



**BAT KOL INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH STUDIES,  
POB 8030, JERUSALEM, 9108001, ISRAEL  
NEWS BULLETIN SEPTEMBER 2018 No.18**

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*Ki miTzion teitzei Torah, ud'var Adonai miY'rushalayim*

**From Prof. Maureen Fritz, nds, Founding Director:**



Dear Bat Kol Alums and Friends, So much has happened in our lives since our last Newsletter. All that has happened has changed us, some events more than others. The July study of the “Book of Leviticus: the basis for Holiness” with participants from Israel, Ireland, Brazil, Canada, Australia, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, lit sparks of newness in all the participants, including myself who is privileged to participate in these sessions year after year. Not long afterwards, 12 August 2018, we were greeted with the first day of Elul, the Jewish month of preparation that led up to the high holy days of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Succoth and Simchat Torah. The season brought to a close the annual reading of the first Five Books of the Bible and beginning again.

Three weeks have passed since that beginning. The third Torah portion, Lekh Lekha (Genesis 12:1 - 17:27), will be read this Shabbath, 20 October. The parashah, Lekh Lekha, “Go Forth,” is one of my favorite readings. These two beginnings, a new reading of Genesis and the new command “go forth,” give me reason to pause. What will be different about these new beginnings is the new me, the new you, the reader, who have been formed and shaped by all of last year’s happenings. Together we stand tall and grateful, ready to face the new year with thanks for the past and hope for the future.

A blessed New Year to each one. Let us remember one another in our prayers. *Maureen*

**From Dr Marcie Lenk, Academic Director:**



On Simchat Torah the Jewish community celebrated the annual cycle of parashat hashavua by reading the end of Deuteronomy and immediately beginning Genesis once more. The idea is to think of the liturgical year as a spiral. We each move on and change as life progresses, considering where we were and what we were thinking last year and in previous years when we last read this scriptural text. This past July Bat Kol hosted a special group to focus on the Book of Leviticus, and those readers who have studied Leviticus in Bat Kol can relate to the discussions about sacrifices, sin and atonement, purity, ethics, the sabbatical and jubilee years, and much more. As for me, I was able to reflect on the difference between my experience running in and out as a Bat Kol instructor in previous years, and this year as academic director feeling the intensity of the experience of study and community. The Aramaic term havruta means both friend and study partner; I send blessings to the Bat Kol community that you all experience a year of study and spiritual meaning, and deep friendship.

**COMING HOME July 31, 2108, by Sr Grace Roclawska csfn**

There are many experiences of homecoming in my life. The very first one is, of course, the one I always recall with the greatest fondness whereby I received the gift of life and the love of the people closest to my heart: my mum, my dad and my sister.

Going home is, and will always be, something special and unique. As I grew up and left that home I was called to live in the one given to me through my vocation to consecrated life.

The religious community would never be a replacement for the family life I knew as a child and young adult but it is, and should be, a home. Home is the place of safety and joy and also

sometimes of arguments, heartaches and tension. But home is most of all the place to which we all want to return; it is a bond, a relationship which we create with one another.



This July (04-25 July, 2018), I was privileged to participate in three weeks’ study of the Book of Leviticus at the [Bat Kol Institute](#) in Jerusalem where each year Christians have an opportunity to study the Bible within Jewish milieu, using Jewish Sources. The program was intense and filled with many experiences. Almost every day started with learning and praying the Siddur, the Jewish daily prayers, followed by Hebrew lessons and various lectures delivered by rabbis from the various synagogues, reflecting on many key themes found in the third book of the Old Testament. There were many opportunities for “Havruta” study of the Bible which traditionally involves breaking open the Word of God in small groups of 2 – 4 students. The participants and teachers came from various parts of the world: Israel, Brazil, Canada, Australia, Ireland and they represented many other nationalities by their country of origin (Brazil, Korea, Canada, Ireland, Poland, Tonga, United States and Britain.) Among them were three priests, consecrated

brothers and sisters and pastoral ministers. Each week students were invited to join the Shabbat dinner at the accommodation (St Charles Hospice) and to pray in the reformed synagogues in Jerusalem. The richness of these experiences broadened our horizons of thinking about our faith and were truly inspirational. We discussed what we had learnt and increased our learning through our shared experiences. We prayed in the Jewish tradition and gladly celebrated the Eucharist in our Roman Catholic rite.

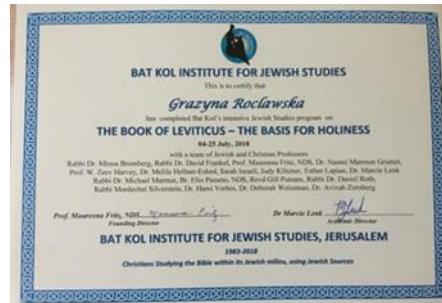


What really united us with our Jewish neighbours was our faith: different faiths perhaps, but both striving to understand the divine and connect it with the human experience. Some of the participants from the congregation of the [Brothers of Sions](#) currently live in Jerusalem and surrounding areas. Their being local was extremely helpful (as our generous, knowledgeable tour guides!) for those of us who were there for the first time. We used every break we had, every moment of free time, to reach out and touch, see, smell and taste the places where our Lord lived and died. There were tears of emotion shared in the Garden of Olives, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Sea of Galilee, the Mount of the Beatitudes, the Church of the Visitation, and many other places. For me, as a Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth, the visit to the Basilica of the Annunciation and the Church of St Joseph in Nazareth were extremely special. Powerful moments of emotion happened for me when I brought to these places in prayer those people I love (and/or don't love enough yet!), those who asked for prayers, those I would love to have been there with me, and those I know who have dreamed all their life of being in the Holy Land but cannot yet be here.



It is impossible to be with others on such a personal journey without sharing our life stories. Our group was both lively and loving. Many of us moved from being mere classmates to becoming friends, knowing that even separated by distance because of our different home countries, we will be friends staying connected by prayer. After three weeks of intense study and immersion in the Jewish tradition, the Book of Leviticus became more understandable for us. Following the call of the Vaticanum II expressed in the declaration [Nostra Aetate](#), we started to make our journey home aware and encouraged to be the sign of dialogue and unity between Christians and our Jewish brothers and sisters. Although the study never ends, we know at least a bit more of what constitutes the basis for holiness: being able to contemplate God and be in awe of our God.

On the last day of the course, each of us received a special blessing and blessed others. The Bat Kol Founding Director, Sr Maureen Fritz, Academic Director Dr Marcie Lenk and the Executive Secretary Rev. Gill Putnam, sent us off with encouragement to never give up learning, to find Bible study partners, continue learning Hebrew and...to return to Jerusalem.



The last day was also exactly twenty years since my final profession as a sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth. My classmates surprised me with an occasional speech, song and gift. At the end of the day, I prayed with gratitude and tears, simply feeling overwhelmed with the blessings I have received in my life: the day God gave my parents the grace of giving me life, calling me to consecrated life and allowing me to enjoy these past three weeks in the Holy Land. The experience in Jerusalem was like coming HOME.... ***Sr Grace Roclawska csfn***



**SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR DETAILS OF OUR 2019 PROGRAMS AND HOW TO APPLY.**

#### **From Revd Gill Putnam, Executive Secretary:**



**More events in Jerusalem:** In recent weeks, Israel has been filled with the awesome spirituality of the High Holy Days beginning with Rosh HaShanah, the Feast of Trumpets, marking the start of the New Year, 5779, on Tishrei 1 (10 September) when it is customary to wish each and every one '*Shanah tovah um'tukah*', meaning 'May you have a good and sweet new year.' Apples and honey symbolize these wishes.



Rosh Hashana is followed by ten days of repentance leading up to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. During this time the shofar is sounded every day, with the last blasts at the end of the final Yom Kippur service. For more information go to <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-ten-days-of-repentance/>.

Four days after Yom Kippur comes the Feast of Sukkot <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/?s=Sukkot> Jerusalem has had an abundance of visitors, and particularly during Sukkot Christians from all over the world came, thousands taking part in the Jerusalem March in support of Israel. Get a taste of the spirit of the celebrations here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdoRmNpd9Y>

Then just to round off all the festivals came Simchat Torah, accompanied with the joy of singing and dancing with the Torah scrolls. Maureen and I celebrated with Kol HaNeshama and the Akim community:

<https://www.facebook.com/kehilatkolahaneshma/videos/1918390368239616/>

#### **WOULD YOU LIKE A TORAH STUDY PARTNER? NO ONE AROUND, THEN THIS COULD BE FOR YOU!**

Are you feeling isolated in your Torah studies, trying to do it alone, longing for a havruta partner? Well, you could soon have an international partner to study with. To find out more, visit:

<https://batkol.info/2018/04/16/international-torah-study-partners-proposal/>

If you would like to join in please contact Revd Sandra Clark [sandra@bearwickhouse.on.ca](mailto:sandra@bearwickhouse.on.ca) and myself, [gill@batkol.info](mailto:gill@batkol.info)



## HOLD THE DATES!

DON'T MISS THESE OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDY RIGHT HERE IN JERUSALEM IN 2019!

### **04 March 2019 - Wrestling with God: Jews and Christians in Conversation**

In this one-day seminar, scholars will reflect on the ways that Jewish and Christian theologians at different points in history, when examined in relation to each other, can yield important ideas for contemporary Christians and Jews. We will examine central writings and ideas of each, consider the effect on both Jewish and Christian theology today.

### **8-18 April 2019 - Tshuva, Repentance and Lent**

During this season of holy reflection, we invite you to delve into the Jewish concept of *tshuva* - returning to God, and the ways that *tshuva* is like or unlike the *metanoia* of the New Testament. As you experience Lent and Holy Week in Jerusalem, you will study texts from the Bible, Talmud, Jewish philosophy and liturgy with Jewish teachers, considering the ways that Jewish ideas about *tshuva* can enhance Christian faith and practice, considering the influence of the Jewish concept of *tshuva* in the literature of the Church Fathers. This 10 day program will include approximately 27-30 hours of lectures, plus excursions in and around the Jerusalem area.

### **2–23 July 2019 - Numbers: God's Presence in a Wandering People**

The book of Numbers includes many stories of the relationship of the people of Israel with God in the Wilderness: the murmurings at Taberah, complaints about manna, God's Spirit resting on 70 elders, including Eldad and Medad, Miriam and Aaron speaking out against Moses, the spies, some of whom return from the Land with negative reports, Korah's rebellion, and Aaron's death. In those stories and in the lesser-known sections of this book, we find instructions and indications of the challenges and gifts of the presence of God among this people who only recently emerged as a free people after a long period of slavery in Egypt. We will explore the theme of God's presence in the Book of Numbers, examining Rabbinic, medieval, and modern Jewish methods of scriptural interpretation. The three week Bat Kol program includes approximately 50 hours of lectures, plus excursions in Jerusalem and the Galilee. Inclusive fee is US\$3,950.

### **26 September –10 October 2019 - The Days of Awe**

Study the texts and experience the atmosphere in Jerusalem on the Days of Awe: Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. This is an opportunity to learn from Jewish teachers, and immerse yourself in the liturgical poetry of *slikhot*, penitential prayers recited before sunrise daily in this season, as well as biblical, rabbinical and medieval Jewish texts about sin and forgiveness. Consider the meanings of the Ten Days of Repentance for individual and communal reconciliation with each other and with God. This 14 day program will include approximately 27-30 hours of lectures, plus excursions in and around the Jerusalem area.

***Residential programs are inclusive of single ensuite accommodation with full board, and also cover the cost of all scheduled excursions in the program, pre-study material and books. The programs can be taken for academic credit with the agreement of individual colleges. (Additional fee US\$250.) For more information please contact Academic Director Dr Marcie Lenk, [marcielenk@batkol.info](mailto:marcielenk@batkol.info) and Executive Secretary Revd Gill Putnam, [gill@batkol.info](mailto:gill@batkol.info).***



### **BAT KOL INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

#### ***Bat Kol International Leadership Team:***

The next BKILT Conference is scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> November, and plans are well under way for another inspirational gathering to which this year we look forward to welcoming additional representatives of the Religious of Sion. We also have a new delegate from Ireland, Thérèse Fitzgerald, nds, who is replacing Anne Kelleher who has been a great Bat Kol supporter but has had to stand down at present for family reasons. Our thoughts, prayers and thanks go to Anne and her family. We very much look forward to welcoming Thérèse and the wisdom she will

bring to the discussions. The Team members voluntarily accept the role of ambassadors for Bat Kol in their own countries, to help animate and unify the Bat Kol cells in their country by promoting the vision through the cells, Erev Shabbat suppers, Parashat Hashavuah study, Hebrew and Jewish Christian dialogue as well as seeking and supporting potential participants for future programs. They are also there for ***you*** if you want to know about Bat Kol cells and how to join one, and the other activities in your own country. Please support this team, the Religious of Sion delegates and the Jerusalem staff in prayer as we continue to work together on the future growth of Bat Kol. The Bat Kol team members are:

Australia: Mary Ann Payne [mapayne77@gmail.com](mailto:mapayne77@gmail.com)  
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New members will be elected to represent Brasil, Spain, France and Italy

#### **WORLD NEWS:**



##### **AUSTRALIA from Mary Ann Payne (Bat Kol Alum: 2007, 2011, 2015 and BKILT Representative)**

Mary Ann sends a reminder regarding Elizabeth Young's ETZ HAYIM Jewish and Christian Liturgical Calendar (5779 - 5780) and website: <http://www.etz-hayim.com> The calendar is comprehensive and professionally produced and can be downloaded totally free of charge. Elizabeth also includes links to Bat Kol commentaries on her site and some wonderful resources. Mary Ann is sure our readers will appreciate a reminder that a treasure trove of inspiration and information, produced by a Bat Kol alum, is only a "click" away! Do visit and enjoy!



**CANADA:** News from the Winnipeg Bat Kol Haemet group - Elizabeth Sokoloski writes that after a very successful year the group met on June 8th for their last session before a summer break. The session concluded with a Shabbat meal. They are very blessed to have Bev Binder, who is Jewish, in the group and she led them in the Shabbat service. They concluded the meal with a lively discussion on Parashat Shelach Lecha.



**PHILIPPINES:** Kristine Meneses, Ph.D, Bat Kol alumna 2016, has sent a link to the Catholic Women Preach website: <http://catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/09092018>. There are many sermons together with bios of the preachers, including Kristine, and lots of other items.

**AND FINALLY, A MUSICAL TREAT FROM JERUSALEM:** Psalm 122 sung in Hebrew by Br Joel Moreira NDS and Br Tiago Rangel, NDS, filmed by Br Cristóvão O Silva, NDS. Enjoy!

Click here to view: <https://www.facebook.com/872100649575821/videos/174701596776500/>



#### **DON'T FORGET! This is YOUR News Bulletin**

Please send Gill items about your Bat Kol activities, book/articles published, conferences, visits and special events

[gill@batkol.info](mailto:gill@batkol.info)

