

## **Meeting Kathryn Turner, the Diocesan Coordinator of Spiritual Formation**

“Mrs. Kathryn Turner – the recently appointed Diocesan Co-ordinator for Spiritual Formation will be visiting the parish next Friday afternoon. **There will be an open parish meeting at 4.30pm in the presbytery.** This meeting is open to everyone. Kathryn wishes to seek ways of developing the spirituality and prayer life of our parishes and schools.”

That's what it said on the newsletter a few weeks ago. What it didn't say was what an exceptional person Kathryn was, how easy to listen to and how simple and practical were her ideas! Kathryn is not here to impose her suggestions on us but to give us ideas and to help us to develop what is right for our parish of St. Robert's. These were a few of her suggestions. Please have a look at them and see whether any appeal to you as being good for us. Father Lawrence would welcome any comments or suggestions. **There will be a box at the back of church for these.**

**You are also invited to the Church Hall on April 15<sup>th</sup> after the Morning Mass (no Stations of the Cross on this day) for refreshments and a chat about what we might do next!!**

**The Quiet Garden Movement.** This Movement exists to provide places of quietness, stillness in gardens; to create a “sacred space”. We have the space in our grounds to make this happen for us.

**Hidden Houses of Prayer.** Finding a way of really involving those who are housebound or not so mobile in the life of the parish by having a system where they could join us through prayer. Each month they would receive a card with information about people needing prayers e.g.: those facing operations, people who are ill, people who have been bereaved, our First Holy Communion children, our Confirmation candidates, couples getting married or seeking Baptism. Maybe we could bring our Hidden House people together once a year for a celebration. Maybe they could have a candle or other symbol for the special prayer times.

**Support days for those who have been bereaved.** This could include anyone who has ever been bereaved at any time they felt the need to come not just when it happened. Many people gain benefit from these days years after the event.

**Family Prayer.** Finding ways of encouraging prayer in the family. How do we teach children to pray?

**Prayer Tree** A branch of a tree stuck in a pot with a basket of ribbons nearby. Anyone who has a special intention just ties a ribbon on the tree but the intention remains private. The parish prays for the intentions represented on the tree.

**Intentions Book** This could be left in church for anyone who wanted to ask us to pray with them to write in the intention.

**Too busy to pray at work or home?** Get an egg timer and just before something important that you are going to do or something that is worrying you, turn the egg timer over and let God “take over” as you watch the grains of sand run through.

Other ideas and suggestions, some of which were contributed by those at the Meeting were:

**Time for Taize** prayer.... Very soothing and repetitive and inspiring.

**Commitment cards** at certain times in the year e.g. Lent or Advent when parishioners choose to say a certain prayer each day or to set aside 5 mins. or 10 for prayer. The idea being that the commitment is more likely to be kept than our own vague promises!

**Travelling Nativity** to be passed round families/ homes

**Statue of Our Lady** passing round families/homes in May and October. This happened for a number of months last year. Some people might prefer to offer a simple liturgy than to pray the Rosary. These would be provided!

Kathryn has materials on the Diocesan website that can be accessed by anyone. At the moment there are Lenten reflections. [www.rcdhn.org.uk](http://www.rcdhn.org.uk)

She also has a website packed with prayers and resources at [www.wellsprings.org.uk](http://www.wellsprings.org.uk)

There is also information about the Quiet Garden Trust at [www.quietgarden.org](http://www.quietgarden.org)

Anne Dawes.