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Last updated: 23 July 2020

# Re-opening Quiet Gardens

Following the initial global impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and as lockdowns are gradually lifted many Quiet Gardens are starting to consider reopening their garden spaces. Now more than ever many people will benefit from outdoor space to grieve, rest and recover from the impact of the pandemic, as well as to consider the future, seek inspiration and prepare for ways to flourish.

How we provide such spaces will differ depending on the situation of the garden space and the circumstances of the host and support group. Ultimately hosts will need to decide what they are comfortable with whilst following the latest government guidance for their situation.

Only you can decide when you want to reopen your Quiet Garden. There should be no pressure for anyone to be re-opening until they are ready. Please talk it through with your support group or give our office a call to speak with a member of staff or a trustee.

We hope the following resources and words from our patrons will inspire and support you and your visitors as you explore how your Quiet Garden can provide a space of welcome in these new times.



**"I thank God for the good work of Quiet Gardens. These gardens have always provided a place for beauty, for reflection, for prayer. Now with new safety guidelines for reopening they can once again serve precious people with space for stillness."**

**Richard J Foster**, Patron of the Quiet Garden Movement

## Updating your Risk Assessment...

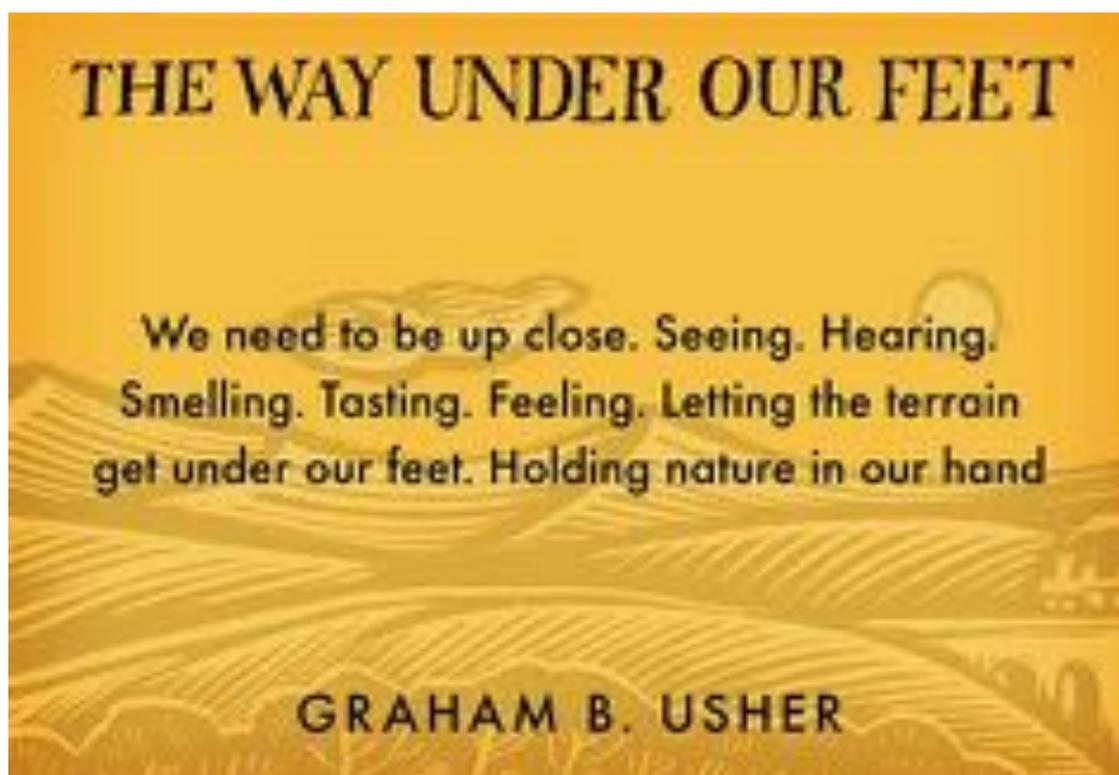
As we consider Covid-19 the good news is that we are starting with a more beneficial view of outdoor spaces than indoor spaces. You will though need to update your risk assessment > our guidance on this can be found at <https://quietgarden.org/hosts-admin/info-guidance/>



Natural beauty: looking into the crown of a tree fern – from our Patron Bishop Graham Usher

“How might we lay foundations for a good post-pandemic world? What might that re-imagination look like? Where might it place poverty environment peace health in our priorities? I’m keen to see an inclusive public conversation because the old ways were not all good ways.”

Rt Rev Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich – Patron and Host at the Bishops Garden, Norwich



From The Way Under Our Feet – The spirituality of walking

# The Spiritual Journey and the Quiet Garden Movement



**Revd Philip Roderick**, Founder and Patron of the Quiet Garden Movement, shares some reflections as our world and Movement wrestle with the challenges of a pandemic, a series of lockdowns, together with challenging financial and work realities:

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**I have been looking back** at different Quiet Garden newsletters, articles and aspirations produced in the past twenty seven years or so. From the naming, launch and first uptake of the vision of the Quiet Garden Movement in Stoke Poges in 1992, I and those who joined me in those early days, became aware that we were being called into an unfolding future. **The direction of travel, as they say? God in the personal, God in the local, God in the global.**

It soon became apparent that this **simple idea of occasional low-cost retreats or step-aside times could be replicated anywhere in the world** - in peoples' homes and gardens and, eventually, in arenas such as schools, hospitals and other organisational settings. In a fractured and hyperactive world, **“Don't just do something, sit there!”** was a nudge in the direction of the contemplative dimension of the gospel, of Mary choosing “the better part”. We soon discovered that prayerful attentiveness leads out into creative engagement with the world. As Jesus declared: “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10: 10). And the pivotal invitation for our work: **“Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while”** (Mark 6:31).

As early as Spring 1996 I wrote in “Quiet Places”, then the Newsletter of The Quiet Garden Trust: “It has long been **my hope that Quiet Gardens should be established not only in leafy suburbs and in places of natural beauty, but also in concrete jungles and housing estates...** Let us all keep our ears and eyes alert to the needs of others – not only for bread, food, finance or shelter, but also for a safe space to draw breath, to **reconnect with God and to find some meaning within or beneath the tough reality of life.**”

**In the Quiet Garden Movement we have so much to be, to do and to become.** The past, the present and the future, the divine and the human, the spiritual and the material all intersect. What we seek to provide is of course open to all – those of full faith, questioning faith or of no explicit faith. We highlight and **work with the metaphor of garden** and greening and also with the practical demands and life cycles of gardens. **From micro to the macro, ecological care walks hand in hand with the care of those who attend our Quiet Gardens.**

St Paul, in writing to the Christians in Corinth, put this emergent reality forcefully: *“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose...For we are God's co-workers, working together; you are God's field, God's building.”* (1 Cor 3:5-9)



**Rt Rev John Pritchard**, Patron of the Quiet Garden Movement, shares, “During these recent months I greatly valued the following prayers. I hope they help in your situation too.”

Gracious God

When this is over help us never again to take for granted  
a handshake with a stranger, full shelves at the shop, conversations  
with neighbours,  
a crowded theatre, Friday night out, the taste of Communion,  
a routine check-up, the daily rush-hour, coffee with a friend,  
the stadium roaring, each deep breath, a boring Tuesday,  
life itself.

When this ends may we find that we have become more like the  
people we wanted to be, we were called to be, we hoped to be.  
And help us to stay that way – better for each other because of the  
worst we’ve known.

Amen.

Originally written by Laura Kelly Fanucci ([further details](#))

Leave me alone with God as much as may be.  
As the tide draws the waters close in upon the shore,  
make me an island, set apart,  
alone with you, God, holy to you.  
Then, with the turning of the tide,  
prepare me to carry your presence to the busy world beyond,  
the world that rushes in on me,  
till the waters come again and fold me back to you.

attributed to St Aidan

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“Our experiences of God’s absence create within our  
souls the space to hold God’s returning presence.”

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund via [encounteringsilence.com](http://encounteringsilence.com)

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There is a place of stillness, deep inside. You have always known it. A silent  
place where the Great Spirit lives in you. You have felt her presence. You  
can go there whenever you want. The grief of our world will go on, but you  
will have love to help

– From Galilee Spirituality Centre

## A Coronavirus Prayer

Loving God, Your desire is for our wholeness and well being.  
We hold in tenderness and prayer the collective suffering of our world at this time.

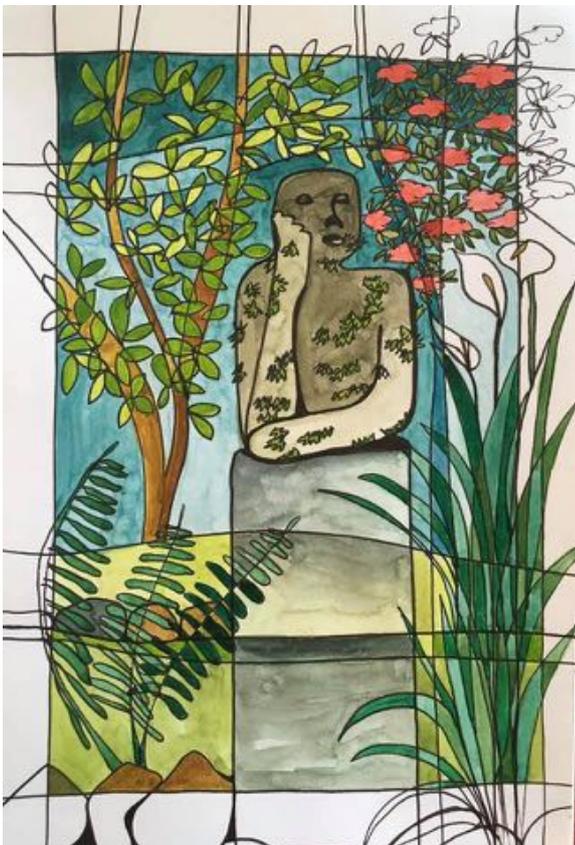
We grieve precious lives lost and vulnerable lives threatened.  
We ache for ourselves and our neighbors, standing before an uncertain future.

We pray: may love, not fear, go viral.  
Inspire our leaders to discern and choose wisely, aligned with the common good.

Help us to practice social distancing and reveal to us new and creative ways to come together in spirit and in solidarity.

Call us to profound trust in your faithful presence,  
You, the God who does not abandon.

*Sister Christine Koelhoffer, IHM*  
Via [JesuitSource.org](http://JesuitSource.org)



Puzzling and Pondering by Annie HenryHolland, host of Tremorran - Back to the Garden, Cornwall

Please do visit our website for further **news** and **reflections** from those involved in the **Quiet Garden Movement** and to find our more about our work

[www.quietgarden.org](http://www.quietgarden.org)

Resources and guidance from the...

# Quiet Garden Movement

sharing outdoor space for wellbeing and the inner journey

Nurturing access to outdoor space for prayer, reflection and rest.

[www.quietgarden.org](http://www.quietgarden.org)

The Quiet Garden Trust is a UK registered charity – No. 1038528