

Dear Member,

Welcome to this latest edition of the Spirituality and Psychiatry Newsletter, No. 19, September 2005.

We include in this issue the texts of two talks given by Special Interest Group at the College Annual Meeting in Edinburgh, by Professor John Swinton on 'Why Psychiatry Needs Spirituality' and Professor Peter Gilbert on 'Spirituality and Mental Health'. Our thanks to John and Peter for permission to reproduce their texts.

We are also able to report with pleasure the success of the conference 'Beyond the Brain VI – Memory beyond the Brain', held in August 2005 at University of Lincoln by the Scientific and Medical Network in association with the Spirituality and Psychiatry SIG. The distinguished researcher into the Near Death Experience, Dr. Pim van Lommel, has kindly allowed us to reproduce the talk he gave. A report of the whole conference will be provided in the next Newsletter.

We are delighted to announce that our new chair is Dr. Sarah Eagger. Sarah has been involved in the activities of the SIG from its outset and we are confident that with her wise guidance the SIG will go from strength to strength.

The next event in our calendar is the autumn one-day programme for SIG members to be held at the College on 21<sup>st</sup> October. The title of the programme is 'Special needs, special gifts - learning disability and spirituality'. Full details of the programme are included in this Newsletter, and application forms will be available for members in News and Notes, to be issued shortly.

On December 14<sup>th</sup>, the Special Interest Group is jointly holding an open one-day conference jointly with the Faculty of Old Age Psychiatry at the 15 Belgrave Square on 'Spirituality and Religion in Later Life'. See this Newsletter for further details of the programme, and contact information for application forms.

In this Newsletter, we have three articles by service users, covering a wide range of experiences. We hope you will find these contributions thought-provoking. We have much to learn from service users who are determined that psychiatrists should be better acquainted with authenticity and personal meaning of their experiences of mental distress.

As always, I would like to encourage you to let me have any articles you have written that you would like to see published on our Website, as Word or rtf files to [rcpsych@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:rcpsych@rcpsych.ac.uk) and headed 'for the attention of Dr. Andrew Powell'.

With best wishes,  
Andrew Powell (editor)