

JUST THIS DAY: November 23rd, 2011



Since 2007, people across the world have taken part in *Just this Day*, a day for people to come together in stillness, to go beyond any difference and to find that space which is without division.

JOIN IN ON NOVEMBER 23rd 2011 WHEREVER YOU ARE

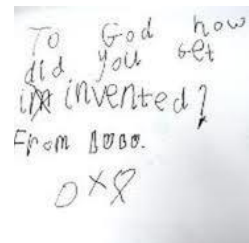
The main events for **Just this Day** will be taking place at St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square, so please come and spend a day discovering more about the important effect of silence and stillness on children and adults.

This story captures the questions children have about God, and indicate how important silence and quiet are in answering their questions:



Alex Renton of *The Times* Newspaper sent a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury from his 6 year old daughter, Lulu.

He replied:



Dear Lulu,

Your dad has sent on your letter and asked if I have any answers. It's a difficult one! But I think God might reply a bit like this –

'Dear Lulu –

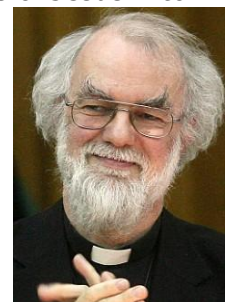
Nobody invented me – but lots of people discovered me and were quite surprised. They discovered me when they looked round at the world and thought it was really beautiful or really mysterious and wondered where it came from. They discovered me when they were very very quiet on their own and felt a sort of peace and love they hadn't expected.

Then they invented ideas about me – some of them sensible and some of them not very sensible. From time to time I sent them some hints – specially in the life of Jesus – to help them get closer to what I'm really like.

But there was nothing and nobody around before me to invent me. Rather like somebody who writes a story in a book, I started making up the story of the world and eventually invented human beings like you who could ask me awkward questions!'

And then he'd send you lots of love and sign off. I know he doesn't usually write letters, so I have to do the best I can on his behalf.

Lots of love from me too. +Archbishop Rowan



The Warmth of Your Heart prevents your body from Rusting

Marie de Hennezel writes of the importance of learning to be quiet and alone during childhood in her book: 'Nobody teaches us how to be alone, and that is the case from childhood upwards. The aim of all our education, whether it is dispensed by the family or school, is never to leave the child in silence, alone with him or herself.....If he isolates himself, people get worried, for exploring one's inner garden is not well received. So it is hardly a surprise that the adult individual is so dependent on others, that he has never learned self-reliance, self-knowledge, or how to trust himself.'

As part of the programme for Just this Day at St Martin in the Fields on November 23rd, 2011 we will have a walking labyrinth for children and adults to experience, as well as opportunities to join in a period of silent contemplation. At 11am you can also listen to the following speakers as they offer their experience of working with children to bring peace and rest to the child through silence.



Led by **Claire Foster-Gilbert**, founder Director of the Ethics Academy which seeks to help children meet their potential through the Hero's Story, she will encourage these four women to speak about their experience of positive silence for children in schools. The first speaker is **Helen Lees**, whose forthcoming book *Silence in Schools*, will be published early in 2012. Secondly **Laura Hyde**, headmistress of St James Senior Girls School where meditation and stillness are offered to all pupils will speak: www.stjameschools.co.uk/seniorgirls. The third speaker is **Kim Nataraja**, who is a practitioner and teacher of Christian meditation to children worldwide: www.wccm.org. And last but by no means least **Shanida Nataraja** will speak; she is a neuroscientist and author of *The Blissful Brain*, which uses scientific research to prove that meditation has a proven mental and physical benefit: www.blissfulbrain.com.

Each will speak from their own experience and research into children and young people's response to meditation and silent reflection and discuss its relevance to attention, achievement, well-being and happiness in relationships which influence behaviour in children and within a school community.



Mrs Laura Hyde, Headmistress of St James Senior Girls School, London. "Recourse to stillness has been a cornerstone of the St James approach since its foundation.

We provide our young people with regular opportunities to be silent, so that they may discover how to be inwardly free and deeply at ease within themselves. A short period at the beginning and end of every day is allocated to quietude in which pupils may meditate, contemplate or simply be still - according to their own spiritual inclinations. If they so wish, pupils may be introduced to the practice of mantra meditation, an ancient and traditional system of meditation, which originated in India and is often referred to as 'transcendental meditation'; it does not involve any religious 'content'. This approach assists in the quietening of the restlessness of the mind and allows the discovery of simple 'being'.

In addition to periods of meditation, we provide a pause of one or two minutes before and after every lesson. This offers an opportunity to let go of what has passed and be free to meet the next event with full attention. The ability to 'let go' of that to which we have become mentally or emotionally bound, and the power of concentration are essential to an effective and happy way of life. We encourage pupils to appreciate the importance of the present moment.

The benefit of this access to quietude is great. Pupils discover an inner strength which enhances clarity of thought and personal judgement; in addition, they enjoy a greater stability with which to meet the many challenges of life as they find their way towards adulthood. The increased power of attention that meditation engenders gives rise to a greater sensitivity and perception of the human condition which invariably improves the quality of relationships. Young people care for each other with empathy, kindness, and compassion - qualities which are entirely natural to our human spirit." www.stjameschools.co.uk/seniorgirls

Music for Stillness: In the evening of November 23rd, there will be a concert at St Martin in the Fields, tickets will become available in the summer.

IN WHATEVER WAY YOU WISH TO TAKE PART IN JUST THIS DAY, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH THROUGH THE WEBSITE www.justthisday.org