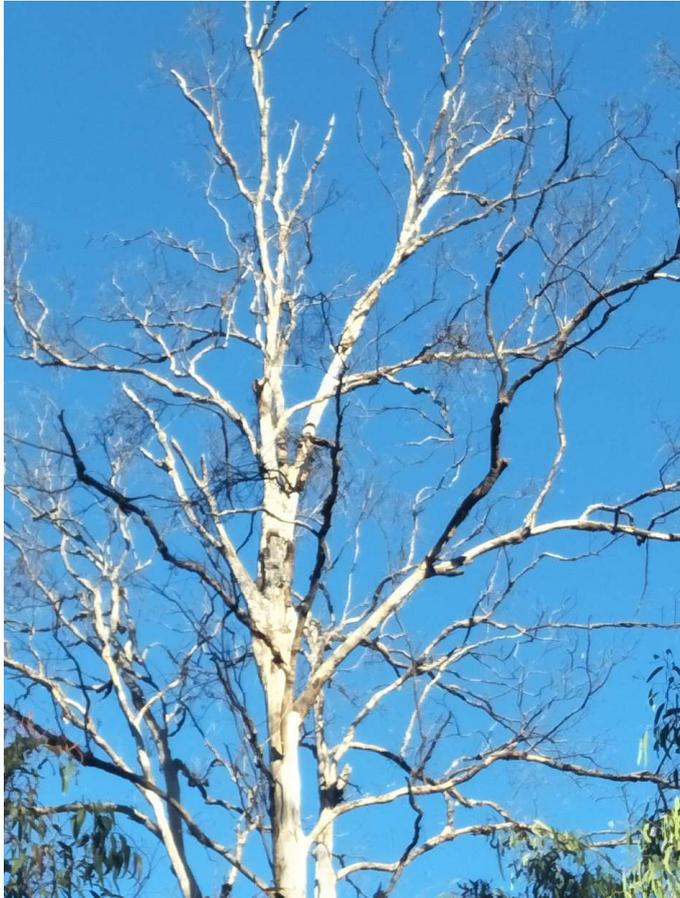


**Editorial (Ann McNelley)**

In her books Judy Cannato discusses self-dissolution and transcendence. Self-dissolution is not only accepting that physical death is a natural part of life, but that we must be prepared to die to those things within ourselves that hinder our spiritual growth. Transcendence calls us not so much to change as to become what we are truly capable of.



We see this self-dissolution symbolised in nature during winter. Trees become bare, the temperature chills and growth slows. It's a season in which we can review those actions, thoughts and views that hold us back, and be prepared to let them go. Then we are brought to the start of a transcendence that allows us to grow into so much more than we dreamed.

Take a look at the apostles. These men suffered a death of their old way of living at the crucifixion. Then at Pentecost they were empowered by the Spirit to reach out to the world with courage and faith, trusting in God to show them the way.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many readers who gave us such positive feedback to our last edition. We are most grateful for your input and welcome your suggestions in the future.

**“Touching the Sacred” Workshop (Anne-Marie Doecke)**

The ten people who attended this day-long workshop with Sr. Pat Quin would agree that this was an enriching event. We were encouraged to be attuned to the present and the sacred through a variety of reflections. We answered questions, journaled, sat in nature and some of us did artwork. Sometimes the remembrance of past sacred moments prompted gratitude and fired our love. When we shared a sense of God's absence, we held this with compassion for we knew that it had been part of all our stories. In solitude, we spent time alone and treasured our uniqueness. In communion, we ate together, listened, shared life-giving stories with each other and laughed. We went home blessed!

## OPENING TO LIFE'S MYSTERY

(A morning was given to exploring the depths of our experience by personal and group reflection on the poetry of Noel Davis.)

*Poetry speaks to the heart through the experience of another. The effort it takes to lay aside our own views and feelings and enter into someone else's vision helps us to prepare our hearts to be open to the wisdom of God.*

### A Tiny Seed

To be  
planted firmly in the ground  
of fellow creation

To lie as a seed  
in the love of the Divine

To be awakened in time  
Into another time

To be broken  
to grow deep and to grow high

To reach out and befriend the dark  
and the light

To believe from the heart of my being  
Yours are the Hands  
tending us all!



*Love finds a way: little meditations and reflections from its encounters, Thornleigh, N.S.W.: Shekinah Creative Ministry, 2000*

### SoulCollage Workshop (Clare Smith)

During May Sharyn Murfett introduced a group of participants to SoulCollage at Sychar. Using images from magazines and brochures, we were asked to have fun, become the artist and create a 'picture' on a card or cards. It was not necessary to have any artistic ability to participate in this activity; it was simply a way of expressing ourselves.

The cards created on the day were personal, beautiful and reflective of our individual stories or feelings on the day. We reflected and shared some of what had emerged for us personally. Soul Collage is an enlightening process which results in surprising wisdom and food for thought. While most participants may have had little knowledge of SoulCollage,

we enjoyed the day and each other's company. We were grateful for the opportunity Sharyn and Sychar gave us.

When participants were asked to describe the day in a word or two, the responses were: *illuminating, revealing, a lot to digest, connection, playful, gentle surprise, affirming, sharing, inciteful and creative.*

Perhaps these words best describe the process and the effect on participants.



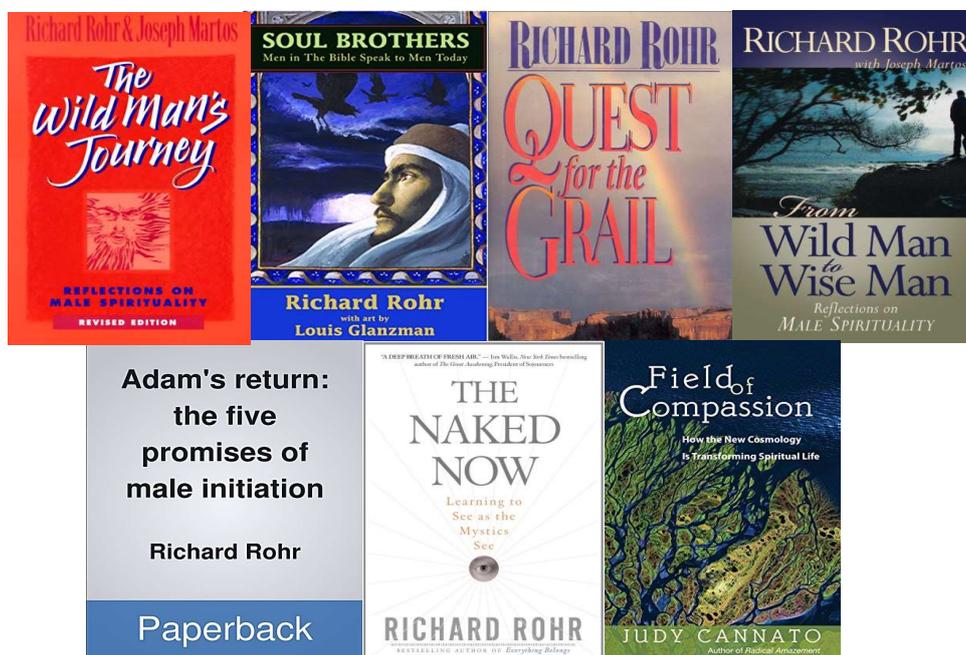
## Sychar Library

There is a richness of resources in the library, books as well as CDs and DVDs, that nurture spirituality, challenge our thinking and enable contemplation and meditation. You are encouraged to browse the shelves if you live in town or otherwise to make use of the rural libraries which are available to parishes on request. Books used fruitfully by groups during second term and recommended to you are:

- ***Field of Compassion*** by Judy Cannato
- ***The Naked Now*** by Richard Rohr.

There are also some books in the library written **specifically to help men better appreciate the giftedness of male spirituality**:

- ***From Wild Man to Wise Man: reflections on male spirituality*** (Richard Rohr) - preference for borrowing this book during third term will be given to those men opting for the sessions **Awakening to the Giftedness of Male Spirituality: living the male life that God has called us to**
- ***The Wild Man's Journey: reflections on male spirituality*** (Richard Rohr) – an earlier version of the book above.
- ***Adam's Return: the five promises of male initiation*** (Richard Rohr)
- ***Soul brothers: men in the Bible speak to men today*** (Richard Rohr)
- ***Quest for the Grail*** (Richard Rohr)



**Reflection (Ann McNelley)**

**Listening to Winter**

“The trees have shed their colorful autumn robes.  
Winter is raging through the dark, empty branches  
And I am listening.

I am listening to a beauty  
That sometimes remains unseen.

*I am listening ...*

I am listening to the season of contemplation,  
To the urgency of our world’s need for reflection.

I am listening to all that waits within the earth,  
To bulbs and seeds,  
To deep roots dreaming.

I am listening to the sacred, winter rest.

*I am listening ...*

I am listening to the kind permission of the season  
To rest more often,

To reflect more deeply,  
to pray without words.

I am listening to the sacrament of non-doing.

*I am listening ...*

I am listening to my dreams and inner visions,  
To the unknown wrapped in the mystery of my life,  
To tears trapped in underground streams of my being,  
To seeds watered daily by those tears.

*I am listening ...*

I am listening to winter  
handing over spring.

I am listening to the poetry of winter.

*I am listening.”*

(“The Heart’s Journey Through the Seasons – The Circle of Life”, pp 246-248. J. Rupp & M. Wiederkehr.)

**Meditation**

Find yourself a quiet place to sit.

Breathe deeply, remove any feelings  
of fear or sadness,

wrap yourself in the warmth of  
Eternal love.

Listen to the sound of winter.

What is it saying to you?

What do you need to shed to be  
ready for the new growth of Spring?”

