



Whale Spouts

*inspiration & information
to nurture spiritual vitality in everyday living*

A monthly newsletter of Belly of the Whale
Spiritual Direction & Retreat Ministries LLC

June 2015

Dear friends,

I find it hard to believe that we are coming up on our one-year anniversary next month. What a year full of shared blessings it has been - sacred silence retreats, creative pray-dates, spiritual direction, mandala making and more. Hopefully the year to come will be full of even more opportunities for us to nurture our spirit and deepen our relationship with God.

It is indeed a life-long dance of spiritual growth - sometimes the dance is slow, sometimes it is fast, sometimes we are a little afraid to even get out on the dance floor. May this summer bring you plenty of opportunities to dance!

“Let them praise his name with dancing.” Psalm 149:3

Peace and joy,

*Sharon Seyfarth Garner, Director
Belly of the Whale Ministries*

The mission of Belly of the Whale Ministries

is to nurture spiritual vitality
in everyday living through
spiritual direction,
silent retreats and
spiritual wellness workshops.



Where is your belly of the whale?

In the **belly of the whale**, Jonah could no longer run away from God. There he prayed an honest prayer that encompassed a whole range of emotions including lament, frustration, fear, anger, surprise, thanksgiving and redemption. I imagine that a whale's belly may not have been the most luxurious of accommodations, but in the **belly of the whale** Jonah was safe from the storms around him, he reconnected with God, and regained the spiritual strength to step back out into the world and be who God had called him to be.

I, too, long to find my own **belly of the whale** - that sacred space where I am safe from the storms, can pray honestly, reconnect with God, and regain the spiritual strength to step out into the world and be who God has called me to be. My **belly of the whale** may be my morning prayer, singing loudly in the shower, sacred silence, coloring mandalas, a quick afternoon nap or any other safe space where I reconnect with God.

Where is your **belly of the whale**? Where do you go, or what do you do to reconnect with God? I encourage you to find your **belly of the whale** and go there often so that you might find renewed spiritual vitality and enthusiasm for living.



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Whale Spouts



Opportunities to nurture your belly of the whale...

Sacred Silence 101

~ a 24-hour silent retreat ~

July 10-11, 2015 or **October 4-5, 2015**
 (registration deadline July 1) (registration deadline Sept. 27)

*Does the cacophony of daily life make it hard
to hear the still small voice of God?*

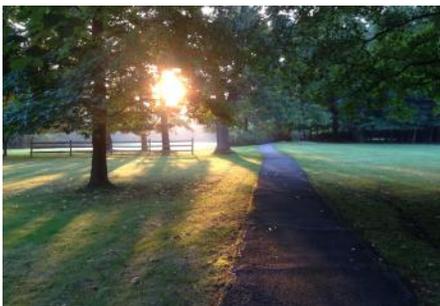
"Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

Sacred Silence 101 is designed to provide a gentle and meaningful introduction to an extended experience of sacred silence. You will be introduced to a variety of contemplative prayer practices, experience meaningful worship (including Taize prayer and Holy Communion) and have ample time for silent rest and reflection.

Location: The Jesuit Retreat House (5629 State Rd, Parma, OH 44134) is a spiritual oasis located on 57 beautiful acres of forest, meadow and meandering pathways.

Cost: \$175 (Single bedroom & 3 meals included.)

Registration: Download the registration form at bellyofthewhaleministries.net



Tentative Schedule

Day One:
 1:30-2:00 Arrival/Check-in
 2:00 Opening Devotions/Orientation
 3:00 24-hours of sacred silence begins
 7:00 Taizé prayer service (optional)

Day Two:
 3:00 Closing Reflections/Communion
 4:00 Return home rested & renewed

Mandala Pray-dates



In the Belly of the Whale Office
 @ University Circle UMC
 1919 East 107th Street
 Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Saturdays - Fall 2015
10 am- Noon
 (\$20/session or \$80/all)

Bring focus, depth and joy to your spiritual life by praying with mandalas. Used for centuries by many cultures, mandalas also have roots within the Christian tradition (Gothic rose



windows, Hildegard of Bingen's visions, the labyrinth of Chartres Cathedral). Come for just one or all five of the sessions and explore a variety of methods for using mandalas to breathe new life into your prayer practices.

Sept. 19 - Mandalas within the Christian Tradition
 Oct. 3 - Centering Prayer
 Oct. 17 - Lectio Divina
 Nov. 7 - Intercessory Prayer
 Nov. 21 - Create-your-own Mandala

Contact Pastor Sharon (216-224-7452 or spiritualdirection@att.net) to reserve your space.