



2016 Autumn NEWSLETTER

Change is in the air: stories from the mountain ... and the city

October 2016



2016 has been a year of great change for us at Los Olivos. In addition to our rural ministry as a retreat centre, we have developed new professional connections in Madrid. Both mountain and city work have enriched and stretched us in different ways.

New roles in the city

Guy has been involved in creating Keytree Spain, a subsidiary company of the British firm Keytree Ltd, based in London. In addition to setting up the legal company on Spanish soil, he has managed all the logistics of finding an office in central Madrid, and is the company's head of logistics, finance and human resources in



Daniel leading a seminar at the Protestant Faculty of Theology of Madrid

Spain. Daniel, on the other hand, following the completion of his doctorate at the University of Madrid, has been lecturing Church History at the city's Protestant Faculty of Theology. The teaching is both online (Open University style), and on site. Both Guy and Daniel have travelled regularly to Madrid through the year.

Life in the mountains

This year we have welcomed groups from different parts of the UK and Spain, including Roehampton University, St. Paul's Cathedral Dundee, Parish groups from the the Diocese of Europe and Worcester, diocesan groups from Chelmsford and Truro, and Human Dimensions.



Keytree Spain office in Plaza de España, Madrid

We have also enjoyed hosting a varied and exciting programme of retreats, including icon painting, poetry, the Spanish mystics, Matthew's Gospel and Benedictine spirituality. In addition to our regular retreat leaders (John Bell, Mark Burrows, Daniel Muñoz and Bishop Jonathan Clark), we have welcomed two new leaders: Bishop Graham Usher (Worcester Diocese) and Andrew Bain (Episcopal priest and director of Emmaus House, Edinburgh). It has been a privilege and a joy to share with all of them and with the hundreds of retreatants who have visited us this year, many of them good friends.

Eco Farm, Bees & Spa

As part of our eco philosophy, this Spring we introduced over 80 beehives to the land. These are EU sponsored agro-environmental bees in charge of pollinating the fruit trees in the National Park farms. We look forward to getting our very own organic mountain honey next season.

Likewise, this Summer we installed an eco Jacuzzi, powered exclusively by the sun. The new spa area has become a popular relaxation and gathering point for many of our retreatants.



At the end of *God's Gifted Gays* retreat



In the footsteps of *John of the Cross* retreat-pilgrimage, at Baeza University



Guy & Daniel during BBQ night (above);
St Andrew's Chaplaincy retreat (below).



Brexit & the cloud of unknowing

The 23rd of June marked the beginning of great uncertainties for Los Olivos as a retreat centre and for us personally as a mixed nationality couple. It remains unclear how Brexit will affect the ongoing relationship between the UK and the rest of Europe. As a retreat centre located in Spain, a country deeply committed to the vision of a more united Europe, Los Olivos looks to the future with hope. We trust and pray that, whatever new relationship may unfold between Britain and the EU, our connections with the UK will continue to be fruitful and strong.

Thanksgiving

Finally, at this harvest time, we thank God for the fruitfulness of this year: on the land, for almonds, olives and bees; in the centre, for all the special moments we've shared with guests and retreat leaders; in our lives, for old friends and new, for our families and loved ones, and for the new professional opportunities in the city.

Thank you all for supporting our ministry in so many different ways and for your ongoing prayers for us and the life of the centre.

Blessings from the Sierra Nevada,
Guy and Daniel