

For information about retreat/conference centres further afield, in the UK and beyond, visit the website of the Retreat Association: www.retreats.org.uk/.

Look for a spiritual companion

We all need companions on the pilgrimage of life and it can be helpful to have someone walking alongside us in our spiritual journey, such as a 'spiritual director' or 'soul friend'.



Spiritual direction is the ministry of listening, reflecting and encouraging, and is always confidential. The Diocese can help you find the right person to accompany you not just when there are particular challenges in your ministry, but in the day-to-day journey of prayer and service. For more information and contact details, visit the Spirituality and Prayer pages of the Ely Diocesan website at: <http://goo.gl/HQLAUu>.

Explore taking study leave

Study leave is defined as 'a period of paid leave of absence from work to study or research with the purpose of renewal of the person and their ministry'. The Bishop grants permission for study leave on a discretionary basis and it will usually originate from the Clergy Development Scheme.

Study leave may be taken after at least 10 years in ministry and it normally lasts 6-12 weeks. Detailed guidelines on Extended Ministerial Leave, together with application forms, are available on the Diocesan website in the section for ordained clergy under Ministry.

Sheldon (the Society of Martha and Mary)

The Community in Devon supports people in ministry and/or spouses at times of stress, crisis, burnout or breakdown. There is a programme of led retreats and also space for individual retreat. Specialisms include the 12,000-mile service and clergy family holiday weeks (www.sheldon.uk.com/).

The Sheldon Hub (doing healthy ministry together)

is an independent, collaborative online community hosted by Sheldon. People in ministry share experience, advice and resources in a safe, confidential and supportive way (www.sheldonhub.org/).



Resources for Spiritual Refreshment

Jesus said: 'Come with me by yourselves and get some rest.'

Mark 6.31



The call to be a people fully alive in Christ is for the *whole* church – laity and clergy. If we are to sustain our ministry and to flourish as God intends we should, then we need to put in place measures that promote our own wellbeing. This leaflet offers a range of suggestions on how we can do this as lay ministers and clergy.

Spiritual refreshment requires intentionally dedicating time both within and aside from our daily routine so that we can connect with God and be resourced by Him.

It includes:

- taking time away from our ministry role on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis
- doing things that maintain our physical, mental, emotional and intellectual health, e.g. physical exercise, creative hobbies, quality time with family and friends
- giving enough time to the development of our own spiritual life, e.g. time with a spiritual companion, time for reading and study, time away on retreat or at a conference

Take up a creative hobby

A creative hobby that engages our hands and senses can free our spirit. Painting, pottery, woodwork, knitting, gardening, photography, birdwatching ... are just a few examples. For a creative arts retreat, have a look at the programme offered at: www.carmretreats.org/.

Spirituality for extroverts

Some of us find our spiritual refreshment through physical activity, such as regular gym sessions or cross-country running; or

through joining in activity with others, such as singing in a gospel choir or playing in an orchestra.

Find a 'local sanctuary'

Look for a local church or chapel (*outside* your parish/es) that is open during the day where you can pray undisturbed, or just sit quietly for reading and reflection.

Find a friend who is willing to open their home and offer hospitality through a 'guest room': somewhere with an armchair to relax and read in, a desk to sit and write at, even a bed to have a nap in!



Visit a 'Quiet Garden'

The *Quiet Garden Movement* nurtures low-cost, accessible outdoor space for prayer, contemplation, rest and inspiration in a variety of settings, such as private homes, churches, schools and hospitals. Find out more at: www.quietgarden.org/.

Consider going on retreat

A 'retreat' is a chance to step aside from life for a while, to rest and just 'be' in a welcoming, peaceful place. A retreat can be for a day or half-day, for 2-3 days with an overnight stay, or for a week or more. The Department of Ministry has a diocesan budget to help with the cost of retreats for its ordained clergy and lay ministers.

Retreat centres within fairly easy reach of Ely (i.e. under 90 mins by car) include:

- All Hallows, on the Norfolk/Suffolk border www.all-hallows.org/
- Bishop Woodford House, Ely www.bishopwoodfordhouse.com/
- Clare Priory, near Sudbury, Suffolk www.clarepriory.org.uk/
- Dowry House, Walsingham, Norfolk www.dowryhouse.org.uk/
- Launde Abbey, Leicestershire www.laundeabbey.org.uk
- The Old Stable House Retreats, Newmarket, Suffolk www.oldstablehouseretreats.org.uk/
- Quiet Waters, near Bungay, Suffolk www.quietwaters.org.uk/
- St Claret Centre, Buckden, St Neots www.buckden-towers.org.uk/
- The Retreat House, Pleshey, Essex www.retreathousepleshey.com/
- Turvey Abbey, Bedfordshire www.turveyabbey.org.uk/