

## WORKSHOP 29 AUGUST 2015

**Aim:** To explore the relationship between Cosmology and Spiritual Direction

*This workshop explores the cosmological context in which our relationships to ourselves, creation, the universe and God take place and how these understandings influence our Ministry of Spiritual Direction.*

**Welcome** and introduction:

**Kuhu Mai** .....

Topic of **workshop**: Cosmology and Spiritual Direction

**Section 1:** Principles of the Universe. **Diversity:**

**Process:** Time to share with person beside them

**Section 2: Interiority**

**Process:** Time for quiet reflection

**Section 3: Communion**

**Lyndall** will share her reflection on cosmology and spiritual direction followed by

**Group sharing** together and back to big group

**Section 4:** Our image of God

**Process:** Lyndall will share on Cosmology and image of God from her experience with directees.

**Conclusion:** Mary Oliver's poem 'The Sun'

**Kuhu Mai**

## **WORKSHOP 29th AUGUST 2015 - 1.15 to 2.30 at Island Bay**

### **Slide 1: Kuhu Mai – Wairua Tapu Kuhu Mai**

We are always attentive to the Spirit present with us in spiritual direction and we invite the Spirit to be with us for this workshop. The same Spirit of creativity that ‘hovered over’ the waters in Genesis to make order out of chaos is the same Spirit flowing through us now encouraging us to co-create new possibilities.

The creative Spirit is inviting us to a new consciousness of being inter dependent with all of creation in the ever expanding cosmos. I invite you to join with Clare as we sing the third verse of your theme song to bring us into this new space together:

### **Slide 2: Wairua tapu kuhu mai ...**

Third Verse of theme song ‘Kuhu Mai’ (Tune: Kum ba ya) © Shirley Erena Murray 2015

### **Slide 3: Trinity icon**

The Universe began its Great Journey in a moment of grace, 13.7 billion years ago – ‘In the beginning was God filled with power and mystery, and God spoke one Word, and the Word exploded into a tiny, hot dense ball of matter that gave rise over a long time to our world as we know it now. (Ilia Delio)

‘Everything was present from the beginning; God creates from within, calling everything into existence over time through chaos and creativity;’ Donna Geernaert SC.  
Each one of us too is called into existence over time through chaos and creativity,

This image of the Trinity captures for me something of the mystery of the relationship between the Trinity and our universe. God is a communion of persons in love and  
**“Everywhere in the world is the imprint of that love”**

Our reference to God as a Trinity of persons points to an active Life-force of relationships-in-motion, i.e., the energy of interaction.

### **Slide 4: The story of the Cosmos and our human story is one single narrative: (Brian Swimme)**

Our story is reflected in the story of the cosmos.

Hidden in the fertile womb of creative energy of The Big Bang, or the Great Flaring forth are the forces that, in the fullness of time, give birth to spiritual direction. The energetic dance of inward and outward, of contemplation and action – that sacred impulse is already there in the universe.

The dynamics of the spiritual direction relationship – life out of death, perseverance in darkness, openness to surprise, letting go and opening to the new – all of these dynamics are part of the deep wisdom of Earth. *There is a reference on your page for a ritual that aligns the universe story with spiritual direction from the very beginning.*

The New Cosmology insists that all creation is derived from relatedness and is sustained through relationships

### **Slide 5: Topic of workshop: Cosmology and Spiritual Direction.**

It is good to be here with you for this workshop. My final project for SGM was 'Cosmology and Spiritual Direction' and I hope to share from that today. Preparing for the workshop was a big learning experience for me. I felt challenged to take small steps in integrating my life experience with the story of the cosmos and I hope today's workshop will give you an opportunity to deepen your experience of cosmology and spiritual direction.

**As you take a moment to reflect on the picture what surfaces in your heart as you connect with the topic of this workshop?**

### **Slide 6: Our workshop is ...**

Our workshop is an opportunity to explore together the relationship between Cosmology and Spiritual Direction. Spiritual direction is at the service of right relationships on every level. **This workshop explores the cosmological context in which our relationships to ourselves, creation, the universe and God take place and how these understandings influence our Ministry of Spiritual Direction.**

### **Slide 7: Cosmology**

**'In every human society, the accepted cosmology is the story of how the world (cosmos) began, how it has evolved into what it is today, and where it is all going. Out of our cosmology come our beliefs, customs, institutions and stories. Our cosmology is the lens through which we make perceptions. Our cosmology is, in great measure, our reality.'**  
(O'Murchu)

Ilia Delio says We are small people if we don't have a big picture and we call the big picture cosmology. Kosmos is the Greek word for world.

Story is so important to us in our lives as families and societies the New Story of Cosmology provides us with a bigger picture to find meaning.

Shift from old to new cosmology – from sense of being separate to connectedness.

The story reveals to us a *creative intelligence* at work in the universe and in our human capacity to reflect in awe upon it. So what does it mean to be a spiritual director at this time: What does it mean *for us as spiritual directors* to come home to the cosmos?

### **Slide 8: What does it mean to be a spiritual director in a universe that began in a singular explosion of radiant energy 13.7 billion years ago?**

**Terrence J. Moran CSSR**

You might need a moment to let that sink in!! Given the vast amount of literature available on Cosmology, I would like to take a little time to focus on aspects of the Universe story that could be helpful for us in spiritual direction.

**Slide 9:** Influenced by science Thomas Berry has explored and developed three dynamic principles that have been at the heart of the unfolding Universe from the very beginning. These three principles flow from the life of the Trinity

**Slide 10:** These values can help us build a new Spirituality and guide us in both our INNER AND OUTER JOURNEY.

They have operated and continue to operate throughout time and space in The Universe Story. They are highly complex, interconnected and ongoing processes. They are significant for Spiritual Direction in these emerging times. They are like the '**golden threads of Divine Wisdom with which God has woven the fabric of the Universe**'.

**Slide 11: The 3 Principles are:**

**DIFFERENTIATION (diversity)**, everything is different from everything else ...

'to be is to be unique'

**INTERIORITY (Essence)** The essence of everything is Divine Fire and each has an inherent potential to grow into fullness... – 'to be is to be a centre of creativity'

**COMMUNION (interconnectedness/interdependence)**

everything is related to everything else ... we are ONE ... 'to be is to be related'

We will take a look at these three principles and explore how they connect with what we're doing in spiritual direction. I have asked Lyndall to share these principles from her experience in spiritual direction later in the workshop and then you will have an opportunity in small groups to explore them from your own experience.

**Slide 12: Diversity is evident in the life of the Trinity –**

God is really creative and imaginative

**Slide 13: Differentiation, Diversity: Everything is coded to be distinctly different from everything else**

We live in a Universe of unending variety; everything reflects God in some way. Each creature is unique and a mystery.

**Slide 14: Nothing is identical with anything else.....**

**in the Divine mystery of the awesome web of life...**

Everything brought into being is loved into being in a unique way.

David Attenborough's nature programmes portray this so beautifully.

**Slide 15: Role of nature in our spiritual practices**

The environment where spiritual direction happens has potential to nourish the spiritual direction session and deepen the connection with the wonder and beauty of the created world. Retreat centres are often located in areas of great natural beauty and can lead us to deeper intimacy with our natural surroundings.

The need to be earth literate – valuing the book of nature as well as the book of Scripture.

**Slide 16: “Our task must be to widen our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”** Albert Einstein.

Teilhard de Chardin reminds us that everything is sacred to those who know how to see. Nature’s cycles of light and darkness reflect the light and darkness of each of our journeys

**Slide 17: We are called to celebrate diversity ...in the awesome Web of Life In the natural World diversity keeps the system healthy and vibrant**

Diversity in spiritual direction is also important. Each person brings their own unique life experience to spiritual direction; the director does not bring the issue of cosmology but provides a larger canvas for exploring the journey towards meaning.

The director listens to the person’s story out of an awareness of how it fits in the story of the cosmos.

**Slide 18: Sharing:**

**Turn to the person next to you and share what is going on for you in the light of what you have heard about Diversity.**

**Slide 19: Interiority – Trinity:**

‘Do you know that within each of us is the unspeakably beautiful beat of the Sacred?’  
P. Newell

**Slide 20: Inner Essence – The call is to live contemplatively through a deepening consciousness of God.**

As spiritual directors we invite directees to go down into their own interior and to discover the sacredness of their own inner experience.

**Interiority:** Is about coming home to ourselves and coming home to the cosmos.

The deep connection with nature is a very significant part of the spiritual journey.

**As Hillman says ‘An individual’s harmony with his or her own deep self requires not merely a journey to the interior but a harmonization with the environmental world.’**

**Slide 21: Everything pulsates with an interior sacred dimension**

Recognising that everything in the universe is a revelation of the divine, an unrepeatable expression; a word made flesh, a temple of the holy. In this new view everything is unique, with its own intelligence and strategy, intriguing and mysterious with the right to grow to its full potential. Indigenous people have a deep connection with nature.

Many people experience the sacred for the first time in their relationship with nature. In spiritual direction the relationship of the directee with nature can be explored and deepened

**Slide 22: Every atom, cell, star, mountain, tree, animal and person has a sacred and mysterious inner essence**

We are all essential.

**Slide 23: Every being has inner beauty – is a word of God has intrinsic value**

We are drawn into contemplation - contemplation helps us to see how connected we are to all that is, and that is the essence of mysticism. Karl Rahner said that the Christian of the future will be a mystic or nothing at all.

**Slide 24: It is from the contemplative stance that we merge the Inner and Outer life. This is the capacity to see with a ‘Sacred Eye’**

We allow nature to nourish us:

**Slide 25: Discovering the essence within all people and all creation draws us into compassion for all life**

‘At a certain point you say to the woods, to the sea, to the mountains, the world, Now I am ready, Now I will stop and be wholly attentive, You empty yourself and wait, listening.’ Annie Dillard

**Slide 26: A new way of relating to each other is to reverence the inner essence and deep mystery in each person....**

*This is what happens in spiritual direction*

The journey in spiritual direction of being true to self, of being authentic reflects this dynamic of interiority. Spiritual direction provides space within our lives for something new to happen, we are invited to pay attention to what is being revealed in our lives, enabling us to live in more contemplative awareness than we normally do. Spiritual direction calls us to be rooted in stillness, contemplation and wonder at the unfolding Mystery of God and of all God’s creation, and the unfolding Mystery of ‘self’ and the ‘other’.

**Slide 27:Pause .... Mystery .....Silence**

Ilia Delio reminds us that *‘we cannot creatively evolve without attending to the divine breath of life within us.’<sup>1</sup>*

**Let us take a moment to attend to the divine breath of life within us – become conscious of your breathing and take a little time within for quiet reflection.**

**Slide 28: Trinity – Communion**

– it’s a symbolic picture of totally shared life at the heart of the Universe.

**Slide 29: The entire universe is bonded together in such a way that everything on the planet is an interconnected, interdependent web of relationships - a seamless whole**

Relationship is the essence of existence. Nothing is itself without everything else. We are relationally programmed people. Who we are is the result of our relational intimacy to one another, our planet, and our cosmos. Our identity is an on-going process of unfolding through discovery , with the Lure of the future (Spirit) inviting us to participate in the co-

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creative horizon of new possibilities.

In doing so we are **persons-in-process** in an unfinished universe (O Murchu, etc)

### **Slide 30: We live in an awesome interconnected interdependent web of life**

**'Because all creatures are connected, each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another'** (Laudato Si 42 )

Pope Francis highlights **relationality** We are not simply human beings; we are human interbeings and share in the interrelatedness of all cosmic life.

**Nothing is itself...without everything else. To be created is to be related.**

The energy we and other animals bestow on this work of relatedness reveals something of the ultimate meaning of communal experience.

### **Slide 31: WE NEED TO FIND OUR PLACE IN THE WEB OF LIFE WITH NEW EYES....**

It is important to provide a reflective space for directees to awaken to the Spirit of God present and active in all that exists, to a Spirituality of Being in Communion in this time of deepening conviction of our connectedness. This "Universe Story" reveals us to each other as kin! We are kin not only to every other human being, but also to the kiwi and the whale, the kowhai and the butterfly. Within this expansive cosmology we experience a sense of **homecoming**.

**Slide 32: When two diverse things come together- eg when hydrogen & oxygen merge .....the miracle of water is created ..... neither lose their identity in the process, the result is further diversity and creativity**

**Slide 33: And the same applies to us in spiritual direction: when two people are listening deeply to each other...when one person speaks her /his message and there is a resonance being created between the two of them...**

**Slide 34: Something new is being created in this communion...**

**IT'S ABOUT LISTENING EACH OTHER INTO CHANGE**

*'The holy energy that set the galaxies swirling is the same holy energy that Spiritual Directors sense in the space between them and a spiritual directee'<sup>2</sup> (T. Moran)*

**Slide 35: "If God became flesh and entered this world in Jesus, then the hiding place of God is this world, in the material, in the animals, in the elements, in the physical. These are the hiding places – and the revelation place of God." R.Rohr**

**Slide 36: Sharing Spiritual Direction experiences -Invitation to Lyndall:**

I now invite Lyndall who has many years experience as a Spiritual Director to share with us her reflections on Cosmology and Spiritual Direction. Following this she will lead us as a group to reflect on our own experience.

**Slide 37:** In the light of our reflection on the three principles of the Universe is there an image of God that is emerging for you? Please share this into the group....

Our image of God is changing and evolving. The God of evolution is a God of 'newness', because God is a dynamic communion of Persons in love. God is deeply personal, deeply relational; everything bears the footprint of the Trinity. This is a God who is engaged, a God of dynamic love not a static God. Elizabeth Johnson writes that the Trinity, as pure relationality, **provides a symbolic picture of totally shared life at the heart of the Universe."**

**Slide 38:** THE WORLD IS LIKE A CRYSTAL LAMP ILLUMINED BY THE LIGHT OF DIVINE LOVE FROM WITHIN  
In traditional cosmology, God intervenes as an external cause. In the new cosmology, God is seen as an internal cause, an immediate presence in the unfolding of the entire universe. We are in a transition from thinking that God is above, to realizing that **our expanding cosmos is infused and alive with divinity.**

**Slide 39 :** The world is charged with the grandeur of God

*Meister Eckhart says "If I put my cheek against the earth's body, I feel the pulse of God."*

Richard Rohr reminds us: 'There is no concept of God that contains God. Your present notion of God is never it.'

**Slide 40:** Sharing Spiritual Direction experience of understanding God in the light of Cosmology – Lyndall.

"...The God of Evolution is the God of adventure, a God who loves to do new things and is always new. We are invited into this adventure of love to find our freedom in love and to love without measure."(Excerpt from The Emergent Christ: Exploring the Meaning of Catholic in an Evolutionary Universe) by Ilia Delio, OSF

**Slide 41:** In the light of this workshop on cosmology and spiritual direction what has been deepened for you (If there isn't time for this question, take it home in your heart for reflection)

**Slide 42:**

Brian Swimme says 'Cosmology, when it is alive and healthy in a culture, evokes in the human a deep zest for life.' This deep zest for life is evident in Mary Oliver's Poem 'The Sun'

**Lyndall will now read Mary Oliver's poem**

**Slide 43: Kuhu Mai -**

*Where fresh water springs, kuhu mai*

*where the Spirit sings, kuhu mai*

*to the heart of things, kuhu mai*

*let each of us come in.....* © Shirley Erena Murray 2015