



Seeds of Hospitality

Newsletter of the Institute of Hospitality
West European Province of Saint John of God - No. 70

September
2015

Dear Hospitallers,

Here we are in September again and most people are back from Summer Vacations. I hope everyone is refreshed for the months ahead. Hopefully we will have an *Indian Summer*. During the month of August we had Foundation Programmes and a One Day Workshop in Kerry

When I am sharing at the Foundation Programme on the topic of the Values I always talk about the importance of creating a friendly work environment. This is the first thing I mention as a way of being hospitable. This is essential when we are practicing the Value of Hospitality. By creating a friendly work environment all will benefit particularly the clients/patients who attend and reside in the Services.

All our organisational strategies should be geared primarily to enhance the lives of the people availing of our services and the people working in them. It stands to reason if the Hospitallers working in the Service are able to create a good environment it will become a therapeutic environment benefiting all involved most importantly the clients or patients.

If the environment is right then we have a great opportunity for creating a "**Sacred Space**" with the clients/patients we encounter and the Hospitallers we work with. The Jesuits have a Prayer Website called *Sacred Space*. What I am saying from a Hospitality point of view is that this Sacred Space is a place where one feels safe. This concept applies to an inner state of being as well as to the external environment.

On our recent pilgrimage to Granada we recognised that every place that we visited was **Holy Ground** because we were treading on the ground, which John of God walked. John created this Sacred Space with every poor sick and dying person he met. It was the same when he was begging or fundraising he created this Sacred Space. John recognised that every healing and caring act was a Sacred Act because he believed that every person was a creation of God. Nowadays everybody talks about how busy they are, how stressful their work is etc. If this is true it can be very difficult to create a sacred space for healing. As I have stated above we are talking about an inner state of being as well as to the external environment. At our Foundation Programmes we have on each of the 2 days a 15 minutes silent reflection. The feedback from the participants is that a lot of them find it very difficult to be silent and reflect for 15 minutes!

John had a focus and amidst the business of John's world he had a stillness, which permitted him to connect to the Divine. So it is important for us as Hospitallers to find that stillness which will enable us to find that sacred space which will enable us to focus on the client/patient we are journeying with and the Hospitallers we are working with. Stillness can be achieved through being in a quiet, still awareness rather than doing something to create that stillness!

So. Gregory



Stillness Meditation

There is a natural space of pure silence and stillness in this moment

In meditation, relax your attention so that it begins to settle into this moment and sink below the outer movements of thoughts, emotions and physical happenings into the stillness that lies beneath them.

Just in resting your attention in this stillness thinking runs out of energy and stops by itself.

It is a place of non-movement, non-doing. It is motionless, effortless and fully aware.

You do not get to this stillness through self-effort but through surrendering and relaxing into what is naturally here.

Do not try to force yourself to remain in this stillness. Rather, keep relaxing back into this effortless stillness when you are pulled out of it.



Madonna and Child with Pomegranate

This is a painting by *Sandro Botticelli* an Italian artist, (1445-1510) which hangs in the National Gallery in London. I came across it about a month ago during a conversation on Pomegranates with Sr. Eugenia, a John of God Sister who lives and works in Perth Australia. Eugenia is a great friend of the Institute, a mentor and a true Hospitaller of St. John of God.

I have a copy on canvass which I purchased from the Gallery. As we have no space to hang it as yet I thought it would look well and meaningful in Hospitaller House. As you can see the Child has one hand in the Pomegranate and the other hand has 5 Pomegranate seeds falling from it which fits in beautifully with our 5 Values.

Botticelli decorated parts of the lower walls of the Sistine Chapel in Rome.

The Most Exciting Moment Of My Life



A few years ago the Birmingham, Alabama, paper had a headline on the sports page: "The Most Exciting Moment Of My Life." It showed a picture of Jack Nicklaus writing out a \$5,000 check for charity. As a matter of fact, it was the second \$5,000 check that day. It happened because of a game of golf he lost.

A man by the name of Charley Boswell lives in Birmingham, Alabama. In 1937, he was the captain of the Alabama football team that played in the 1938 Rose Bowl. In World War II he was a captain in the infantry. He stepped on a land mine and blew his eyes out. Charley Boswell is stone cold blind! But for nine holes of golf he can shoot par golf. He hits a ball he can't even see. The caddy rattles the pin in the cup, and the noise tells him where to putt. How does he do that? He said, "Holding mental pictures."

Jack Nicklaus went to Birmingham to help raise money for a Boys' Ranch and gave \$5,000. They had a banquet to honor Nicklaus for helping the fund-raiser and for his \$5,000 check.

Halfway through the meal, Charley Boswell stood at a table in the back of the room "Mr. Nicklaus, they tell me you play a little golf." There was silence. "Yes, I've been known to play a round or two." "So do I and I think I can beat you! I'll play you nine holes of golf. If you can beat me, I'll give \$5,000 to the Boys' Club. And, if I beat you, you give another \$5,000. And to make the contest fun, exciting, and fair, you choose the course where we play, and I'll choose the time we play -- day or night."

Guess what time Charley chose? Night, of course! The Birmingham paper had a full length picture of Nicklaus writing out his second \$5,000 check. The headline said "The Most Exciting Moment of My Life." Someone asked him about that headline. Why had he made that statement? "You have won every trophy, award, honor, and accolade. Why would this be so exciting?" Nicklaus replied, "***I met a person today who refuses to let fear control his life!***"





**August Visit to the
Kingdom of Kerry!**



Kerry Hospitallers on Foundation Programme



Kerry Hospitallers on One Day Workshop