



Charitable Object: The promotion of spirituality by providing education, research and community service for the public benefit

Address: SpIRE, Milltown Park, Milltown Road, Dublin D06 W9Y7

Trustee Report and Financial Statements

Including

Table of Activities related to SpIRE purposes

For the year ended 31st December 2023

Spirituality Institute for Research and Education (SpIRE)

TRUSTEES AND OTHER INFORMATION

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Spirituality Institute for Research and Education (SpIRE) TRUSTEES AND OTHER INFORMATION

Trustees	Sr. Anne Marie Dixon Dr. Bernadette Flanagan Dr Ruth Harris Ms Andrea Hayes Dr. Michael O'Sullivan
Chairperson	Dr Bernadette Flanagan
Director and Treasurer	Dr Michael O'Sullivan
Secretary	Sr Anne-Marie Dixon
Charity Number (CHY)	22374
Charity Regulatory Authority Number (CRN)	20204471
Principal Address	SpIRE, Milltown Park, Milltown Road, Dublin D06 W9Y7, Ireland
Telephone	087.4140694
Website	www.spiritualityinstitute.ie
Accountants	Crowleys DFK Unlimited Company Chartered Accountants 16-17 College Green, Dublin D02 VO78 +353 1 679 0800 w: www.crowleysdfk.ie
Bankers	AIB, Ranelagh, 40/42 Ranelagh, Dublin 6, D06 VY5869/71 BIC: AIBKIE2D National sort code: 93-10-39 Account Type (SpIRE) (bank spelt it as SPIRE) IBAN: IE20AIBK93103926652017
Solicitor	Cormac Ó Ceallaigh & Co 388 North Circular Road, Phibsborough, Dublin 7

Spirituality Institute for Research and Education (SpIRE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
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Chairperson's Foreword 2023
Dr Bernadette Flanagan, PBVM
Chairperson Board of Trustees

We are filled with gratitude for another year of engagement with a multitude of individuals and groups who seek to bring the insights and practices of spiritual traditions into a great variety of daily life settings. In the past year, we were honoured to have an MA student explore the development of a toolkit of spiritual practices for carers. She developed this toolkit from her own experience of caring for her son who was born with autism and of looking after her mother who had developed dementia. The demands of caregiving can be exhausting and overwhelming, but the toolkit which was developed for sharing with other long-term care givers had been tried and tested for reining in stress and regaining a sense of balance, joy, and hope in life.

SpIRE appreciates the power of research to bring life-giving responses to some of the challenges which face society. In this context the research project of the MA participants each year is an essential contribution to positive change in society. The MA dissertations for each year are listed on the website <https://spiritualityinstitute.ie/research> and are available for review in the library. These dissertations are often at the frontiers of knowledge, such as exploring the implications of the new science of kindness for those in leadership roles today.

Through collaborating with SpirSoP www.wit.ie/spirsop, an accredited Research Centre for the study of spirituality at South East Technological University (SETU), it is possible for SpIRE to apply to a diversity of research funds which are available to forward critical research at this time. In particular, collaboration is being developed with the other universities of the European University of which SETU is a member (<https://www.eu-conexus.eu/en/>). In particular, collaboration is being established with a Spanish University which supports pilgrims with Motor Neurone Disease through improved wheelchair design. The eighth cohort of MA in Applied Spirituality students was admitted in September 2023.

Good governance continues to be a priority. Risk management has received particular attention in the past year. SpIRE is enormously grateful to the Irish Province of the Society of Jesus who provide a beautiful home for SpIRE activities in Milltown Park. The very generous sponsorship of the Presentation Sisters (North East Province), the Order of Discalced Carmelites, the All Hallows Trust, and the Jesuits (Irish Province) have provided the financial support to enable SpIRE to grow, to sponsor students in need, and to support innovative research.

I congratulate all who collaborate with SpIRE in successfully delivering MA and PhD studies. I express my gratitude to Kathleen Lyng CHF, to Margie Kennedy and to Lisa Power for their practical support of SpIRE's Vision and Mission through Library, Secretarial and hospitality volunteer services. I am very appreciative of the commitment of the Advisory Committee who support SpIRE's vision and mission in public events, publications and conferences. Ad multos annos!

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Director's Foreword 2023
Dr Michael O'Sullivan, SJ
Trustee / Director and Treasurer
of SpIRE

The new South East Technological University (SETU) consisting of Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) and the Institute of Technology Carlow, which came into being on May 1, 2022, continued to develop during 2023. MA and PhD studies in applied spirituality were now being offered at a technological university for the first time in Ireland. SpIRE was delighted to have played a major role in bringing these studies to the new university and provides a first-class specialist library in the discipline, in Dublin, where it hosts and supports such university studies. It was also delighted to have played an innovative role in the Spirituality in Society and Professions (SpirSoP) Research Group of SETU, which is the first group of its kind in an Irish university and which is led by the Chair of SpIRE. During 2023, also, the Chair, and a graduate of the MA in Applied Spirituality, who was appointed Honorary Research Fellow of SETU's School of Humanities to work with SpIRE, advanced the editing of what will be a ground-breaking book on research methods in contemplative and spirituality studies.

As a result of the creation of the new university, graduation day for the 2021-22 MA students was changed to 11 January 2023. On that day 10 students graduated with an SETU MA in Applied Spirituality, 4 with a Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Spirituality, and two with a Postgraduate Certificate. 4 more completed all the requirements to graduate, with the exception of the dissertation, which they deferred to 2023. Many of SpIRE's members are also SETU programme staff, and two of them, the Director and the Chair, along with the Head of Humanities, wrote the programme for WIT/SETU and were very involved in leading it through the approval process.

Feedback from the MA graduates is further evidence of the impact of SpIRE in developing and disseminating the value of spirituality study, research, and practice for lived experience and the professions. See <https://spiritualityinstitute.ie/ma-applied-spirituality/> and the 'Esteem for Work of SpIRE' page in this report (pp. 25-26).

SpIRE's website, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Soundcloud pages, and Mailchimp communications are key sources of dissemination of news about SpIRE's activities. See <https://spiritualityinstitute.ie> and the tabs and icons on the site.

The election of the Director as the VP/President-Elect of the global Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality (SSCS) in Denver, USA was a powerful acknowledgement of SpIRE's standing in the field as was his role as the lead organiser and Chair for the 7th biennial conference of the International Network for the Study of Spirituality (INSS - <https://spiritualitystudiesnetwork.org/CONFERENCE-2023>) which took place at SETU in May 2023. More information about this conference is available in the section about international collaborations further on in this report.

Spirituality Institute for Research and Education (SpIRE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT

for the year ended 31 December 2023

Behind much of SpIRE's visible work are its generous sponsors to whom we are very grateful. We honour all those who contributed so enthusiastically in different ways to the life and development of SpIRE during the past year, and look forward to another great year in 2023. Míle buíochas to all!

INTRODUCTION

The Spirituality Institute for Research and Education (SpIRE) was established in 2015 to serve the spiritual seeking of people. It emphasises the value of the academic study of spirituality in higher education, and the interface of spirituality with the professions and the issues that arise in a range of settings such as work, family, relationships, life-transitions, and concerns regarding human, societal, and planetary wellbeing.

In order to serve this global spiritual awakening and the journey of life in its spiritual dimension and connection, SpIRE aims to develop contemplative and critically informed spirituality guides, reflective practitioners, spirituality theoreticians, and skilled researchers. It gives effect to its aims through education, research, conferences, training, consultancy, publishing, leadership and networking.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CHARITY

The Charities Act 2009 lists as 'charitable purpose' the following four objectives:

- **The prevention or relief of poverty or economic hardship**
SpIRE provides bursaries to students in need.
- **The advancement of education**
SpIRE hosts and delivers an MA in Applied Spirituality, serves PhD students in spirituality, runs a specialist library, organises international conferences regarding spirituality studies, and members serve on various international educational boards in the field of spirituality studies.
- **The advancement of religion**
SpIRE provides public lectures on Spirituality & the Professions and spiritual guidance.
- **Any other activity that is of benefit to the community**
SpIRE supports publication of research findings in the field of spirituality studies and provides a consultancy service.

Spirituality Institute for Research and Education (SpIRE) TRUSTEES' REPORT for the year ended 31 December 2023

Mission:

The promotion of spirituality by providing education, research and community service for the public benefit at Milltown Park, Milltown Road, Dublin D06 W9Y7, Ireland.



DELIVERY OF MA in APPLIED SPIRITUALITY

The MA in Applied Spirituality, now a programme of the South East Technological University (SETU), Ireland, takes place in Milltown Park, Milltown Road, Dublin D06 W9Y7, Ireland (image above). It gained accreditation in 2016 from what was then the Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) making it the first time in Ireland for an Institute of Technology to accredit a postgraduate programme in applied spirituality. The first version of the programme ran at Milltown Institute, Dublin from 2001 (NCEA, HETAC, NUI). In those years it was a 2-year programme. The first year was a HDip year and was mandatory for progression to the MA. In 2010 the programme was rewritten as a one-year programme in order to become a DCU award at All Hallows College (DCU).

SpIRE hosts and supports the programme which has the unique benefit of the internationally-leading SpIRE library for applied spirituality studies. The MA is also served by a very experienced and distinguished team of lecturers, research supervisors, and spiritual accompaniers.

The photo below shows the 2023-24 class with the programme leadership team: Noelia (Programme Leader), Michael (Programme Director/Leader from 2005-2021), and Bernadette (first Programme Director in 2001), and the Library Resource Coordinator, Kathleen. Class participants come from South Korea, Myanmar, Nigeria/UK, UK, and Ireland.

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ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH / PUBLICATIONS

Initiatives taken by members of SpIRE to advance research and publications in the field of the academic study of applied spirituality during 2023 included:

- Encouraging and supporting a graduate of the MA in Applied Spirituality to apply for an **SETU PhD scholarship** to study the role of inner development goals in relation to the UN's sustainability development goals. The graduate was successful in her application. The overall purpose of this scholarship programme is to promote high quality, innovative research and the provision of research and development training for highly skilled graduates leading to the award of a PhD, and to support the increase in PhD numbers at SETU, in line with national priorities.
- Another graduate of the MA in Applied Spirituality, who also holds a PhD in a different discipline, gave a paper at the Society for Education and Research international conference on "**Being Spiritual While Doing Research**" held in Germany and his paper was well received. The photo below is of the participants at the conference.

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SpIRE continued its collaboration with and leadership in developing a fully accredited Research Group for the study of Spirituality in Society and the Professions (SpirSoP) at South East Technological University (SETU).

- The second year of the **spirituality studies book club**, led by the Director, with participants from the SpirSoP research group took place in 2023. The group consists of faculty and PhD spirituality students of SETU who avail of the SpIRE library, and members of SpIRE. The book club was one of the outcomes of a day of reflection of the SpirSoP research group. It was formed to study writings about spirituality and to give members the opportunity to learn more about each other's perspectives in this field of study. The group first studied *Critical Reflection, Spirituality, and Professional Practice* by Dr Cheryl Hunt, Exeter University and

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during 2023 *Religion around Virginia Woolf* by Prof Stephanie Paulsell of Harvard University. Both Dr Hunt and Prof Paulsell held sessions with the group. The book being studied in 2023-24 is *The Blue Sapphire of the Mind – Notes for a Contemplative Ecology* by Doug Christie.

- The Chair was invited to take part in an event in Enniscorthy in March to mark the **launch of the new Wexford-Pembrokeshire Pilgrim Way**. This initiative will link Ferns in North Wexford with St Davids in Pembrokeshire and is part of the wider EU funded Ancient Connections project linking these two regions through arts, heritage and tourism. Ancient Connections is leading a free symposium to celebrate pilgrimage and address three key questions: how do you create a successful pilgrim route; what's in it for all of us; and is there a difference between a *tourist* and a *pilgrim*? The photo shows leaders in this initiative and the SpIRE Chair is third from the left.



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- During the year Dr Susan Flynn, Head of the Dept of Arts, SETU, visited where SpIRE is located in Dublin.
L-R: Michael (Director), Bernadette (Chair), Susan, Noelia (MA Programme Leader), Kathleen (Librarian). The second photo is of the MA graduation class in 2023 with MA faculty.

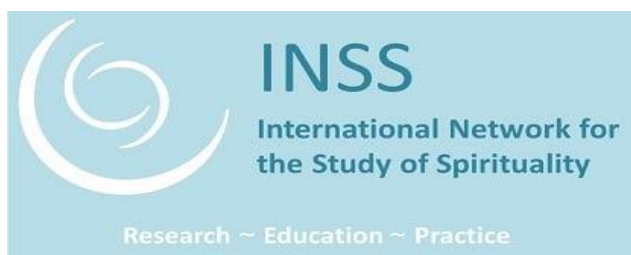


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INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC COLLABORATIONS

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR THE STUDY OF SPIRITUALITY (INSS)

www.spiritualitystudiesnetwork.org



INSS International Conference on ‘Spirituality, Critical Reflection, and Professional Practice in an Uncertain World’, May 2023

The Director of SpIRE, who is also a member of the Executive Committee of the International Network for the Study of Spirituality (INSS) and the Links Coordinator of INSS with other organisations engaged in spirituality studies around the world, was the lead organiser and Chair of the 7th biennial international conference of INSS (formerly the British Association for the Study of Spirituality). The title of the conference was ‘Spirituality, Critical Reflection, and Professional Practice in an Uncertain World’ and it took place in the South East Technological University, Waterford, Ireland from May 16-18.

It was the first time for the biennial conference to be held outside the UK and it received great support from staff in catering services, educational services, and estates at SETU. Planning for the conference began in January of 2022. SpIRE was the partner organisation for the conference, which it supported in various ways. The conference was the most significant conference on spirituality studies to ever take place in Ireland. (See <https://spiritualitystudiesnetwork.org/CONFERENCE-2023>).

160 delegates came from 25 countries and 5 continents. 5 keynotes and 80 parallel papers were delivered. As well as the Director of SpIRE, the Chair of SpIRE, and the Programme Leader of the MA in Applied Spirituality were members of the Academic Committee that reviewed the abstracts. The Director, who also serves on the Editorial Board of INSS’ prestigious *Journal for the Study of Spirituality*, gave one of the keynotes at the conference (see photo below). As well as presenting at the conference, the Chair, other members of SpIRE, and the PhD students that SpIRE works with gave presentations and chaired sessions. An electronic copy of the conference booklet with abstracts of all the presentations, etc. is available from the Director of SpIRE. The first photo below shows the Director giving his keynote and the second photo is of the SpirSoP group with the Head of Humanities and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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A reception was held during the conference to celebrate Dr Cheryl Hunt's more than 12 years as Founding Editor in Chief of the *Journal for the Study of Spirituality* (JSS), a leading international journal for the study of spirituality, and to welcome the new Co-Editors in chief, Prof Linda Ross and Prof Wilf McSherry. The photo below shows the Editorial Board of JSS which includes the Director and Chair of SpIRE.



Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality (SSCS)

The global Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality (SSCS) exists to promote research and dialogue within the community of persons interested in the field of spirituality. The SSCS is ecumenical and interdisciplinary, encouraging the application of diverse critical approaches to the study of spirituality. The membership of the SSCS is drawn from universities, seminaries, and higher education colleges in various countries, especially the United States. The Chair of SpIRE is a past-president of the Society and was the first ever Irish president. She and the Director previously served on the Society's Governing Board. In November, in San Diego, the latter, having been Vice-President and President-Elect for the previous year, became the first Jesuit, first Irish male, and third European to be elected as President by his peers in the more than thirty years of the Society's history (See <https://spiritualityinstitute.ie/new-leader-of-christian-spirituality/>). He had also previously served on the Steering Committee of the Christian Spirituality Group of the American Academy of Religion, the Promotions Committee of the Society, the International Relations Committee of the Society, of which he is a founder, and he continues to serve on the Editorial Board of the Society's journal, *Spiritus*, a world leading academic journal for the study of Christian spirituality.

SSCS Board of Directors in San Antonio, Texas, 19 Nov 2023



Dr Michael O'Sullivan, SJ, from Ireland (top centre), presiding.

L-R: Dr Leonard McMahon, Dr Bo Karen Lee (Past President), Dr Liza Anderson, Dr August Higgins, Dr Amy Maxey, Dr Shannon McAlister (VP), Michael (President), Dr Francis McAloon,

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SJ, Dr Noelia Molina, Dr Andre Brouillette, SJ, Dr Paul Houston Blankenship-Lai, Dr Tim Geoffrion, Dr Rachel Wheeler (Secretary/Treasurer); + absent from the photo: Dr Trey Clark.

- In San Antonio, USA, in November, immediately preceding the American Academy of Religion (AAR) and the events of the SSCS which take place at AAR, a special conference was held at Oblate School of Theology to honour **Sandra Schneiders**, perhaps the most significant figure in the development of Christian Spirituality as an academic discipline. The photo below shows Sandra (centre) with the Director (L-R 4; incoming President of SSCS) and the Chair of SpIRE (L-R 1; past President of SSCS), and the 3 PhD students, Liz, Diane, and Tara, who work with SpIRE and the South East Technological University SETU). For information about the dissertations in progress of Liz, Diane, and Tara, see under the Research tab on the SpIRE website.



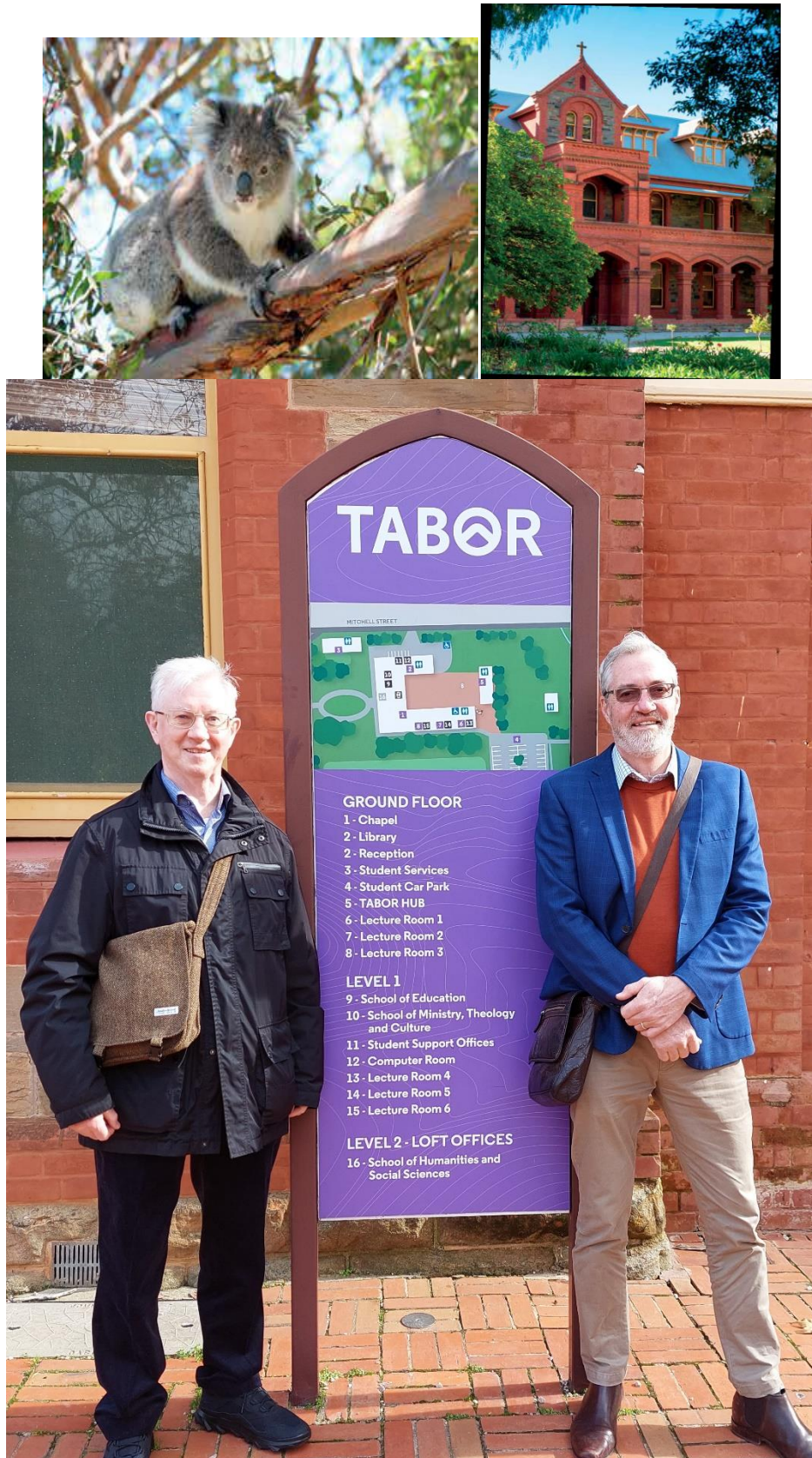
- An event in June by **Companions for the Journey**, an initiative of the Emerging Scholars Group of the SSCS, attracted 55 participants, 11 of whom were graduates of our MA in Applied Spirituality. The Companions for the Journey provides a space that is meant to facilitate contemplation, companionship, and professional development among Emerging Scholars and Practitioners.

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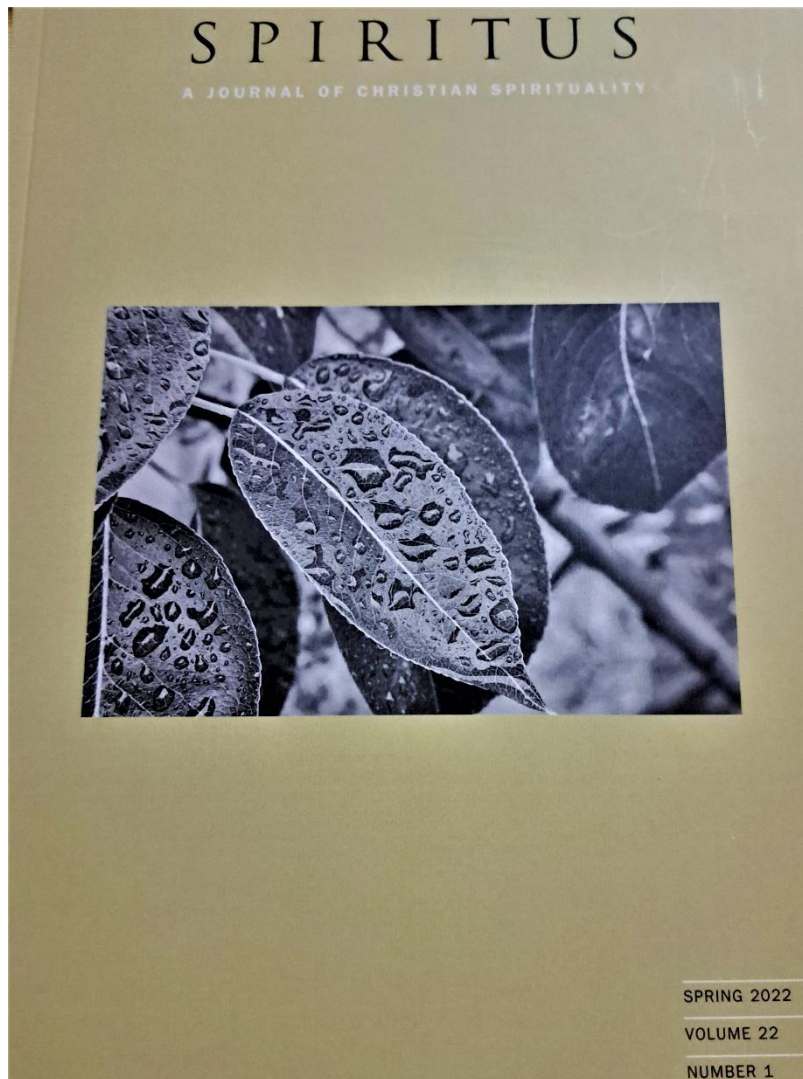
- The photo above was taken after the Director became **President of SSCS**. Noelia Molina, the MA in Applied Spirituality Programme Leader in Ireland (far right) joins the new President, the Chair of SpIRE, and the 3 PhD candidates who also travelled from Ireland.
- SSCS held its **fourth international conference outside North America at Tabor College, Adelaide, Australia Conference** in July 2023. The title of the Conference was 'Christian Spirituality as a Pathway for the Modern Seeker'. The Director as Vice President of SSCS at the time addressed the participants and also gave a paper. The Chair also gave a paper. The photo below shows the Director with the lead organiser and Chair of the conference, Dr Phil Daughtry.

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- The Director of SpIRE is a member of the Editorial Board of *Spiritus*, the SSCS journal. The journal is published bi-annually, and is the leading international journal of its kind.



The Spirituality Association of South Africa (SPIRASA), a venture of the Centre for Spirituality Studies, promotes the academic study and practice of spirituality.
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/spirasa.org>

During 2023 the Director continued as a Research Fellow of the University of the Free State of South Africa where SPIRASA is based.

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The Center for Contemplative Leadership, Princeton Theological Seminary, USA



Prof Bo Karen Lee, founding director, in photo.

The Center for Contemplative Leadership (CCL) in the US believes in the robust integration of deep spiritual roots with the wider work of liberative justice in the world. SpIRE has sponsored and promoted a few of CCL's activities and members of SpIRE have participated in them. The most recent event was a webinar with Prof Bernard McGinn, one of the most distinguished scholars in the field of Christian spirituality studies. The webinar was about his new book on Mysticism on August 1, 2023. About 200 attended and 70+ were participants from the SpIRE database;

other participants were also likely to have taken part as a result of advertising about the event on SpIRE's social media, which attracted very many hundreds of views.

Website



The SpIRE website (<https://spiritualityinstitute.ie>), of which the Director is the administrator, gives helpful information about some of SpIRE's activity and resources and is a key resource for disseminating SpIRE's influence in the national and international field of spirituality studies and practice. The resources include a YouTube channel, videos, podcasts, Facebook, twitter, and LinkedIn icons, as well as the online catalogue of its specialist

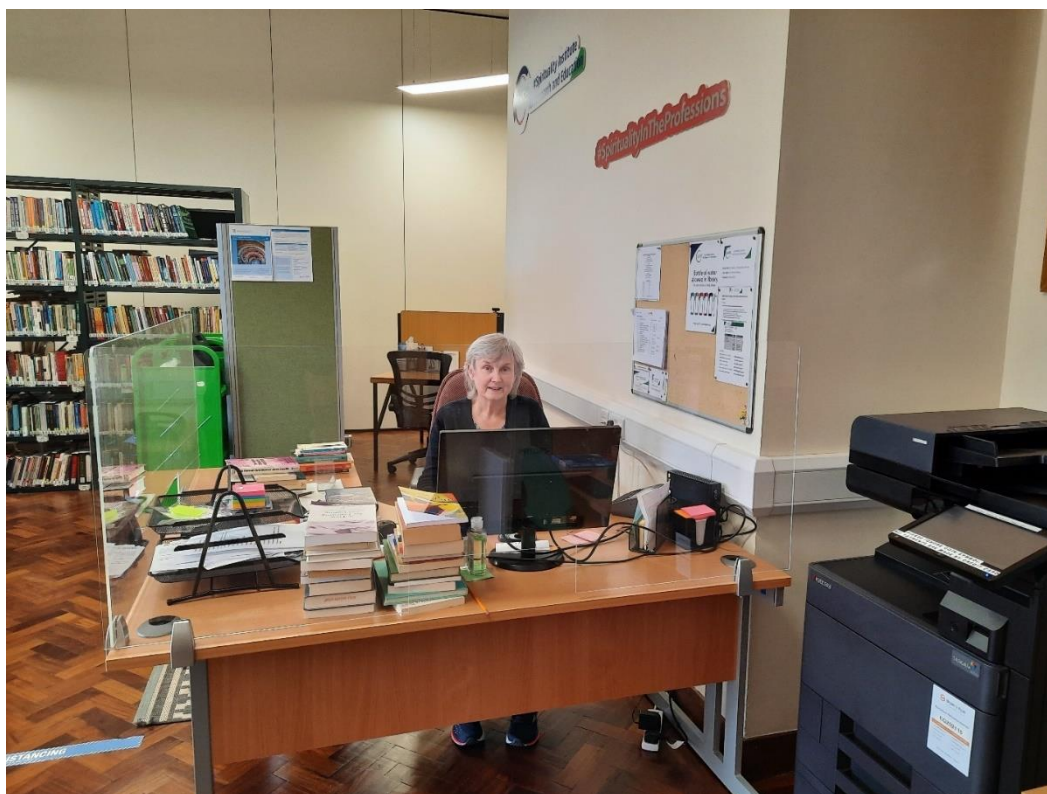
library.

DEVELOPMENT OF SpIRE ACADEMIC LIBRARY

During 2023 the SpIRE Library, which was created in 2019, continued to update its holdings. The Chair, Bernadette, and the Library Coordinator, Kathleen Lyng, also continued the work of creating a spirituality cataloguing system for the whole collection. The direct weblink to the online catalogue is <https://spirelibrary.spiritualityinstitute.ie/> Prof David Perrin from Canada, a former President of the international Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality visited the library during the year to do research for his forthcoming book,

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SpIRE's specialist library service is managed by a volunteer graduate of the MA in Applied Spirituality programme, Sr Kathleen Lyng. She is a Holy Faith sister and former Principal of St Brigid's primary school, Greystones, Co. Wicklow.



LIBRARY RESOURCES at SpIRE

The Library's collection is the premier collection in Europe of over 9,000 books and associated journals for the study of contemporary and applied spiritualities. This collection has been carefully built over the past 30 years primarily through the substantial initial book donation of the Irish Jesuits, with a significant contribution by the Irish Vincentians to the collection after the MA in Applied Spirituality and PhD studies in spirituality ceased at All Hallows College when the College was sold to DCU. Today a modest per capita from South East Technological University for registered students of the MA in Applied Spirituality and the exceptionally generous annual donation of the Presentation Sisters, North East Province enable the stocks to grow in line with the ever-new fields of research in spirituality which are developing: e.g., trauma-informed spirituality, spiritual needs of neurodiverse persons, and kindness as a spiritual practice

Fr Tom Layden, SJ chairs the library board: <https://spiritualityinstitute.ie/spire-library/>

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The Library Project Coordinator provides MA and PhD students and designated library users with an introduction, orientation, and support at the following times:

OPENING HOURS

- **WEEK ONE of the MA in September:** 8.30-8.55am; 10.50-11.05am; 1.00 – 1.55pm; 15.50-16.05
- Library Assistance during the other weeks when MA modules are offered:
 - **Wed:** 10-11am; 11.30-12.30; 2 – 4pm
- **Thurs & Fri:** 8.30-8.55am; 10.50-11.05am; 1.00-2.10pm; 4.05-4.15; 5.00-5.30pm;
 - and 5.30-6.30 on Friday
- **Sat:** 8.30-8.55am; 10.50-11.05am; 1.00-2.10pm; 4.05-4.15pm
- Library Assistance in Weeks when MA modules are not offered:
 - **Tues, Wed, Thurs:** 10-11am; 11.30-13.00; 2.00-4.00pm

VOLUNTEERING AT SpIRE

Margie Kennedy and Lisa Power are graduates of the MA in Applied Spirituality. Margie is the volunteer Secretary to the Board of Trustees and Lisa is the volunteer Hospitality Coordinator.



Margie



Lisa



Kathleen

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FINANCIAL REVIEW

INCOME - WHERE WE GET OUR INCOME

Income received in 2023 was €101,800 and all of it was in the form of donations. SpIRE is very grateful for the great generosity of the Presentation Sisters North East Ireland, the Irish Jesuits, the Discalced Carmelite Anglo-Irish Province, and All Hallows Trust.



SpIRE acknowledge the very generous donation by the Presentation Sisters North East Ireland in 2023 which supports the unique specialist SpIRE library and other projects. The Chair of SpIRE is a Presentation sister.



SpIRE acknowledges the financial and non-financial support of the Irish Jesuit Province. SpIRE's activities, including its unique library, are based at the Jesuit Centre, Milltown Park, Dublin. The Director of SpIRE is a Jesuit priest.



SpIRE acknowledges the generous annual donation by the Anglo-Irish Province Discalced Carmelite Order which was critical in getting SpIRE underway financially at the beginning.



SpIRE acknowledges the generous bursaries awarded to SpIRE by All Hallows Trust to sponsor two students to do MA studies in applied spirituality in each of the following years: 2022/2023, 2023/24, and 2024/2025.

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EXPENDITURE - HOW WE SPEND OUR INCOME

Expenditure in 2023 totalled €77,529 of which:

Library equipment costs were €8,871;

Library expenses (books and journals) were €18,673;

Catering costs were €2,702;

Sponsorship for MA (and PhD) students was €21,524;

International Book Project was €9,808

STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES of SpIRE

1. Preserve and develop a specialist library collection for spirituality studies at Milltown Park.
2. Communicate effectively by implementing an effective use of social media platforms, a website, and an online newsletter;
3. Ensure planning, monitoring, and evaluation by having systems in place to strengthen programme, fiscal, and operations management;
4. Mobilize the funds in support of these strategic priorities through collaboration with benefactors and receipt of entrance fees for SpIRE events.

Some SpIRE Activities 2023¹

DATE	TOPIC
January	MA in Applied Spirituality Research Training Advertising for the 2023 international conference of the International Network for the Study of Spirituality conference at South East Technological University (SETU), a conference for which SpIRE was a partner.
Feb	SpirSoP and SpIRE Reading Club series of seminars continued Began advertising for the 2023 conference of the international Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality (SSCS) in Australia for which SpIRE was an international associate and at which the Chair gave a paper and the Director gave an address as Vice President/President Elect of SSCS, and also a paper.

¹ The COVID-19 virus continued to restrict our ability to run events and we had to adjust what we intended to do accordingly. This table shows what did take place in 2022.

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	Advertised and recruited for 2 All Hallows Trust MA in Applied Spirituality scholarships
March	SpIRE continued its collaboration in the organising of the 7 th biennial INSS international conference on 'Spirituality, Critical Reflection, and Professional Practice in an Uncertain World', at SETU, Waterford,
April	As immediately above and also preparations for the conference in Australia
May	The conference referred to above took place at SETU, Waterford Campus. It turned out to be the most significant conference on spirituality studies ever held in Ireland. 160 delegates from 25 countries participated. The Director was the lead organiser, and Conference Chair, and gave one of the keynotes. The change of Editor of <i>Journal for the Study of Spirituality</i> was also marked. Both the Director and Chair serve on the Editorial Board. The journal is one of the leading international journals for the study of spirituality.
June	Library stock-taking
July	Conference in Australia where the Director and Chair gave papers and enhanced the networking with SpIRE
September	8 th Intake to MA in Applied Spirituality in collaboration with SETU.
November	<p>Participation by the Director and the Chair of SpIRE and the MA Programme Leader at the annual meeting of the global Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality (SSCS) - in conjunction with the American Academy of Religion (AAR) – in San Antonio. USA.</p> <p>The Director was ratified as the President of the Society, which is the premier international society of its kind; the MA Programme Leader serves on the Board of Directors of SSCS; the Chair serves on the Steering Committee of the Christian Spirituality Study Group (CSU) of the AAR.</p>

ESTEEM for the Work of SpIRE

Some testimonials from graduates about the 2022-23 MA in Applied Spirituality degree

Alan

What a wonderful course and we are so blessed to have it available here in Ireland. As a practitioner of indigenous Irish Spirituality and an interfaith minister I was welcomed with openness and interest and all aspects of the course; staff, resources, lectures, curriculum, support, duty of care etc. far exceeded any expectations that I had. The course leaders embody an essence of Inter-spirituality that is so welcome and I would recommend the course

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to all who have that deep calling to explore their own spirituality and the ways in which we can bring spirituality in to our communities and the world to support others on their journey.

Jurica

When I enrolled in the MA in Applied Spirituality programme, I had very little idea about what to expect. Very quickly, however, I realized I found 'it' - that what my soul was searching for. It became clear I am among 'seekers' who came very far on their journeys and who can show me the way. Seekers with whom I can share my thirst for deep discussions, longing to open and explore my heart, and willingness to expand my consciousness. The programme was transformative beyond all my expectations as well as a profound academic outing thanks to extraordinary lecturers who are an authentic embodiment of their teachings, classmates who provided nothing but beautiful nurturing and compassionate energy, and incredible support of the staff throughout the entire programme and beyond.

Brid

I deeply enjoyed every moment of this powerful and amazing course with the thought-provoking subjects presented with warmth, stirring deep curiosity by Bernadette, Noelia and Michael and other tutors. The sacred listening spaces and often challenging assignments led me on an inspiring and enriching soul journey reconnecting me with my own spirit and that of the universe.

Susan

have rested in the presence of God while attending the MA in Applied Spirituality. The unfolding story of grace in action; in the lectures, in the library, in the coffee room, outside on benches and steps has been beautiful to witness and participate in. The human beings who inhabited the space with me are gracious, loving and merciful. I thank God that his liminal year for me was spent with such characters.

Henry

The MA journey has been thought-provoking and intriguing. It challenged my comfort zone and conformism to the institutional Church. It has been life integrating and transforming and arduous at the same time. It gave me opportunities for life introspection, rousing consciousness, and enhancing the authentic self and developed many skills and ways as a reflective practitioner, opening to the world and Creation.

The MA facilitated my waking up to the awareness of my true potential and the blindness of my conditioning, fears, desires, attachments, beliefs, and images of God. The renewed understanding of spirituality helped me find my voice and sense of authentic self-authoring as a missionary priest of African origin. It expanded my experience of daily life to include a global communion with everything that exists and to embrace all activity with conscious presence through being present to self, to Holy Mystery, to others and the world.

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DATA PROTECTION at SpIRE

Scope of Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures which have been developed cover both personal details and sensitive data, held in relation to data subjects, by SpIRE. The policy applies equally to personal data held in manual and automated form.

All Personal Details and Sensitive Personal Data are treated with equal care by SpIRE. Both categories are equally respected as Personal Data in SpIRE's policies and procedures, unless specifically stated otherwise.

This Handbook of Policies and Procedures provides for the following:

- I. A Subject Access Request procedure
- II. The Data Retention and Destruction Policy
- III. A Data Loss Notification procedure
- IV. A sample Fair Processing Notice (for conferences and public events)
- V. A matrix of data categories, with reference to the appropriate data retention period for each category

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE of SpIRE

SpIRE is a Trust. Andrea Hayes became the fifth trustee of SpIRE in December 2023. The Trustees are ultimately responsible for the policies, activities and assets of the charity. They meet at required times to review developments and make decisions. The Trustees are:

Bernadette Flanagan Michael O'Sullivan Anne Marie Dixon



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Ruth Harris



Andrea Hayes



Dr Bernadette Flanagan, PBVM

Bernadette Flanagan, Chair and co-founder of SpIRE, completed her PhD in Humanities (Spirituality) at the Milltown Institute, Dublin. Since that time she has become an Associate Professor in Spirituality and led the development of MA and professional doctoral studies in spirituality in Ireland. She has consulted to a wide range of organisations in Ireland and overseas on dimensions of spiritual education, spiritual care and spiritual practice in such fields as healthcare, education, relational wellbeing, aging; addiction and leadership.

Side by side with her expanding disciplinary expertise, Bernadette has had a distinguished career as a manager and leader in third and fourth level education in Ireland. She has held such roles as President (Acting), Deputy President, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Registrar, Head of Department and Director of Research. In these roles she has developed quality systems, administration systems, strategic plans, implementation plans, teaching & learning strategies and institution-wide research activities. She has had responsibility for line managing staff and negotiating partnerships, as well as validation and accreditation for more than 30 programmes ~ NFQ LEVELS 6 – 10 ~ with various agencies (NCEA / HETAC, NUI, CCE, MIE, UW, DCU). Her expertise has been called on by a wide diversity of academic bodies in Ireland.

Having served on the Governing Board of the prestigious global Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality and the Nominations Committee of the Society she was elected the first Irish President of that Society in November 2017. She is also a member of the advisory board of *The Way* journal.

Email: bflanagan@spiritualityinstitute.ie

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Bernadette-Flanagan/e/B00H2VGQ7Q>

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1688-6569>

Rev Dr Michael O'Sullivan, SJ

Michael O'Sullivan is the Co-Founder and Director of the Spirituality Institute for Research and Education in Ireland (SpIRE) and of the Spiritual Capital Ireland Centre which SpIRE superseded. He is a Research Fellow at the University of the Free State, South Africa, President of the global Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality (SSCS), and a member of the Executive Committee of the International Network for the Study of Spirituality (INSS) and its Links Coordinator with organisations engaged in spirituality studies across the world. He is a

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member of the Editorial Board of both *Journal for the Study of Spirituality* and *Spiritus*, two of the leading international journals for the study of spirituality.

He has degrees in Social Science and Philosophy, and four degrees in theology up to PhD level, as well as training and experience in spiritual accompaniment, counselling, and community development. He is Emeritus Senior Lecturer at South East Technological University (SETU) and was the Programme Director/Leader of the MA in Applied Spirituality in three different higher education institutions over a period of 16 years. He was also during some of those years Programme Director of the Higher Diploma in Applied Spirituality at Milltown Institute (NUI) and Head of Theological Studies and of the Depts of Systematic Theology and Moral Theology at All Hallows College (DCU).

Having worked originally as a specialist in liberation theology and feminist theology, he has dedicated himself since the early years of this millennium to the development of spirituality as an applied academic discipline. He has served as a member of the Governing Board, the Promotions Committee, founding member of the International Relations Committee, and Vice-President of the global Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality (SSCS). He has also served on the Steering Committee of the Christian Spirituality Study Group of the American Academy of Religion and on the Leadership Board of the Centre for the Academic Study of Christian Spirituality at the University of Zurich.

Professor Arthur Holder's citation is one of many that shows his standing in this field of applied academic study and practice:

Dr. Michael O'Sullivan, SJ has established himself as a leading figure in the academic field of Christian Spirituality. Through his teaching, writing, public speaking, and administrative service he has inspired colleagues and students not only in Ireland but throughout the world. Tireless in his efforts to build networks of collaboration among people of different nationalities, denominations, and scholarly disciplines.

(Professor Arthur Holder, Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and John Dillenberger Professor of Christian Spirituality, Graduate Theological Union Berkeley, CA; and past President of the international Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality and former Co-Chair of the Steering Committee of the Christian Spirituality Study Group of the American Academy of Religion).

E-mail: spiremos@gmail.com

Skype: [mfos1151](https://www.skype.com/user/mfos1151)

Linkedin: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/michaelfosullivan1>

ORCID: orcid.org/0000-0003-0215-9536

YouTube: 'A Jesuit with the People' (2018); 'Authentic Interiority and the Study of Spirituality' (2018); 'Spiritual Capital' (2014)

Sr Anne Marie Dixon, OSU

Anne-Marie Dixon has a background in theology, sociology, education, counselling, and spiritual guidance. Having taught in the Voluntary and Community Sectors at Second Level she went on to become a Lecturer in the Pastoral Department and Department of Spirituality,

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Milltown Institute (National University of Ireland), and a Visiting Lecturer in the Department of Spirituality, All Hallows College (Dublin City University). At All Hallows College she was a member of the MA in Applied Spirituality Board, delivered MA modules on spiritual autobiography, awareness and attentiveness skills, and integration process, and supervised MA dissertations. She continues in some of these roles for the South East Technological University in Applied Spirituality that SpIRE hosts and supports in Dublin. She is an accredited psychotherapist (MIAHIP, MIACP, Reg. ICP) working in private practice. She is also an accredited cross professional supervisor, an MIACP accredited supervisor, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Supervisors Association of Ireland (SAI). She was a member until 2020 of the Board of Directors of the All Ireland Spiritual Guidance Association (AISGA). An Ursuline Sister, Anne Marie is a member of the Congregation's Leadership team,

Gmail: dixonannemarieosu@gmail.com

Skype: [anne-mariedixon](#)

Dr Ruth Harris

Ruth Harris studied languages and literature at UCC and at the University of Lille (France) and has a PhD in Psycholinguistics from the School of Education in TCD. She completed the MA in Applied Spirituality at the Milltown Institute in 2007 undertaking a research project on the topic of bereavement following suicide which was later published as a chapter in *Spiritual Capital* (O'Sullivan & Flanagan, 2012). She delivered a number of guest lectures and workshops at the Milltown Institute in subsequent years.

Ruth is a senior lecturer at TU Dublin in the School of Humanities and specialises in the areas of Applied Linguistics, Intercultural Communication, Diversity and Equality, and Research Methods. Her research interests include Linguistic and Cultural Diversity, Migrant Integration, Transformative Learning and Contemplative Pedagogies. She has been involved in special interest groups on assessment in third level education, including most recently in Authentic Assessment, and acted as external examiner on the MA in Applied Spirituality from 2017 to 2020.

Ruth sees opportunities for integrating her studies in spirituality with her academic work, in particular in conveying the dignity of the human person, the importance of social justice, and the need to adopt anti-racist approaches and policies in contemporary Irish society. She sees contemplative pedagogies as a means to enable students to connect more deeply with themselves and their learning, to question their assumptions and in the process uncover issues of unconscious bias and become more empathetic and inclusive. She also considers that undertaking research in Humanities can be an opportunity for Transformative Learning for students and is currently investigating the role of the supervisor in this process.

Email: Ruth.Harris@tudublin.ie

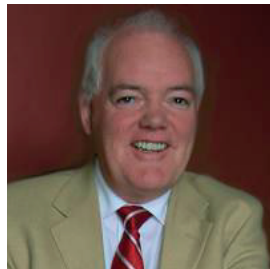
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Andrea Hayes

Andrea Hayes is *Irish Times* and *Sunday Times* best-selling author. She is also a well-known Irish presenter whose TV and radio work include *Fota into the Wild*, *Dog Tales*, *Coming Home for Christmas*, *Animal A&E* and *Sunshine Meets*. Andrea holds an MA in Applied Spirituality, is a Clinical Hypnotherapist, Bethany grief facilitator, Spiritual Director and is currently on the teaching team for Anamcharadas (<https://anamcharadastraining.com/>)

Email: andreahayesroro@yahoo.ie

The operational aspects of delivering the Strategic Plan are supported by a voluntary Advisory Committee. The members of the Advisory Committee are:



Prof Michael Howlett

Michael Howlett has a doctorate in Theology, and a PhD in English. He is Professor Emeritus and retired Head of Department of Applied Arts at South East Technological University, Waterford, Ireland, where he also lectured in Theology and Religious Studies, and offered the Interdisciplinary Seminars. His research interests lie in the interacting relationships between literature, society, spirituality and religion, and he has published in Irish and European theological journals. As well as serving on the SpIRE Advisory Group he is a member of the Social Justice Ireland board and its Academic Advisory committee. Michael's interest in spirituality developed when he was working with youth services and parish renewal more than thirty years ago. Following this experience, he began a study of Patrick Kavanagh for his theology doctorate in which he focused on the Human Being in Kavanagh's poetry. This work led him to appreciate the fundamental spiritual dimension of human beings, a conviction which was further strengthened in a doctoral study of James Joyce's writings. For Michael, spirituality is a core value and starting point and lies at the heart of religion and of pastoral and social renewal.

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Dr Noelia Molin

Noelia Molina is a psychotherapist, lecturer and researcher. Her primary background was in Biomedical Sciences and Molecular Pathology. She worked for 17 years as a Medical Scientist (accredited by The Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine in Dublin) in various laboratory disciplines in Dublin. Having worked in private practice as an accredited psychotherapist (NAPCP) for 13 years, she has specialised in maternal mental health and had run therapeutic maternal groups.

She has been engaged in spirituality studies for more than a decade now. Having studied for an Adult Diploma and a Higher Diploma in Spirituality at the Milltown Institute, she went on to complete a PhD in Spirituality at All Hallows College, Dublin City University, where she investigated the transition to motherhood as spiritual process. Her book based on her dissertation has been published by Routledge. At All Hallows College (Dublin City University) she delivered MA modules in Contemplative Psychology and Spiritual Autobiography. In August 2021 she became Programme Leader of the MA in Applied Spirituality which is accredited by the South East Technological University (SETU) and hosted and supported by the Spirituality Institute for Research and Education (SpIRE) in Dublin. She teaches spiritual autobiography, awareness and attentiveness skills, spiritual accompaniment process, spiritual accompaniment literature, and also supervises MA dissertations. She has wide experience giving workshops in spirituality and researching spiritual and religious issues in Ireland.



Dr Noel Keating

Noel was awarded a doctorate for his research into the child's experience of meditation and his paper "Children's Spirituality and the Practice of Meditation in Irish Primary Schools" was published in the *International Journal for Children's Spirituality* in December 2016. His book *Meditation with Children: A Resource for Teachers and Parents* was published by VERITAS in

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December 2017. He progressed to the PhD after successfully completing the taught Masters in Applied Christian Spirituality at All Hallows College, Dublin City University, with a research interest in meditation with children, particularly how children experience its spiritual fruits.

Noel is voluntary National Coordinator for Christian Meditation in Ireland and he coordinates their *Meditation with Children Project*, involving 35,000 children who meditate as a whole-school practice in over 150 primary schools across Ireland. He offers in-service, free of charge, to school staffs who are interested in introducing meditation to children. Noel also works with teachers at second-level and lecturers at third-level who are interested in introducing teenagers and young adults to the practice of meditation.

He spent 40 years in the education sector in Ireland as a second-level teacher and principal and as Education Officer with the Presentation Sisters in Ireland. He is author of *Mission Integrity: Having Faith in Our Schools*, which explores how trustees and schools may reflect together on the challenge of remaining faithful to their vision and mission. His most recent book is *Meditation with Children – A Resource for Teachers and Parents*. Noel and Alana Levandoski in Canada have created a CD of music, song, and reflections inspired by the book.



Dr Bernadette Masterson

Bernadette Masterson obtained her PhD in Medical Humanities from All Hallows College, Dublin City University in 2016. Her chosen topic, spiritual awakening in chronic illness, has been close to her heart for many years and her research, utilising a psycho-spiritual approach, uniquely highlights ways in which chronic illness may foster opportunities for ongoing awakening to deeper levels of consciousness. Her dissertation has been published as a book by Peter Lang. She supervises research dissertations in the MA in Applied Spirituality. She is also a trained spiritual director.

Bernadette completed a four-year training in psychosynthesis, leading to an MA from London's Institute of Psychosynthesis/University of Middlesex in 2001. Psychosynthesis is a transpersonal psychology founded by Italian psychoanalyst Roberto Assagioli, a contemporary of Freud and Jung. Its framework holds that humans are essentially spiritual beings having a human experience, and contain within them a drive to become whole. Every personal challenge presents an opportunity for psychological and spiritual growth.

Bernadette's first degree was a BA in Irish and English, followed by a Higher Diploma in Education, at University College, Galway, in 1981. She worked in London for many years in broadcast journalism. She produced reports from the Middle East on human rights issues, such as the refugee crisis in Jordan (interviewed King Hussein) following the Gulf War in 1991, sanctions in Iraq, and territorial disputes in Yemen. Her reports were screened by

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international broadcasters including the BBC, Channel 4 and RTE. She was co-founder/director of an independent TV production company for nearly 10 years, managing 15 employees including film crews and broadcast facilities in central London.



Dr Elizabeth McCrory

Elizabeth McCrory received her BA, MA and PhD from University College Dublin and MBA from Warwick University, UK. She developed an interest in spirituality through her work both in the public health services and private business sector and has studied spirituality for 10 years. She runs workshops and seminars on a variety of topics including: Meditation, Spiritual Autobiography, Parenting, Spirituality and long-term illness, Death and Dying, and Women in transition.

She completed her training as a Clinical Psychologist and worked in the General Medical Services in Ireland before moving to the UK where she undertook an MBA and worked as Human Resources Director for Coopers & Lybrand. She then returned to Ireland and worked as Human Resource Director at Coopers & Lybrand, PA Consulting and KPMG.

She is an experienced clinical psychologist and psychotherapist with a special interest in Chronic Pain. Her clinical practice covers a diverse range of issues including adolescent issues, emotional problems, health challenges, relationship issues and life crises. She combines psychotherapy with contemplative practices; the focus is on helping clients to archive wholeness through connecting with their deepest True Self.

Elizabeth's corporate work focuses on developing potential through transformational growth promoting Executive & Leadership Development, Team Development, Employee Engagement and Coaching.



Dr Anne Kennelly

Anne Kennelly has a background in education, arts administration and is a psychodynamically trained art therapist. Having qualified as a Primary school teacher, she went on to work in arts

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administration in Siamsa Tíre (The National Folk Theatre of Ireland). While there, she developed a community arts education project entitled, "Hidden Voices from the Dark" which focused on illuminating the voices of people with sight loss in the community.

Following studies for an MA in Education, she then taught on a number of adult education programmes with Kerry ETB, contributing appreciably to the organisation's work in inclusive education and adult literacy. Combining her experience in adult education with her community arts work, she completed an Education Doctorate at NUIM in 2013 with a thesis entitled, "An áit in a bhfuil t'anam is ann a thógas do chosa tú (Your feet will always take you to the place of your soul): A study of transformation through indigenous ways of knowing in a County Kerry community". This study highlighted how learning through the lens of imagination as opposed to a more technical and rational one only, allows for experiences of soul which, in turn, facilitates an experience of learning as living; thus challenging modernist approaches to education.

In 2007, she qualified as an art therapist, in Vancouver Art Therapy Institute. She is a professional member of IACAT and delivers experiential workshops in art therapy to students of mental health nursing at the MTU, Tralee. From 2016 to 2018, she taught the Education module on the MA in Education and Wellbeing of the Older Person at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. She is also a graduate of the MA in Applied Spirituality and became a member of the SpIRE Advisory Committee in 2021.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of Trustees collectively is:

- Defining the mission statement, ethos and constitution of the organisation
- Developing a high ethical standard within the organisation and ensuring that everyone involved acts with integrity at all times
- Encouraging a culture of openness, responsiveness and accountability
- Developing a strategic plan
- Safeguarding the organisations' assets
- Monitoring the efficient use of resources
- Financial planning, including liaising with fund providers and identifying new sources of funding
- Encouraging the best possible service provision in line with the constitution of the organisation
- Ensuring compliance and keeping up-to-date with changes
- Setting the risk capacity for the organisation
- Communicating with stakeholders and the public – and being open and accountable
- Clearly defining the role of board members – including distinguishing between the role and responsibilities of the Director and the role of the Chairperson
- Ensuring that key positions such as chairperson, vice-chairperson and treasurer are always filled

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- Adequately planning for succession and ensuring handovers take place
- Consulting with specialists, as appropriate
- Regularly reviewing and assessing SpIRE's performance, and utilising the results to instigate positive change and innovation
- Developing a strategic plan for SpIRE, as well as monitoring and evaluating this plan annually with the Director. The performance of SpIRE will also be assessed and monitored against the strategic plan and KPI's
- Managing operations effectively and efficiently, while also ensuring compliance with legislation and corporate governance requirements so that sustainability is not jeopardized.
- Ensuring that entries on the CRA's Register of Charities is up to date and that the Annual Report / Accounts is submitted in a timely manner
- Adopting the Governance Code for Community and Voluntary Organisations
- Ensuring that all board members are fully aware of the responsibilities associated with their role and receive adequate training opportunities

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



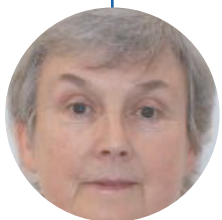
TRUSTEES



VOLUNTEERS



DIRECTOR



LIBRARY
COORDINATOR



HOSPITALITY
COORDINATOR



SECRETARY TO
BOARD OF
TRUSTEES



ACTIVITIES
ADVISORY
TEAM



PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT

