

## Report from S W Scotland

October, 2007

In 2006, Rachel Inglis bought a house in Kirkcudbright with the vision of using it to offer her time and space for the use of people to explore and develop their spirituality on their journey of faith, where ever they are at that particular moment. Within Rachel's garden there was a dilapidated outhouse which attracted her to the idea to convert it into a prayer room/chapel. At the time of writing the work on this project is almost completed.

The name of the venture is Aig Fois, which in Gaelic means 'In Tranquility'.

At the time of writing, Rachel has just completed the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius and in 2008 plans to complete in Edinburgh, her training in Spiritual Direction .

Rachel has gathered round her two other people with different but complementary gifts to be the team that wishes to develop the Ignatian tradition:

Sarah Howarth has worked through the Exercises and trained as a spiritual director through the London Diocese' training programme. She is also an Acorn Christian Listening tutor - a lady of wide experience. She also has an intimate knowledge and contact with the ecumenical scene down here in the South West.

Edith Thorp on the other hand has also worked through the Exercises and trained as a spiritual director through the Ignation Centre, Glasgow. She is Convener on the Glasgow and Galloway Diocesan Spirituality Group and brings to the team the wider spiritual directors' contacts, having also been part of the team of prayer guides of St Matthew's, Kilmarnock.. She is the one who says 'what about ....', ideas, some visionary, some impracticable, but always keeping the possibilities alive.

The team has already met with three of the local clergy to introduce Aig Fois to them and to establish links. We were encourage by the feedback from the clergy and hope to use them to make contact with congregations and individuals. We feel that Aig Fois plan to be a haven in a hostile world; a place of acceptance; a place of healing in the broadest sense; a place to explore issues

and life; a place to be creative; and all under the vision and teaching of St Ignatius

Our vision is therefore:

1. To enliven the gifts that God has given to each person, through creative development and to own and appreciate the five senses and the emotions that God has gifted to us; to increase the Ignatian insight of, to quote 'the art of seeing God in all things'.
2. Quiet Days or Days of Reflection on different topics, e.g. the Church seasons, perhaps introduced by morning, afternoon or evening events so that those who haven't experienced a whole day, or are anxious about spaces in silence could have a more gentle lead in
3. Progressive Quiet Days that develop the spiritual life of the individual or group, using the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises as a guide
4. To enable Weeks of Guided Prayer to be run, although this could be problematic in congregations where we are known. Other qualified people would have to be enlisted because of confidentiality among known people. We haven't explored yet how this could be achieved, but it would be done ecumenically as far as possible.
5. Individual work - accompanying a person on their individual faith journey
6. Reflective walks in the town or surrounding area
7. Exploration Days of for example the environment; 'artistic' skills - music, art whether participatory or appreciation of. The Exploration Days are in the germination stage and would need input and facilitation from others and are in the future rather than the immediate.

From a personal point of view, I came to Galloway 12 years ago, feeling very unsure of leaving my spiritual home in the south. I was assured that 'The Lord will go before you' and so it has been. Having trained as a spiritual director in 2001/2002, and for so long resting on that training, suddenly it is all opening up. The time, place and people are gathered for God in his graciousness to use the three of us, each with our own particular gifts to further His Kingdom. May His name be praised.

Rachel, Sarah and Edith seek your prayers for *God's* guidance for the future.

Edith E Thorp  
(Epiphany Group member)