



art...

Beads of Inspiration

Motivated by God and inspired by the beauty of nature, **Cheryl Milligan** finds endless pleasure in creating beaded jewellery

WHEN MY HUSBAND, DAVE, TOOK A MID-LIFE CHANGE OF career and started his own beaded jewellery business, it wasn't long before he asked me to join him. A nursing sister by profession, I was working in a geriatric home at the time and felt I also needed a change. I have always enjoyed being creative, from patchwork to paper maché, and threading beads didn't look too difficult! So I took over the design work, while he took on the business management and sales. That was fourteen years ago and I'm still designing!

I find endless creative pleasure in the whole design process. From wandering around bead shops and seeing what grabs my eye, to "designing on my feet" as I mentally put together colours, shapes and textures. Next, scattering the beads across my worktable (nothing too orderly about the process!) and playing around a bit to see what works best. When I have finally settled on a design and completed the piece, satisfaction kicks in.

MY INSPIRATION

I find the beauty of beads to be amazing. Natural products such as shell, pearls, wood and semi-precious stones are wonderful to work with as there is a variance of grain, colour or shape in a single string. And I'm always inspired by nature – God has shown the way and set the standard. Worshipping Him brings great energy. I'm also inspired by people who work hard and persevere in their God-given talents and who produce innovative items of excellence – some of the beaded wire art sold at traffic lights are fantastic! Art galleries, décor shops, ballet and dance, beach and mountains, spending time with my fabulous family (and dog!) and friends, all fuel my creative tank.

My relationship with God is my motivation for life. I am able to draw so much from Him: creative inspiration, peace and "push-through" determination for deadlines, love for (and sometimes patience with!) co-workers; and the drive to continue

in my commitment to honour Him with the work of my hands. It's great to be able to say "thanks" and give glory to Him when my work is well received.

In our fair-trade business, we are committed to employing and training mainly women from previously disadvantaged communities. It is wonderful to be able to bless others through the blessings I have received. God's grace is amazing! ☩

