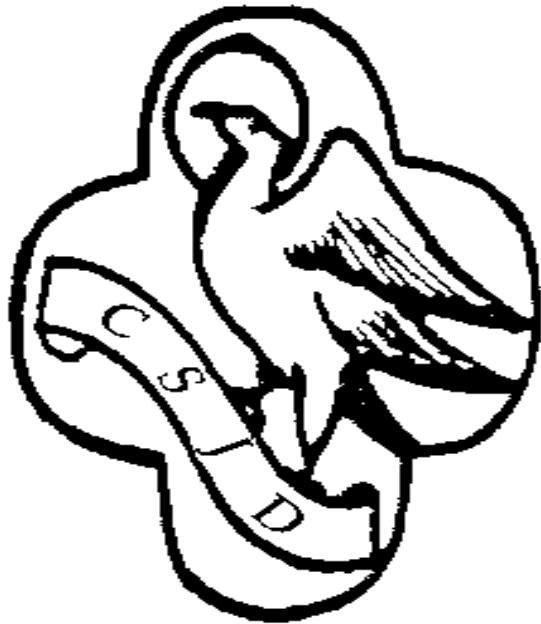


COMMUNITY OF ST JOHN THE DIVINE



*St. John's House,
652 Alum Rock Road
Birmingham B8 3NS
Tel. 0121 327 4174
e-mail: csjd@onetel.net*

COMMUNITY OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

Today, as we continue to welcome people to test their vocation in the Religious Life, we have also found increasing contact from others wanting to become Associates, or Alongsiders who ask to live with us for a period of time.

This has required us to be open to the Spirit and have courage to explore new patterns for living and sharing our life with others as we have considered the challenge of change in the Religious Life. This has been an evolutionary journey over a number of years flowing from much prayer, reflection and discussion.

Those coming to test their vocation in the Religious Life in CSJD need to be women and men not afraid of joining with the Community in exploring this new model for living the Religious Life in the 21st century. Whilst the essence of the Religious Life remains the same, the way it is being lived out is changing very significantly.

The small core Community has become the welcoming centre for a growing circle of Associates, Alongsiders and others who share much of our life.

Together, our vision is to be a centre of prayer within the diocese, to exercise a ministry of hospitality to those who come to use the House as a resource, either as individuals or as groups, to offer a ministry of spiritual accompaniment and to be open to new ways in which God might use us here, for example, building friendships with our Muslim neighbours.

The underpinning of our life and work is a spirituality based on St. John the Apostle of Love.

ASSOCIATES are men and women from all walks of life who desire to have a close link with the life and work of the Community. They make a Commitment to God, to the Community and to one another. Together with the Community they form a network of love, prayer and service. They visit the Community, staying as they are able, to join in the worship, life and ministry of the house, or for a time of rest or retreat for themselves. A few Associates are beginning to explore living with the Community for a longer period.

ALONGSIDERS are people who come to the Community for varying lengths of time, usually 6 months to 1 year. The aim is to provide an opportunity of sharing in the worship and life of the Community but with less commitment than Associates. It could be useful for a sabbatical, a time of spiritual renewal, study, to respond to a specific need, or to allow time and space to consider the way ahead.

SINGLE CONSECRATED LIFE

Another interesting development is the current interest in the Single Consecrated Life within the Church of England. The vocation to live this life is a person's response to a call from God to live out their Christian life under the Vow of Consecrated Celibacy whilst living in their own home and within their own ministry. A Launch Day was held in April 2005 at St. John's House on 'Living the Consecrated Life Today' and brought an enthusiastic response from those either living or interested in the life.

Prayer from the Anglican Religious Communities Year Book

Lord Jesus Christ
in your great love
you draw all people to yourself;
and in your wisdom
you call us to your service.
We pray at this time you will kindle
in the hearts of men and women
the desire to follow you in the Religious life.
Give to those whom you call,
grace to accept their vocation
readily and thankfully,
to make the whole-hearted surrender
which you ask of them,
and for love of you,
to persevere to the end.
This we ask in your name. Amen