

*Presence, The Journal of Spiritual Directors International, vol 7, No 2.*

Reviewed by the Revd Neil Broadbent of the Sozein Trust.

The Editor passed this magazine to me at the recent Chichester conference of the CFPSS. It consists of 88 pages of A4 size in a card cover. Sixteen pages, including the inside back cover, are given to advertisements from famous universities, seminaries, retreat houses and organizations that work with big businesses, commerce and industry. American spiritual directors are perhaps better than this readership at promoting its activities.

'*Presence* is published three times a year, in February, June, and October. Grounded in Christian faith and the belief that God's active presence is revealed in human experience, it invites dialogue within our community and with other spiritual traditions. *Presence* recognizes and honours diversity and provides a forum for the exploration of present and future trends in spiritual direction, both as an art and a profession. By facilitating professional conversation among spiritual directors and those engaged in the formation of spiritual directors, the journal seeks to articulate the essential elements of our practice and training, to encourage accountability, and to develop clear ethical standards.'

This issue for June 2001 contains short features on the artists and poets whose work is published in it, readers responses, corrections, an introduction and reviews. The main articles cover three areas: spiritual direction, traditions and legacies and contexts and cultures. These are substantial pieces of work that require space and time to study and digest.

Formative Spirituality, Part II by *N. Graham Standish and Ellen McCormack* is sub-titled 'A Foundational and Integrative Approach to Spiritual Direction Part ii: The Field of Formation and Discerning Directives.' It is a distillation of an aspect of the science of spiritual formation as expounded by Adrian van Kaam, whose works are readily found in Roman Catholic bookshops. The focus is on exterior factors that affect a person's spiritual growth. It covers the ground that, say, a social worker might well till in their training – and non the worse for that – and has some helpful diagrams on the forces at work and the factors to be sought in guidance. The four C's that combined show consonance in a soul's life are *congenial* to our insides, *compassionate* in our relationships, *compatible* with our immediate situation and context and *competence* in our world and culture. Good stuff.

Spontaneous Images: Charms for Spiritual Growth by *Anne Schank* is a personal and helpful exposition on careful use of the 'pictures' that may arise in some folks heads as they hear another's story.

Geistliche Führung Im Alten Mönchtum (The Desert Fathers and Spiritual Direction) by *Regina Bäumer & Michael Plattig* is another solid and fruitful essay given in German and translated into English.

Tending to Spirituality in the Workplace by *Liz Budd Ellmann* is a missionary piece on how group spiritual direction may be incorporated into work/organizational life to everybody's profit. Her transformational workshop has been featured in *Vanity Fair, The Seattle Times* and *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

Circle of Hearts: Women's Spirituality Groups by *Patricia D. Brown* looks at Core Characteristics, Be-Attitudes and group leadership in women's groups. The Regional Churches Training Groups have been teaching this in the Church of England for over thirty years.

All in all this is a useful journal and a good read for all involved in the spiritual care of others. Your greatest difficulty may be in getting hold of a copy. Try the Revd Philip Roderick, vicar of Amersham-on-the-Hill who is the UK corresponding editor for *Presence*.