

## Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>

The final day of our gathering bore the theme of "Gratefulness for what God prepares for us in the future". Having looked to the past and to the present, we now cast our eyes forward as we contemplate with prayer how God might be leading us.

Lectio Divina, bodywork and Morning Prayer led us into the day as usual. It seems so important to begin the day with a regular rhythm. It focuses and settles those sometimes diffuse moods at the beginning of the day.

After breakfast the morning was spent in our Triads, a standard feature of our gatherings, and one most highly valued. We are able to engage in both giving and receiving spiritual direction. Apprehension is something which I feel beforehand, but I believe most of our members find the sessions rich and deep. Many confidences are shared and many burdens are lightened. It is such a privilege to be entrusted with a part of another person's life. We experience humility before the mystery of life.

But there was also business to be done. In the afternoon we started the process of discernment for the future of our SDE. With his customary verve Fabio introduced the theme and Natalie encouraged us to list all the things we value about what we have now in the SDE. This gives us a clearer picture of what is truly important, which is in turn the basis for future development. It is work in progress as we grow in attentiveness to the leadings of the Holy Spirit. Watch the website for further developments!

Then it was time for our AGM Part 2 with the elections. Josep had earlier withdrawn his candidacy for 4<sup>th</sup> Member for health reasons, though not for lack of enthusiasm. So Sirkka Liisa Raunio was elected with overwhelming support. Next the elections for the Chair. Two candidates: Fabio-Souza Muniz and Sigríður Halldórsdóttir. The vote came down in favour of Sigríður and congratulations followed, but thanks were extended to Fabio also for his willingness to stand.

Of course it was only fitting to thank the retiring members. Antoinette described how Lehel had been a father-figure, seeking unity, peace and maintaining a good overview of matters, a firm and steady pair of hands. Liina was praised for her creativity, her many ideas, her diligence, her patience and kindness. They were presented with prayer bracelets, first of all normal ones and then, to the surprise and laughter of all, with giant versions to place around the neck! And to conclude it the newly elected officers, plus Fabio, were given prayer bracelets too.

And so we moved into the concluding eucharist, led by Paivi and Sirkka Liisa. Warm were the embraces at the peace, a genuine expression of mutual affection. And finally the EC members received a blessing and the new members too, Cynthia, Patti, Michael and Matthew. We hope to see them again next year, and indeed all of us as tomorrow we part with warm hugs and embraces.

"For all that has been, THANKS. For all that will be, YES" (Dag Hammarskold)