



"I feel an almost constant longing and desire for silence so that I might serve God undisturbed."

(Blessed Elena Stollenwerk)

SHORT RENEWAL PROGRAM – 17th to 31st March 2025:

6-day in-person Workshop followed by a 7-day Contemplative Retreat

(For Members of Religious Orders)



6-DAY WORKSHOP

Theme:

UNCOVERING THE INNER SELF IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNITY LIVING: A PATH TO TRANSFORMATION

From a psycho-spiritual approach (including concepts like identity, the power of culture in shaping core values and perceptions, vulnerability, transformation, search for meaning), light is shed on the quest for the true self – the “immortal diamond”. This process leads to love-filled connections with self, God, others, and creation – having Jesus as the Model.

The workshop includes times for input using various dynamics, time for reflective silence, spiritual conversation and sharing in small-group, and contemplative prayer practice as a group (20 minutes twice a day).

Work on inner transformation is sought through the following objectives:

- To create a space for developing greater awareness of the “immortal diamond” – the indwelling Presence of the Trinity.
- To deepen the concepts of true self & false self, and thus, grow in a new way of seeing inward and outwardly.
- To further develop emotional language to identify, in the "here and now", the connection: feelings – thoughts – behaviours.



- To grow in understanding the power of culture in core values and perceptions, and the impact of this in building bridges versus walls in interpersonal & intercultural relationships.
- To have space to learn and practice the art of “contemplative listening and responding” from an attitude of ongoing discernment.
- To practice moments of silence and guided contemplative prayer in the context of the workshop and (intensively) in the retreat, as a means to hold strong emotions before God, so as to become a more life-giving presence in community and mission.

7-DAY CONTEMPLATIVE RETREAT

Theme:

JESUS: CONTEMPLATIVE AND COMPASSIONATE PRESENCE OF THE TRINITY

“CONTEMPLATION is the highest expression of a person’s intellectual and spiritual life. It is that life itself, fully awake, fully active, fully aware that it is alive. It is spiritual wonder. It is spontaneous awe at the sacredness of life, of being. It is gratitude for life, for awareness and for being.”

(Thomas Merton)

Through the intensive practice of contemplative prayer, one embraces the process of transformation in oneself and in others. By persisting in this practice, a new way of seeing and acting has space to emerge; a new capacity to listen to the inner voice of the Spirit is developed; and the soul’s innate sense of awe and wonder at the whole of creation is restored.

The retreat will include: Input sessions (twice daily for 20 minutes) on passages from Jesus’ life and mission, along with sessions on the method of Centering Prayer complemented with elements from the Trinitarian Spirituality. In this way, the growth in the contemplative path, having Jesus as a Model, will be fostered and experienced at the heart level.

In addition, there will be: several periods of Contemplative Prayer (centering prayer) practice each day; opportunity for moments of spiritual companionship/sharing the inner journey (if desired); celebration of the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation; guidelines on the practice of journaling as a tool for spiritual growth; and time for personal prayer in silence.

Meet the Team:

Sr. Maria José Rebelo, SSps (Steyl - Netherlands)



Missionary Sister Servant of the Holy Spirit, from Portugal, Maria José has experience of living and ministering in various countries; has academic training in clinical psychology and worked many years as a psychologist with migrants and refugees. She served in leadership roles at Provincial and European level for six years. At present, she works as a researcher in mental health and migration with Comillas University (Madrid), and conducts workshops on contemplative spirituality and the inner self both, in person and online.

Bishop Tim Norton, SVD (Brisbane - Australia)



Divine Word Missionary from Australia, trained and worked as a physiotherapist before joining the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). After joining the SVD, he lived and worked for several years as a missionary in Mexico. Tim has specialized academic training in spiritual direction and accompaniment, served in leadership roles both in initial formation and as Provincial in Australia. Before being appointed Bishop, Tim lived in Rome (Nemi) for seven years and worked full-time with consecrated women and men in the promotion of holistic formation, interculturality, professional standards, and community building.

Sr. Maria Cristina Ávalos, SSps (Steyl - Netherlands)



Missionary Sister Servant of the Holy Spirit from Argentina, Maria Cristina has a vast leadership experience, first at the Provincial level and, from 2008 to 2022, serving as a General Council for 14 years. She has training in Education, spiritual direction, safeguarding standards, and interculturality and community building. Presently serves as a member of the SSps/SVD international spiritual animation network and provides ongoing formation for religious both in person and online. She offers in-person interculturality workshops with consecrated women and men from different orders.



PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

Website:

<https://www.steyler-missionsschwestern.de/standorte/steyl/silence-contemplation>

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Address:

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Sacred Heart Monastery
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[Place](#)

Contact:

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Full cost of the Program: 1300 €

OBS: The number of participants is limited.

Deadline for registration: 15th January 2025