

## Argyll Hotel, Iona



21<sup>st</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> October 2017 Retreat

After a successful course in 2016, we are pleased to once again welcome Kenneth Steven and Kristina Hayward to host their retreat in October 2017. Here's what Kenneth and Kristina have to say...

"It was to the tiny island of Iona that St Columba came with the Christian gospel in 563 AD. But Iona wasn't an edge place, the site of distant pilgrimage, back in the high days of the Celts. Instead it was at the meeting of the sea roads, a place at the centre and not the periphery, ready to become a vibrant seat of learning, creativity and spiritual enlightenment for the many who journeyed to Columba's island. And it became the place where the greatest treasure of the Celts itself was begun – the Book of Kells.

Kenneth Steven and Kristina Hayward are both Christians who live on the coast of Argyll – not many miles, as the crow flies, from the island of Iona. They know and love this county of Scotland with its manifold islands, its secret creeks, its magnificent hills and lochs. For Kenneth, Iona has been at the very heart of his writing through the years: his best-known poetry collection from 2000 bears the island's name, and his most recent novel *The Well of the North Wind* is imagined here during those high days of the Celts.

What the retreat they lead will seek to offer is a deep sense of what lies at this island's heart. Kristina and Kenneth will re-create something of the story of Iona's early days, and seek to convey a sense of those Celtic Christian beginnings.

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Through creative practice of many kinds, through reading and writing, through walks to discover Iona's secret corners, the goal will be to re-experience something of the simplicity and beauty of Celtic Christian practice, and allow its inspiration to re-ignite and challenge our faith today.

Over the days of the retreat we will share our thoughts and insights as a group. But we will have real time too for personal meditation and creative practice of many kinds in order to find deep things within us, allowing us to return to the mainland world with a new sense of the inner and the outer landscape of our lives.

The group will gather on the island at the Argyll Hotel for the evening of Saturday October 21<sup>st</sup>; the retreat lasts until the morning of Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>. There's no knowing what the weather will hold, so sturdy clothing for wild walking will be valuable, and a notebook and simple camera too (mobile phone, tablet, iPad will do), and perhaps paints or crayons for sketching. Please think of also bringing special meditations and prayers."

We are offering this retreat for an inclusive fee of £700 (price based upon a single participant occupying a garden view single room; single occupancy of double rooms priced from £800 and doubles available from £750 per person – includes full board accommodation and course fee). Interested participants should contact Kenneth and Kristina in the first instance on [info@kennethsteven.co.uk](mailto:info@kennethsteven.co.uk). Once you've reserved a space on the course with Kenneth and Kristina, please contact reception on 01681 700334 to book with us.