

REPORT FROM ABERDEENSHIRE, 2006-2007

The spiritual accompaniment course for clergy took place in Aberdeen between October, 2006 and May, 2007. One of the ten clergy dropped out after one week and the remaining nine were led through the sessions by members of the Ignatian Spirituality Centre staff, Sr Moira Donnelly, rscj and Carole Phelan. All were struck by the depth of sharing in the groups and the trust shown towards one another. Friendships have developed and as a result an R.C. priest and a Scottish Episcopal priest led a pilgrimage to Hungary together last week.

Also last week Moira and Carole led a Silent Guided Retreat at St. Drostan's Lodge in Tarfside, Angus. Thirteen people participated – some for the full eight days and some for less. Most were people who had done the clergy course or a previously held Faith Accompaniment Course. There were mixes of the three main denominations, male and female, clergy and laity. The awareness of God's presence in the depth of the silence in that awesome part of the country appeared to take us all by surprise!

A Retreat in Daily Life was recently offered in a group of churches in an area in Aberdeen where Gero presented two sessions on prayer earlier in the year (one with Carole).

Four more Quiet Days were offered during the year and it is hoped to be able to do the same in this coming year. Numbers fluctuate and venues and presenters vary

and our list of interested people grows!

One of the clergy has followed up one of our days when the labyrinth was used by inviting Fiona Fidgin to come and offer a further day using the labyrinth in his church and he is facilitating yet another labyrinth day during Advent.

Moira and Barbara Farquharson offered part 2 of the Enneagram during a weekend in Aberdeen last month.

More of the clergy are asking for Spiritual Direction and Carole's prayers for a greater trust between clergy and the work of lay members of the Epiphany group are being answered all the time!

Two clergy have just started to make the Spiritual Exercises in daily life.

Gero is planning to be present at one of the Core Committee's Ends and Means Days in November, to be held in Elgin and led by Carole (Aberdeen) and Ruth Flockhart (Coach House).

He is also planning to give a day on Prayer in one of the churches in December as an introduction to a Retreat in Daily Life planned for Lent, 2008.

As the work grows, the desire to offer a Spiritual Direction Course grows and it is hoped this can happen in Autumn, 2008.

Carole Phelan (October, 2007)

