Exploring the Boundary Between Science and Spirituality
With Pamela Prime and David Kirkpatrick

We are excited about the ways in which science is informing our Spirituality and hope to illustrate why this is so. Sadly, many scientists attack spirituality and religion as being irrational & superstitious while some on a spiritual path fear science as leading to secularism and want nothing to do with it. Despite these views, there is a need for communication between science and spirituality.

Within the Catholic tradition, Vatican II called for a new “analysis and synthesis” of what Catholic faith means in the age of evolution (Gaudium et spes, 1965). In his closing message to the council (December 8, 1965), Pope Paul VI acknowledged the indispensability of science for an intellectually sound Catholic vision. The writings of Bernard Lonergan and Teilhard de Chardin laid the groundwork for such a vision. Karl Rahner discussed it further in “Christology Within an Evolutionary Worldview,” (1975). Others more recently discuss the evolutionary process of our path toward Divinization. Bernie Owens, SJ, (2015). Richard Rohr in a recent daily meditation talked of “God forever evolving human consciousness, making us ever more ready for God,” citing the Jewish prophets and Catholic and Sufi mystics. (Richard Rohr’s Daily Meditation, February 3, 2016). Einstein famously is quoted as saying, “Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind.”

The SDI conference has previously heard from Brian Swimme, talking about the new cosmology – how the universe operates under rules that have to be “just so” for life and consciousness to evolve. His presentations create a sense of prayerful awe and wonder at the cosmic level. Some might conclude, however, that God created the universe and then stepped back and watched it unfold. The Ignatian view is that God is present everywhere in every moment and is always working toward the unfoldment, i.e. Divinization. This workshop will take the new cosmology a few steps beyond Brian Swimme, focusing on the evolution of consciousness toward oneness with God.

We will explore different possibilities for the interplay of Science and Spirituality so that participants can reflect on their own beliefs and find their own spirituality through introspection and experience. We will identify some of the questions that spiritual directors might ask of themselves and their spiritual directees to enrich their spiritual life. We will also look at some tools that science suggests might be helpful in the process of going within to explore our own truth and in guiding others to that end.

The workshop will consist of the following three parts:
1. A brief explanation of different ways of looking at the relationship between science and spirituality.

2. Some questions that might be explored to see how the new cosmology, current views of evolution, and other new sciences could impact an individual's spirituality, and

3. How emerging science in measuring brain wave patterns and each individual's utilization of different sensory modes will be most effective in supporting directees in their spiritual journey.

We will include meditations to help participants experience some of the principles discussed.

For those interested in knowing more about the interplay between science and spirituality, resources include: The Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences at Berkeley, www.ctns.org and its many publications.


For those who want to know more about brain wave patterns and what helps individuals go deeper into prayer, resources include: The work of Joe Dispenza and Jeffrey Fannin found at: drjoedispenza.com thoughtgenius.com, and Dawna Markova, The Open Mind: Exploring the 6 Patterns of Natural Intelligence, (Emeryville, CA: Conari Press 1991)