

## **North London Pastoral Assistants Scheme**

### **Theology and Spirituality Formation for the academic year 2020/21**

We have designed this year's programme so that it has maximum Covid resilience. This means that most of the sessions can take place by Zoom if need be. Please expect that many sessions will take place by Zoom in the autumn. Zoom details will be communicated closer to the time. We will then see how things go in the New Year and make a decision on whether we can meet physically then.

The theological and spirituality formation programme offered by the NLPA scheme is viewed by the trustees as a crucial part of your placement. It should be given the highest priority and takes precedence over parochial duties. Any request to be excused a session must be discussed with your supervisor in good time beforehand. It is then for your supervisor to be in touch with either Fr Bruce or Fr Peter requesting permission for you to be absent from any session.

*Thursday 17th Sept 2020 - 10.30 am – 12 noon by Zoom.*

#### **Introductory session with Fr Peter and Fr Bruce.**

This will be an opportunity for us to introduce ourselves, talk about the spirituality and theology programme and set expectations for the coming year.

*Thursday 1st October 10.30 am - 4.00 pm at Hornsey Parish Church*

#### **Spirituality: discernment and listening**

A day exploring listening as discernment in the Rule of St Benedict Part 1, led by Fr Bruce Batstone.

*Thursday 15th Oct 2020 – 10.30 am – 12 noon by Zoom*

#### **Speaker: Revd Marjorie Brown**

This morning's seminar will be an opportunity to meet Revd Marjorie Brown, who is the Edmonton Area's Director of Ordinands. She will speak and field questions on the theological underpinnings of ministerial discernment, the processes whereby candidates are selected for ordination training, and the different paths of theological formation offered by the Church of England. Contact for this seminar: Fr Peter Anthony.

*Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020*

#### **Safeguarding Training Day**

You will join with pastoral assistants from across the diocese for a day of compulsory Safeguarding training. It will be assumed that you will have already completed online training C0 and C1 found [HERE](#) before you begin in parishes. Further details concerning timing and how this training will be delivered will be made known closer to the time. Be in touch with Fr Bruce if you have any questions.

*Thursday 12th November at Edgware Abbey (10.00 am - 4.00 pm):*

#### **Spirituality: discernment and listening**

A day exploring listening as discernment in the Rule of St Benedict Part 2, led by Fr Bruce Batstone.

*Thursday 19th Nov 2020 – 10.30 am -12 noon by Zoom*

**Topic: Learning about Lockdown through literature**

All of us have a lot to process from the time of lock down, the “new normal,” and continued anxieties about Coronavirus. One thing a lot of people seemed to have more time for during lockdown was reading. This seminar will be an opportunity to share insights we gained about life and faith from what we read and witnessed happening around us in lock down. There may be books you found particularly helpful, or films and poems that especially spoke to you in a new way. Bring your experiences and share with others at this seminar as we seek to make some sense of where God was at work in our lives through this difficult and curious year. You will be expected to have read one of the following novels in preparation for this seminar:

*The Betrothed* by Alessandro Manzoni

*A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

*The Plague* by Albert Camus

Led by Fr Peter Anthony.

*Thursday 17th Dec 2020 – 10.30 am – 12 noon by Zoom*

**Topic: What do the gospels tell us about the birth of Jesus?**

With so many saccharine Christmas images bombarding us from every side at this time of year, it is good to reflect on what the gospel narratives actually tell us about the birth of Jesus. In this seminar, we will explore how the birth narratives were written, by whom, and how they were interpreted in the early church. Led by Fr Peter Anthony.

*Thursday 14th January 10.00 am- 4.00 pm at Hornsey Parish Church:*

**Spirituality: Discernment and St Ignatius**

A day exploring the idea of discernment in the Exercises of St Ignatius Part 1 led by Fr Bruce Batstone.

*Thursday 21st Jan 2021 – 10.30 am – 12 noon by Zoom.*

**Topic: The Gospel of Mark**

As we begin the weeks of Ordinary Time again after Christmas, we start working through the Gospel of Mark in 2021. Each year we read from a different gospel on Sunday mornings, and this is the year of Mark. This seminar will explore the key themes of his gospel, when it was written, and for whom. We will learn more about the image of Jesus that Mark seeks to convey to us through the pages of his extraordinary narrative, and the theological originality of his literary creation. Led by Fr Peter Anthony.

*Thursday 18th February 2021 – 10.30 am -12 noon by Zoom.*

**Book review seminar: *Ghost Ship: Institutional Racism and the Church of England* by A.D.A. France Williams**

*Ghost Ship* is an extraordinary new book just published by A.D.A. France Williams which tackles head on the problems of institutional racism and historic prejudice within the Church of England. In this seminar we will reflect on this text, and use it as a spring board to make us more aware of bias and discrimination in our own experience of ministry and ways in which we can fruitfully tackle racism when we see it. Led by Fr Peter Anthony.

*Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 10.00 am - 4.00 pm at Hornsey Parish Church:*

**Spirituality: Discernment and St Ignatius**

A day exploring the idea of discernment in the Exercises of St Ignatius Part 2 led by Fr Bruce Batstone.

*Thursday 18th March 2021 – all day.*

**Day trip to Canterbury**

On this excursion to Canterbury, we have the opportunity to reflect on the historic origins of English Christianity. Not only is Canterbury the See from which St Augustine preached the Gospel to the Anglo-Saxons, but it is the location of the murder of St Thomas a Becket. In recent times, it has taken on a greater significance as a focus of prayer and unity within the worldwide Anglican communion, and witnessed historic ecumenical visits such as that on John Paul II in 1982. We hope to be given a tour of the Cathedral, to say Mass there, to be able to spend time hearing from some of the clergy who work in Canterbury Cathedral, and to finish our day with Choral evensong. Led by Fr Peter Anthony.

*No session in April because of post Easter breaks.*

*Thursday 20th May 2021 – 10.30 am – 12 noon by Zoom.*

**Book Review seminar: *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis**

One of the most popular and beloved introductions to the concept of faith ever written, 'Mere Christianity' has sold millions of copies worldwide. The book brings together C.S. Lewis's radio broadcasts during the war years, in which he set out simply to 'explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times'. Rejecting the boundaries that divide Christianity's many denominations, 'Mere Christianity' provides an unequalled opportunity for believers and nonbelievers alike to absorb a powerful, rational case for the Christian faith. Led by Fr Peter Anthony.

*Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June – Friday 18th June 2021*

**Pilgrimage to Rome with retreat at Villa Palazzola**

Three days in Rome visiting ancient pilgrimage sites, followed by two days of silent retreat at Villa Palazzola, the summer retreat house of the English College by Lake Albano.

*Thursday 15th July 2021 – 10.30 am -1.30 pm at St Benet's Church, Kentish Town.*

**End of Year Session with Mass of thanksgiving and lunch**

We will meet at St Benet's, Kentish Town, to celebrate the Mass together. After this, there will be an opportunity to reflect together on the past year. This will be followed by lunch at the Pineapple Pub.