

Autumn Courses 2016



with course organiser

Canon Dr. Rod Garner
Diocesan Theologian



Diocese of
Liverpool

Autumn Courses 2016

A message from Canon Dr. Rod Garner, Diocesan Theologian



The great nineteenth century theologian, philosopher and poet, John Henry Newman once commented that 'the apostles never stood still, neither should we.' Just to be clear, he was not advocating a form of discipleship that all too quickly leaves us exhausted. Instead, what he had in mind was a continuing engagement with life in all its joys, questions and uncertainties. Faith grows through such commitment and a readiness to explore and understand the unsettling conditions of our times.

In the aftermath of Brexit, the rise in terrorism across Europe and our own fractured politics, we are in such times. To echo a verse from the Old Testament 'we have not passed this way heretofore' (Joshua 3.4). This realisation has contributed to the choice of topics on offer this Autumn. Beginning in September, an evening course in Southport will look at some of the contemporary challenges confronting faith and humanity generally. Under the heading Life out of Balance and aided by a film and an engaging Australian theologian, Rev'd Dr. Stephen Wright (a big hit at the recent Diocesan Readers' Summer Course!) the aim is to offer encouragement and guidance as we negotiate uncharted waters.

In early October there will be an evening presentation on St. Augustine – a huge figure in Christian history, who, surprisingly, is still able to speak to us across the centuries. Whether the issue is scripture, controversies, divisions, evil or fear, we can learn much from his life and writings.

Over three weeks in November an evening course at Christ Church, Aughton will encourage us to look at our familiar world through different eyes – through the vision of an artist, a poet, engraver and mystic, and a Jesuit priest and spiritual writer. Underpinning their very different approaches to life and religion can be seen a common concern to re-invigorate the mind and senses to our extraordinary world.

Finally, in November I have organised a Day of Reflection at Ince Blundell Hall, the occasion will be devoted to scripture and how with a little more application and understanding we might benefit from its deeper wisdom that can easily elude us.

I look forward to welcoming you to these events and would like you to make others aware of them. New attendees are always welcome and they bring a fresh dimension to the questions and discussions. If you have any queries you can reach me on: 07754812915 or email holytrinitysouthport@gmail.com

Life out of balance

An Evening Course in Southport

This Course will consider a celebrated filmmaker, Godfrey Reggio, and the recent writings of Pope Francis and former Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks.

We shall begin with excerpts from the film *Koyaanisqatsi*, a movie first released in the 1980s with a memorable score from the American composer, Philip Glass. The word 'Koyaanisqatsi' is taken from the Hopi (Native American) language and means 'unbalanced life'. It has no actors or dialogue and consists primarily of stunning images of cities and natural landscapes. Reggio was a member of the Christian Brothers' teaching order for fourteen years and in this film he offers us a visual meditation and, depending on the viewer, a spiritual experience

Our second meeting will be led by Rev'd Dr. Stephen Wright, an Australian scholar and theologian currently teaching in Manchester. His theme will be the latest encyclical letter of Pope Francis *Laudato Si* (Praise be to you, my Lord) which has been applauded as a bold and inspiring statement regarding our complex (and sometimes destructive) relationship with Mother Earth.

Our final meeting draws on the wisdom and writings of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks who has recently been awarded the prestigious Templeton Prize for his unique contribution to enriching our vision of human purpose and ultimate reality.

Course Information

Life out of Balance

Dates and Topics

Tuesday, 20th September 2016 -
Film Presentation –
Koyaanisqatsi

Thursday, 29th September 2016 -
Caring for our
Common Home
Led by Rev'd Dr.
Stephen Wright

Thursday, 6th October 2016 -
Rediscovering our
Moral Purpose

Time

All meetings start at 7.30 p.m. with refreshments from 7.00 p.m.

Fee

£15 (£12 concession) for all three including refreshments.

Location

Southport College
Conference Room
1st Floor,
Mornington Road,
Southport,
PR9 0TT.

Journeying with Augustine

Course Information

Journeying with Augustine - Evening Presentation led by Canon Dr. Rod Garner

Dates and Topics

Sunday 9th October 2016

Time

6.30 p.m. beginning with refreshments from 6.15 p.m. and finishing with a short act of worship.

Fee

No charge but retiring donations invited

Location

Holy Trinity Parish Centre
Hoghton Street
Southport,
PR9 0PR.

An Evening Presentation at Holy Trinity, Southport.

St. Augustine remains a familiar name to congregations but apart from occasional sermon references that's about it. In consequence we miss a great deal, not least as we try to live faithfully in a time of uncertainties and disagreements. Because Augustine's own age was one of confusions and fears, his story touches our own journey and offers us hope. As a companion and soul friend, he proves a reliable guide, pointing us to the One of whom the Scriptures speak and the human failings that distract us from the divine presence. As a servant of Christ, he encourages us to share his ideals and to renew our longing and desire for God.

This evening presentation will provide an opportunity for anyone wanting to learn more about Augustine, why he still matters and how his wisdom, energy and prayer can strengthen our own faith and understanding. No prior knowledge of Augustine is necessary – just a readiness to learn alongside others.

The doors of perception: awakening to reality

A Series of Evening Meetings at Christ Church, Aughton

This course takes its theme from a poem by William Blake: 'if the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear infinite.' The inference here is that we sleepwalk our way through life: through a refusal or inability to see, often the result of sadness, depression, anger or frustrations, we can miss the beauty in human experience and the presence of God in all things.

Over three weeks we shall look at the work of a painter, a poet and a spiritual writer. We begin with one of Britain's best loved painters, Stanley Spencer, as a major exhibition celebrates the 125th anniversary of his birth. His evocative paintings of everyday life touched by the divine remain fresh and provocative. Admirers include sculptor, Anthony Gormley, broadcaster Jon Snow and the late David Bowie. The second meeting looks at the life of the poet and painter William Blake. As an 18th century English mystic and visionary he was largely unrecognised in his lifetime. Now however he is considered a major figure – 'a glorious luminary' who invites us to look at the world around us and see it differently. Our final meeting will introduce Anthony de Mello, Jesuit priest and one of the most widely read spiritual writers of the twentieth century, whose books have been translated into thirty-five languages. *Rediscovering Life* is based on a lecture given just months before his sudden death in 1987. It is a deeply compassionate book concerned with the attachments and desires that make for unhappiness and how we might deal with them at any stage of life.

Course Information

The Doors of Perception: Awakening to Reality
Led by Canon Dr. Rod Garner, Diocesan Theologian

Dates and Topics

Tuesday 8th November 2016 - Of Angels and Dirt – The Artistic Vision of Stanley Spencer

Tuesday 15th November 2016 - Imagination and the Soul Divine – William Blake - Rev'd Philip Caton, former actor will read extracts from Blake's works.

Tuesday 22nd November 2016 - Rediscovering Life – The Wisdom of Anthony de Mello

Time

All meetings begin at 7.30 p.m. with refreshments from 7.00 p.m.

Fee

£15 (£12 concession) for all three including refreshment.

Location

Christ Church Ministry Centre,
Long Lane,
Aughton,
L39 5AS.

Taking scripture seriously: being faithful to the word of God

A Day of Reflection at Ince Blundell Hall, Merseyside

The Bible is our holy book and moral compass. It is a source of wisdom and a compelling record of Jesus of Nazareth. But even within the churches it is read less frequently than was once the case and its treasures remain hidden or little understood. There is also the vexing question of biblical authority. Is the Bible literally the word of God or, rather, profoundly inspired words about God? Does it reveal how God sees things or how Isaiah, St. Paul and the writer of the book of Job saw them? And what is required of us by way of courage, hope and sacrifice as we seek to be faithful to its teachings?

This Day of Reflection at Ince Blundell will explore how the scriptures can be woven into our lives more meaningfully and therefore more effectively. It will encourage us to go beyond the 'devotional' reading of holy texts in order to discover what is frequently hidden – the challenge to become more fully human and 'signs' of God by following Christ. The Day will include addresses, time for quietness and personal reflection and will finish with an act of worship at 3.30 p.m.

Course Information

Taking Scripture Seriously: Being Faithful to the Word of God
Led by Canon Dr. Rod Garner, Diocesan Theologian

Dates and Topics

**Saturday 12th
November 2016**

Time

9.30am - 4.00pm
with refreshments and
light lunch

Fee

£9 including soup and refreshments. Please bring packed lunch (if you need more by way of sustenance!)

Location

Ince Blundell Hall,
Ince Blundell
Liverpool,
Merseyside,
L38 6JL.

Autumn 2016 Booking Form

Please complete this form and return it to Lifelong Learning indicating if you will be paying the normal fee or the concessionary rate (for retired or unwaged attendees).

Feel free to make copies of this form if more people would like to attend.

Life out of Balance []

Tuesday 20th September – Film Presentation: 'Koyaanisqatsi' []

Thursday 29th September – Caring for our Common Home: Presentation by Rev'd Dr. Stephen Wright []

Thursday 6th October – Rediscovering our Moral Purpose []

Fees - £15 [] £12 []

Journeying with Augustine []

Sunday 9th October 2016 []

No Fees – retiring collection

The Doors of Perception []

Tuesday 8th November 2016 – Of Angels and Dirt []

Tuesday 15th November 2016 – Imagination and the Soul Divine []

Tuesday 22nd November 2016 – Rediscovering Life []

Fees - £15 [] £12 []

Taking Scripture Seriously []

Saturday 12th November 2016

Fees - £9 []

Total fees enclosed _____

Please make cheques payable to Liverpool DBF

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Autumn 2016 Booking Form

Please detach and complete this form using BLOCK CAPITALS
and return by **16th September 2016** to: Sam Stanford,
Lifelong Learning
St James' House
20 St James Road
Liverpool, L1 7BY

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Daytime Tel No: _____

Email: _____

Please indicate if you are

Clergy Reader Lay Person

Please give details of any special requirements:

_____ (continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Signed: _____ Date: _____