

## **"thin places"- sacred spaces**

### **Sacred Sites**

*The place is never "chosen" ...it is merely discovered...  
in other words, the sacred place in some way or another reveals itself.*

Mircea Eliade

Can you name places in your life which have **revealed** something of life's wonder and God's mystery?  
"The place on which you are standing is holy ground". (Exodus 3:1-6)

*I cannot be a good host until I am at home in my own house, so rooted in my centre that I no longer need to impose my terms on others but can instead afford to offer them a welcome that gives them the chance to be completely themselves.*

Esther de Waal

Think of places- perhaps quite ordinary places- where a particular **ritual** helps us experience the holy.  
Think about Zacchaeus welcoming Jesus in to his home. (Luke 19: 1-10)

*We're going to have nothing to pass onto our children but the sky. No sense of place or the growing inherited sense of culture that gathers around a city or a particular physical environment. The memory is being lost, and without that memory there is ultimately no civilization.*

Tim Winton

Memory – **remembering** - activates the holy for us. Can you get in touch with memories - like the Eucharistic remembering or **anamnesis** - where a past event is somehow present and alive among us?

---

Philip Carter is a retired Anglican Priest. He was the inaugural president of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD). He ran the Julian Centre in Adelaide, an independent and ecumenical centre for spirituality, from 1997-2009.

Contact: [juliancentre@gmail.com](mailto:juliancentre@gmail.com)

*St. Augustine says that God's first gift to us is the glory of being able to say "I am".*

**Recognition** can unlock for us the reality of holy mystery- recognition in a person's face or gesture- like Mary recognising the Risen Christ (John 20: 11-18) Spend some time letting Jesus look at you- and speaking your name.

*The liturgist Aidan Kavanagh describes the sacraments as "unsettling encounters between living presences divine and human in the here and now".*

*The sacramental significance of Uluru can scarcely be over-estimated.*

*Are we ready to appreciate (what Aboriginal Australians have long known) the significance of sacred places?*

*And can we see that we are at a crucial point in the history of humankind –  
facing unprecedented environmental destruction –*

*where we could recover the natural world as a primal crucible for religious experience?*

---

Philip Carter is a retired Anglican Priest. He was the inaugural president of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD). He ran the Julian Centre in Adelaide, an independent and ecumenical centre for spirituality, from 1997-2009.

Contact: [juliancentre@gmail.com](mailto:juliancentre@gmail.com)