

February 22, 2010

Dear parent (s), grandparent (s), and priests,

I have once again been sticking my toes, walking waste-deep, and submerging myself into those spiritual waters that, over the past few years, have been swirling around and within me. I think of spiritual waters as those places that get stirred up when what we thought was a core truth within us falls apart and we are no longer sure of our identity, or our place in life, it can be the place that causes us to question what constitutes a meaningful life. My experiences in the last two years have given me new insights into navigating the terrain of the spiritual wanderer. I am looking forward to working with children as they step and wander into their own journey.

I am beginning a spiritual formation group with children between the ages of 7 – 11. I will meet with them as a group three times and each gathering will last 45 minutes. Each meeting will start with a physical exercise such as meditative breathing, tai chi, or drumming, as a way to set the tone and ease the transition into a safe space where they can express themselves.

I will always pose a question at each gathering, such as:

“Do you think “praying” changes anything in the world?”

“If you met a kid your age who didn’t know about God and you had to describe God, what would you say?”

“Are apple trees, or flowers, or bugs connected to you, to God?”

I will also have different mediums available for the kids to express themselves if they didn’t want to use words. Your child is welcome to invite a friend. I have available a meeting space in a small first floor loft room across the street from the Tap Room at 20th and Locust. Perhaps, if some parents wish, they could gather at the Tap Room and discuss the same question? After three gatherings I will meet separately with each family including the child and have them talk together about their spirituality.

I will begin this initial gathering on Saturday, April 3rd, 4:30pm – 5:15. The subsequent dates will be Saturday, April 10th, Saturday, April 17th, and all classes will begin at 4:30pm. I will make family appointments at the last gathering. The cost will be \$55.00 total for all four gatherings which includes the family one. I would not want finances to be a cause for not participating, so

please just let me know and we can figure something out that would fit your budget. If you are or are not interested, please let me know.

You can reach me at susan.nanny@mac.com or my cell: 314.378.6167

I would like to have an idea if your child will be participating by March 5th. If I haven't heard from you I will give a gentle nudge towards the middle of next week.

If there is continued interest, I would like to offer this type of program maybe three times a year, with a different emphasis each time.

Gratefully,

Susan K. Nanny

Background info: I have been an ordained Episcopal Priest for twenty years. During that time I have been a parish priest, a chaplain in the city juvenile detention center, a hospital chaplain at Barnes, and a hospice chaplain. My most recent experience has been the assistant dean at Christ Church Cathedral in downtown St. Louis. I served there eight years with the last two years developing an intergenerational worship service called Locust Street Worship. It was a place where children were seen as full participants and invited to share their innate wisdom. I am presently an adjunct priest at St. Mark's Episcopal Church where I am flying by the seat of my pants as one of the garden leaders who is helping to develop a community vegetable garden for St. Mark's and the surrounding neighborhood. I will on occasion preach and teach at St. Mark's. I am also a volunteer at Litzsinger Nature Ecology Center. I have two teenage sons, Eli and Jordan. The cores of my spiritual beliefs are: Love your neighbor. Draw closer to your enemies and learn about yourself. We are all connected in the circle of life.

