On Sunday, November 8, Sheila Upjohn visited Swan Hill for an afternoon reflection on Julian of Norwich and her classical spiritual writing, *The Revelations of Divine Love*. Sheila, like Julian a Norwich woman, grew up in the city where Julian lived and wrote her book. She is the author of *In Search of Julian of Norwich* and *All Shall Be Well* - a fresh and lively translation of Julian’s *Revelations of Divine Love*, abridged and arranged for daily reading. Her translation of Julian is used in the best selling *Enfolded in Love and In Love Enclosed*.

Around eighteen participants took advantage of the afternoon as Sheila provided a brief biography of Julian’s life before reflecting on the revelation of God’s love for humanity through *The Revelations of Divine Love*. Julian was born in 1342 and whilst we do not know her real name she was named after St Julian’s Church in Norwich where she lived as an anchoress most of her life. At that time Julian was known for her wisdom on spiritual matters and people would come to her cell in Norwich seeking advice on just about everything. At that time the plague, poverty and famine afflicted the citizens of Norwich so Julian must have counselled many people who were suffering and in pain. At the same time Julian’s writings are suffused with hope and trust in the goodness of God.

Julian’s *Revelations of Divine Love* is based on a series of sixteen visions she received on the May 8, 1373. Julian was lying on what she thought was going to be her deathbed when she suddenly saw Christ bleeding in front of her and received insight into his sufferings and love for us. Julian’s message was one of hope and trust in a God whose compassionate love is always given to us.

Some of Julian quotations that Sheila provided included:

*The love that God most high has for our soul is so great that it outstrips our understanding. No one one earth can comprehend how much, how sweetly and how tenderly our Maker loves us.* (Ch 6)

*Our Lord showed that he loves us as much now while we are here on earth as he shall when we stand before his blessed face. And all our troubled come because our own love fails us.* (Ch 37)

*I saw that God is our true peace. He watches over us continually when we can find no rest, and he works continually to bring us to peace that shall never end.* (Ch 49)

As Advent is almost upon us together with the commencement of the Year of Mercy those present appreciated the opportunity to hear what Sheila had to say on Julian’s life and her work.

*Fr Marcello Colasante – Swan Hill Parish Priest*