

## Discovery “Freedom in Jail” An Umbrian Retreat



Roberto Assagioli’s “prison diary” *Freedom in Jail* is an autobiographical account of the month he spent in prison under the fascist regime in 1940. His conclusion is entitled “A Hymn to Inner Freedom” where he writes about every man and woman’s power to inwardly free themselves.

One does not need to be incarcerated to feel imprisoned. Part of the human condition, at different points in our lives, is to find ourselves enslaved by some uncontrollable situation to which we feel bound. *Freedom in Jail* shows us that no matter what our condition – be it catastrophe, ill health, old age, and even pending death – we always remain free and responsible for choosing how we actively accept the situation and what attitude we take. The mystery is that these circumstances can also lead us to our Higher Self.

From 15-19 September, you too can experience “Freedom in Jail” during a four-day retreat in the heart of the Umbrian Apennines. Together, as a small group, we will spend time living and preparing our meals in rustic conditions. Like Assagioli, you will have a chance to be alone, in silence, without any clocks, watches, or internet connection. We will read and contemplate Assagioli’s *Freedom in Jail*, and on Sunday morning read a canto of Dante’s *Paradiso*, a book that Assagioli read while in prison. Exactly 76 years after Assagioli’s release from jail, we too will end our time in “prison” on 19 September.

Afterwards there is an optional extra program that includes a day excursion to Gualdo Tadino and the Eremo di Serra Santa.

## Discover “Freedom in Jail” Details

**Dates:** Thursday, 15 September starting at 18:00 to Monday, 19 September after breakfast.

**Place:** Colbassano, Italy. From Rome, take a direct intercity train to Fossato di Vico (2 hours).

**Language:** English (without translation)

**Cost:** €450.00, including:

- Single room (6 with private bath, 4 with shared bath)
- Supper on Thursday, 15 September, breakfast on Monday, 19 September, and 3 days full pension (vegetarian)
- Pick up and delivery to Fossato di Vico train station
- Copy of *Freedom in Jail* by Roberto Assagioli

**Please note:** As a part of the retreat, all participants will be asked to help prepare meals and clean up afterwards as a small group on a rotational basis. All work will be completed in silence

### Optional Excursion Monday 19 September

Those wishing to stay an extra night and explore the beautiful area can participate in a visit to the historic center of Gualdo Tadino and a panoramic walk to the Eremo Serra Santa in the nearby Apennines.

**Cost:** €100.00, including:

- Extra night stay with breakfast
- Tour of Gualdo Tadino
- Walking tour in the Apennines to the medieval Eremo di Serra Santa with lunch
- Dinner at a local, traditional restaurant

## Your Guides

Catherine Ann Lombard, M.A. is a psychosynthesis psychologist, practitioner, and researcher. She has had numerous articles published on psychosynthesis. Most recently, she edited, annotated and introduced Assagioli’s *Freedom in Jail*, the first book to be published in the new series *Quaderni dell’Archivio Assagioli*, published by Gruppo Alle Fonti, Istituto di Psicointesi, Florence.

Dr. Kees den Biesen is an independent scholar in literature, philosophy and religion, specialized in the poetry and theology of Ephrem the Syrian (ca. 300-373) and Dante Alighieri (1265-1321). He lectures about literature, personal growth and religion at Dutch universities and leads several Dante reading groups. Kees was a Benedictine monk for 18 years. Catherine and Kees have been married 15 years and offer meditative, small-scale psychosynthesis and Dante trips in Tuscany and elsewhere in Italy. For more information, see [PoeticPlaces.org](http://PoeticPlaces.org).

**Contact:** [loveandwill@live.com](mailto:loveandwill@live.com)

## Program

### Thursday, 15 September

At the day of arrival, you will be met at the train station of Fossato di Vico and brought to the old farmhouse *Casolare Colle Alogne* (see <https://sites.google.com/site/casolarecollealogne/>).

We will gather at 18:00 for introductions and a review of the program.

Catherine and Kees will then introduce the theme of the retreat.  
Afterwards we all prepare and share our first meal.

### Friday, 16 September

This is the first day of silence, mostly dedicated to readings and discussions of Assagioli’s *Freedom in Jail*. The day starts with a silent breakfast, from 8:00-9:00, which you prepare and clean up yourself. Then from 9:30 till 11:30 Catherine will lead the reading of *Freedom in Jail*.

From 12:00-14:00 we all prepare and share a lunch. After cleaning up, the afternoon is free until 17:00, when Catherine will lead the second reading session that finishes at 18:30.

From 19:00-21:00 we all prepare and share supper and then do the cleaning up.

### Saturday, 17 September

#### All day in Silence.

On this second day of silence, you spend all the time between meals in the way that suits you best. Simple exercises will be suggested to explore during the day.

Breakfast, lunch and supper are again prepared by all, at the same times as on Friday.

### Sunday, 18 September

With breakfast at 8:00, our time of silence is over and we start a day of sharing and celebration!

From 9:30-11:30 Kees will lead readings from Dante’s *Paradiso*. After a break, we all prepare and share a celebratory *pranzo di domenica* – the tradition Italian Sunday lunch – from 12:00-14:30.

From 15:00-17:00 we will share our experiences of ‘freedom in jail.’ Afterwards, there is free time till 19:00, when we start preparing the modest *cena di domenica*.

### Monday, 19 September

After breakfast you will be brought to the train station of Fossato di Vico, at whatever time your train is.

Those wishing to stay an extra night and explore the beautiful area can participate in a visit to the historic center of Gualdo Tadino and a panoramic walk to the Eremo Serra Santa in the nearby Apennines.