

Photo by Adalberto Henriquez

The Vision Statement of Contemplative Outreach

St. Louis Annual Conference
September 28, 2006
Thomas Keating

What is the primary focus of the unity of Contemplative Outreach as a network? I think it is to maintain the integrity of the method of Centering Prayer and its conceptual background. For a number of years, it has been the duty of the Board of Trustees to find out how to do that. Maintaining the integrity requires a razor-edged discernment, one that requires certain structures and policies, and at the same time realizes that this integrity presupposes the capacity to make exceptions and to be open to new initiatives and creativity.

As voting members of Contemplative Outreach you have ahead of you the delicate task of trying to sense the distinction between fidelity to the method and at the same time encouraging sensitivity to the possibility that circumstances may change and require new expressions or clearer articulations of the conceptual background. This is particularly true in areas with different levels of cultural participation, especially other countries. In this process the importance of listening to the Spirit is essential. At the same time, while there must be a constant readiness to change, there must always remain a balance between the possible rashness of some risks and the realization that not to take risks is the greatest risk there is.

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Doing What Is Next

Doing what is next without argument is devotion to God.

I just experienced a Holy Week retreat and spent this most holy time in silence. I've always regarded this time of the year as very special, attending all the liturgical services in my local parish and, years ago, when Chrysalis House was in existence, I attended the Easter Vigil services with my Contemplative Outreach friends.

I pondered attending this Holy Week retreat many times, but never took the time to "go apart awhile." I was always too busy with "Easter preparations". You might ask, "What is a better preparation for Easter than a Holy Week retreat?" A very good question – and one I had never asked myself.

This year, I missed my annual Amarillo Post-Intensive retreat because of my duties at the office. Dyane McMahon, our Executive Director, resigned in February to take another position in New York City and there was much to do. I found myself doing what was required of me next without argument.

At that point, I was overdue for a retreat, longing for silence, solitude and community Centering Prayer. I was ready for a retreat. So, I gave myself to this experience wholeheartedly, glad to be there, to be silent, and to participate – to get my feet washed.

I want to share a moment of my retreat that has remained with me. It happened very unexpectedly. Although it was a "momentary experience" I'll give you a few details to set the "stage" with some background. During Good Friday we had time to venerate the Cross - the crucifix was laid on the floor propped up on a purple pillow with a purple fabric draped alongside it. After the services many of us lingered, spent time in silence, and departed when we each felt ready to retire for the evening. Upon returning on early Saturday morning for Centering Prayer, I found the room untouched and filled with reverence. I almost tiptoed in and out of the room so as not to disturb the silence. His presence was engulfing us.

Later that day we gathered again for Centering Prayer. As I entered the room I was greeted by the "empty tomb", the crucifix was gone, only the purple pillow and the purple drape remained. I can't explain the next couple of seconds – which seemed like an eternity and a throw-back in time simultaneously – I became Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Mary the Mother of James all at once. I felt completely confused, empty and shocked! Where was Jesus? I felt bereaved and lost. I moved to my place in the prayer room – the gong sounded and Centering Prayer began. Disoriented as I was, I did what came next. Afterwards, still dazed by the experience, I lingered on my prayer cushion, my head bowed. In the very depth of my being I heard the whisper of that small, still voice repeat over and over again – "He has risen!"

On Sunday morning, the message we received was this, "Our time together and this Holy Week experience has the next fifty days to unfold, so stay awake, listen, be open and wait for the Lord." What will the next fifty days, the next fifty weeks hold in store? This is the question I ask you to hold in your heart now.

I share this momentary experience with you NOT because I had a revelation but to encourage you to take the time for retreat, a time apart, to be present to the presence and action of God within and in our midst. As for this moment, I await the opportunity to do what is next without argument...

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Indeed, He is Risen!



Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler, President

*Editors Note:
Retreats offered
throughout the
world by the
Contemplative
Outreach network
are listed in
The Calendar
of Events
beginning on
Page 23.*

Another “11th” that will forever be a sad, grim memory for me was the accident and passing of our dear friend Maria Lopez.

I can still hear Ricardo’s voice on the phone that Sunday afternoon, “My wife has been run over by an automobile and I’m asking for prayers. Please call everybody you can think of and ask for prayers – a miracle is needed!” So I did. And then two hours later, the phone rang again. It was him saying, “She didn’t make it”.

Many of you will remember Maria for her extraordinary contributions to Extensión Contemplativa, especially her efforts in distributing the many resources from Contemplative Outreach that have been translated into Spanish.

Our Board held an extraordinary meeting with Fr. Thomas Keating and Gail Fitzpatrick Hopler in Miami at the beginning of January. I had stayed with Ricardo and Maria Lopez for six days so that Maria and I could inventory the resources in Spanish. She had been responsible for distributing the translated Contemplative Outreach resources for the past six years. Maria had expressed her desire to quit “the book business” as she felt the time had come for someone else to take over this responsibility. Did she have a premonition? We will never know.

She had just finished two big commitments she had in this world; one, her sons had just moved out to live on their own, and, two, the responsibility of ordering and selling the books for Extensión Contemplativa.

Maria’s other BIG commitment was with her husband – married for 43 years and very much in love!

Two years ago she was at his bedside week after week in the hospital when he had heart surgery and nobody thought he was going to make it. And did we pray for him then! Ricardo and his sons need your prayers now, keep them in yours and in your hearts...

Until we meet again in heaven, Maria, rest in peace!
Hasta entonces, descansa en paz!

Book Ministry: Our book ministry will now be handled by Liliana Ramirez in Miami. For a complete listing of the available resources please contact Liliana by phone at 407-641-5312 or by email at franciscocastano_3@hotmail.com.

Monterrey Mexico:

Fr. Keating visited Monterrey, Mexico in March. His presence made quite an impact on the almost 900 people attending the first evening, and the 650 the next morning. The coordinator, Mercedes Camelo, has done a great job in the relatively short time that she has been introducing Centering Prayer, training people and offering retreats and workshops. Sr. Meg Funk was also there recently to talk about “thoughts”.

A Formation for Service workshop will be held in Monterrey in August, 2007, with the participation of primarily local people and others from neighboring towns.

Another Formation for Service will be offered in San Jose, Costa Rica, and will be attended by people from three different countries in Central America, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela.



The Annual Conference Enrichment Days will be simultaneously translated from English to Spanish.

Para Informes en Español ~ Resources Translated in Spanish

Extensión Contemplativa Contacts

The people listed below are members of Extensión Contemplativa who can answer questions and provide information in Spanish.

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2007 Annual Conference

Contemplative Vision:

Awakening to Beauty, Truth and Goodness
Houston, Texas September 26 - 30



... the conversation continues as we respond to last year's conference theme of listening, by awakening to the contemplative values contained in our revised Vision.

"It is a precious gift to come close to interior silence. Its beauty is so incomparable that it changes one's perception of what beauty is ...When you truly love yourself, you become aware that your true Self is Christ expressing himself in you...then everything begins to reflect not only its own beauty but also the beauty of its Source."

Thomas Keating, *Open Mind, Open Heart*

Keating
and
Rohr

Together Again

This year's Annual Conference will be held at the Omni Hotel Westside in Houston, Texas, beginning at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 26 to Friday afternoon, September 28, followed by the Enrichment Days of Shared Silence and Sacred Sound from 7:30 p.m. Friday, September 28 to 12:00 p.m. Sunday, September 30.

Joining us in Houston will be the nationally acclaimed contemplative choral group, Conspire, under the direction of Craig Hella Johnson and sacred sound musician, Jodi Roberts.

Our expanded Enrichment Days will include time for contemplative prayer and Taize, closing at noon Sunday with a beautiful ecumenical liturgy, all with the intention to open and deepen our awareness in the Divine Presence.

For more details and online registration visit our website: ContemplativeOutreach.org

"I did not have to ask my heart what it wanted,
because of all the desires I have ever known
just one did I cling to
for it was the essence of all desire:
to hold beauty in the arms of my soul."

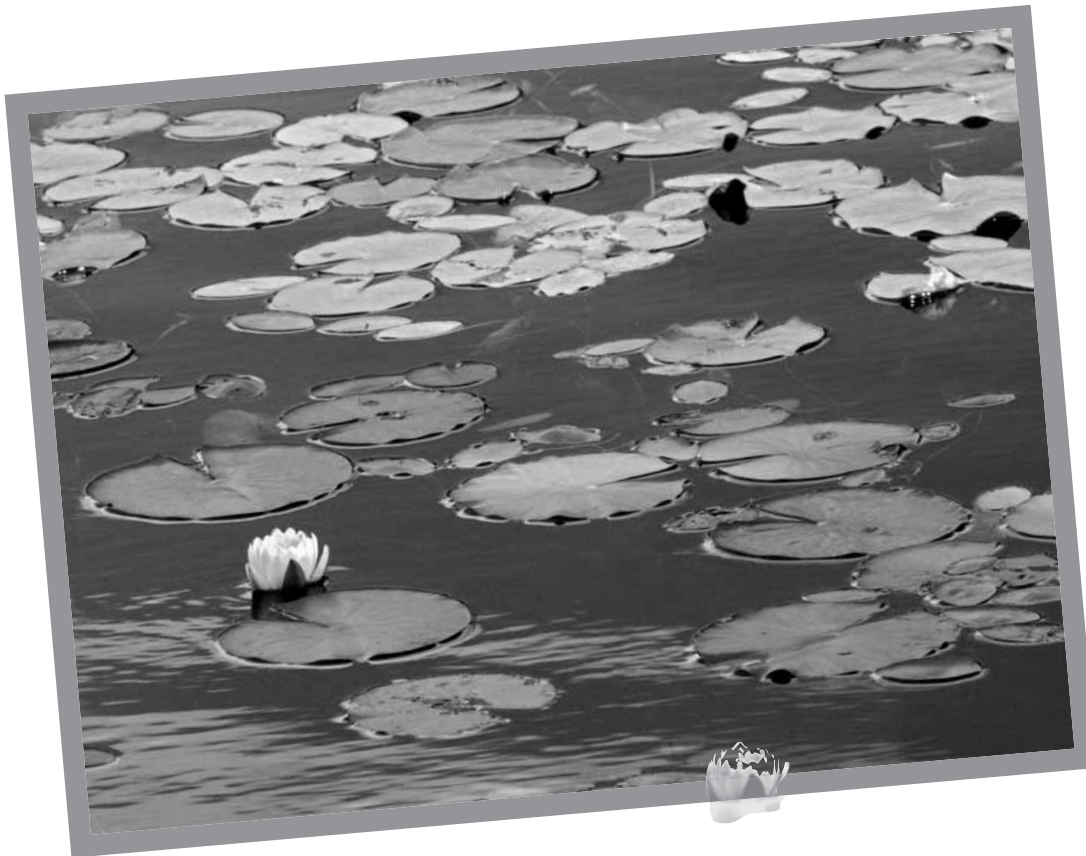
St. John of the Cross



Omni Hotel Westside

"Awakening
to beauty, truth
and goodness
is wakening to God,
the Divine Presence
which permeates
all reality."

Thomas Keating



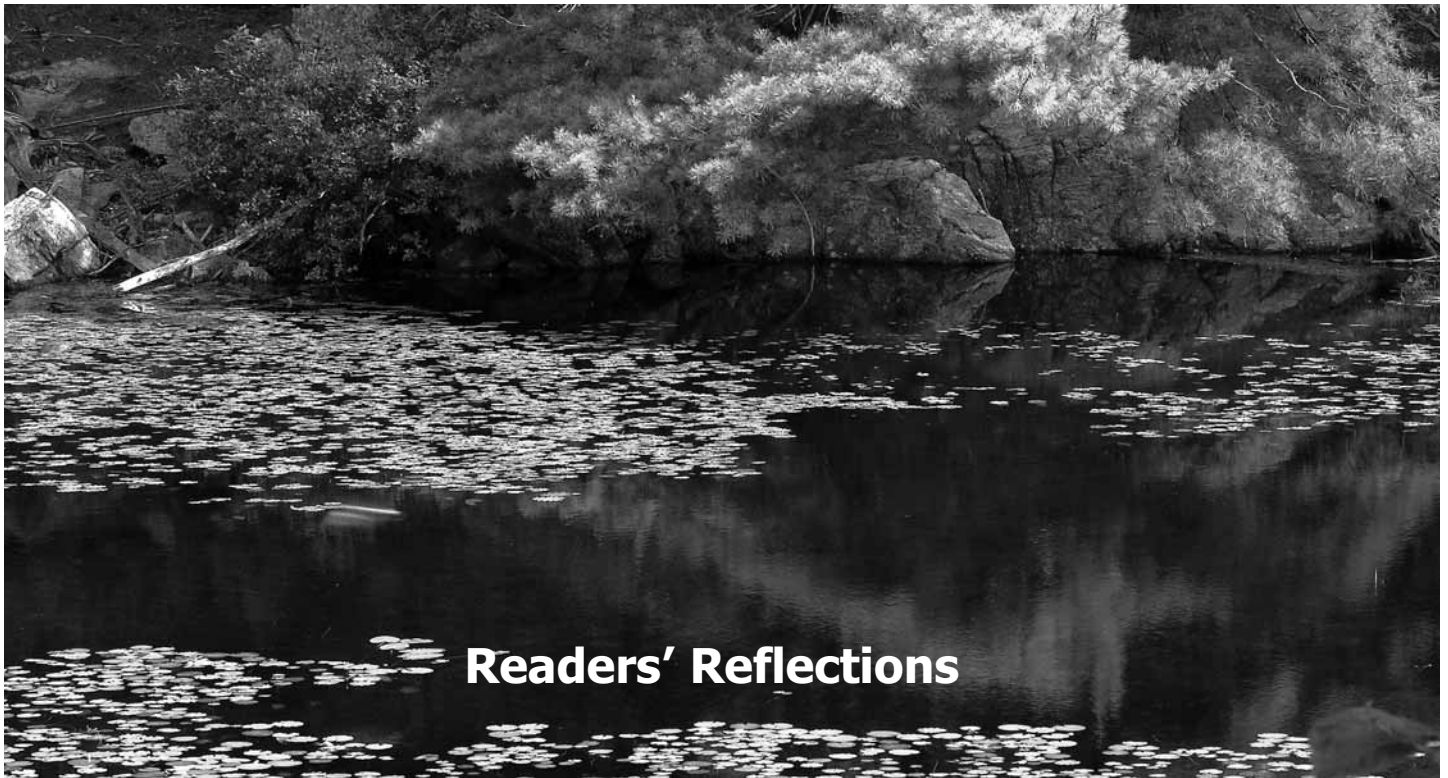
Annual Conference: Process and Collaboration

2006 was a "year of listening," especially to the contemplative values contained in our revised Vision. Pondering these words allows the Spirit to expand them, opening up deep meaning. Through valuation of their meaning, we begin to awaken to their beauty, truth, and goodness, feeling the integration of their wisdom in our lives.

Enrichment Days: Shared Silence and Sacred Sound

Thomas Keating and Richard Rohr will share their reflections on our conference theme with insights and applicability to enhance our perceptions of daily life. It will be a time to celebrate the fruits of our process as we awaken to the beauty of a contemplative vision for us and the world.

—The Enrichment Days will be simultaneously translated from English to Spanish—



Readers' Reflections

Photos by Susan Supak

Be still and Know That I am God

Centering Prayer at St. Luke in the Fields
by Richard Kigel

Trappists. Come any Tuesday evening and you will see a group of men and women sitting quietly, their faces still and serene.

Nobody moves. Nobody speaks. There is only silence. They are practicing Centering Prayer, the meditation practice Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount. *Whenever you pray, go into your room, shut the door and pray to your Father, who is in secret.* (Matthew 6:6)

“The beauty of the silence is that it opens us to being enveloped by the presence of God,” said Patricia Joyce. “Without a word, we say ‘yes’ and a transformation begins,” she said. “It is so subtle we are unaware of it until we notice that we are reacting to the world and the people around us differently.”

James Duus noted how it is “similar to Buddhist meditation but within the Christian tradition. It is my committed time in relationship with God.”

“In Centering Prayer we have a Christian meditation relatively free of the trappings of method,” said Alex Tooker. “It is an inner connection to God with a ‘method’ consisting mainly of acceptance, patience and listening.”

Philomena Benson, who comes to St. Luke’s from Queens via Belfast, finds “Centering Prayer fills a deep need in my soul for quiet.”

Said James Belzer, “The most wonderful gift of the practice is to participate in a moment of stillness, peace and tranquility, allowing the presence of God to be felt in the midst of New York City life.”

“Centering Prayer has deepened my prayer life,” said Joseph Hemmes. “It introduced me to a community of like-minded people, dedicated to helping each other live a more authentic Christian life.”

For my own practice, when I sit alone —*Go into your room*—I put the troubles of the world aside —*and shut the door*—I find myself entering a spiritual space cluttered with the psychic junk of my life, favorite desires, dreams, demands. I bring to mind my intention for this prayer and willingly give it all up, the circling thoughts, ideas, comments, images. Silently, I consent to God’s presence within—*and pray to your Father, who is in secret.* For a moment, a vast inner space opens. Time disappears. I rest in the eternal flow of presence. My relationship to God deepens. He takes me to Himself. I am filled with His Love immersed in His Peace. *And your Father, who sees in secret, will*

From a 21-Day by Bruce Gardiner

Silence

You and I,
these words,
this paper –
Blossoms and tendrils
on the vine of silence

(W)holy Spirit

The Heir
finds me
to breathe into

You Dare Call this Faith?

Centering Prayer:
moving from this pain
to the next,
and back again,
with a sense of hope

Deep Listening

Now hear this:
This / Here / Now

Fair Trade Agreement

You know
thoughts have their rights too.
They'd just as soon
bubble up and be gone.

You let them ascend,
they let you descend.

Sounds like a fair trade to me

Cowboy Thoughts

Thoughts ride into town.

They just wanted to wander,
but we arrest them,

Charge them with vagrancy,
pistol whip them to get them to talk,



Face of Faces sculpted by Frederick Franck
Pacem in Terris, Warwick, New York

throw them in a cell,
hold them for further questioning,

Finally condemn them
and give them a life sentence
or a summary execution.
In some cases, we forgive them
and invite them to stick around:
We try to make friends.

Thoughts, on the other hand,
just want to move on, leave town.

That's their true nature –
coming and going.

But here I am once again
turning my cell
into a jail.

Resist No Thought

Even spiritual warfare is warfare.
That said, be sure to say "hello"
to the boogy-persons
when they visit you.
Benedict says, Welcome
the stranger.
I say: You never know.

My Cell

My cell is a permeable membrane
the world passes through:

Some times a division
of foot soldiers

Some times just
a jet plume in a clear
blue sky

Real Freedom

First-time criminals robe silence
with sharp words

Lifers, on the other hand,
beat their (s)words into plowshares
and cultivate silence.

A garden grows in the Courtyard.
The Judge remains silent,
sentences no one.

All are free to go.
But the lifters return to their cells.
And pray.

In God's country, it's like this:
All fall short, all are guilty.
All are already loved, anyway.

Silence – The Last Word

When silence speaks
without saying a word,
you're close to home,
the home you never left

THE VISION STATEMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH

Continued from Page 1



Take for example the Apostles and the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-35). They introduced enormous changes in the Christian movement when it began to penetrate the Gentile world. It was unthinkable for many Jewish Christians but they gradually had to adjust, and if they couldn't, they suffered the consequences of being left behind in a movement of the Spirit that was in their time embracing the whole world and not just the chosen people of Israel. In our case, we didn't have any plan originally—I for sure did not—and everything that has developed and is developing, has come through discussion, experience, consensus, and a lot of mistakes. These are not disasters but the normal result of listening and learning. An attitude of discouragement or indignation is not the proper response to difficulties. Rather, encouraging the capacity to welcome new situations is the spirit of Contemplative Outreach.

As an example of what I mean by encouraging the capacity to welcome new situations, I'd like to relate an incident that happened when I arrived in an airport the other day. As I arrived at the baggage claim to wait for my bag, I saw a baby and his mother who had arrived on the same plane. A short distance away a dog was sitting with its master, and as the youngster was just learning to walk, it began to toddle uncertainly towards the dog. It found the animal very interesting. As the baby

*Encouraging
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approached the dog, I was fascinated to see the expression on the dog's face. It was evidently not happy about the situation and was hoping that this child was not going to make it, because the poor dog didn't know what he would do. As the toddler proceeded, he leaned so far forward that he fell down. He would get up...fall down...and finally, this one-year-old decided the best thing to do was to lean back, and as he did so he fell on his behind. It was charming to watch the determination of this infant to learn to walk. He wasn't in the slightest discouraged by the number of times that he fell. And neither was his mother as she kept her patience while the baby struggled. It was only the dog that was disturbed about this process.

I was an abbot for twenty years and was expected to make decisions. That was the way I was trained. In the rule of Benedict,

the abbot is directed to consult a committee of senior monks in small matters and the whole community in matters that are more significant. It is possible to do that in a monastery of reasonable proportions, but it isn't easy to find the time and the motivation to work through the process of consensus in large communities.

On the whole I think Contemplative Outreach has done very well in trying to follow its Vision Statement and Principles. So it was with some trepidation that after twenty years of experience we considered bringing the Vision Statement and Theological Principles into a review process in order to bring them up to date. It was my conviction that the Theological Principles along with the Structural and Administrative Principles needed a bit of updating as well as a few additions and clarifications that could make the whole text more intelligible. Words, whether one likes it or not, sometimes change over time and take on different meanings. It was my intention to change the text as little as possible and just to refine it that inspired me to ask the Board of Trustees to look at them once again and to see if we might offer the draft of an improved text for the consideration of the other bodies of Contemplative Outreach and the voting membership. We were so committed to the Theological Principles that when we originally put them before the voting membership ten years ago, we decided to require a two-thirds vote to change anything at all.

That is a heavy commitment. It is hard to get a two-thirds vote on any subject in any voting organization. Accordingly, with the Structural and Administrative Principles, we decided to require only a simple majority to make changes.

At this conference, we are presenting the initial draft of the changes we put forward after two or three years of work by the Board and the rewrite committee. They have worked very hard to articulate the impossible, which is the mystery of our vocation as a 21st century

charism. We don't say we have succeeded; all we can say is that this is our respectable best on the basis of many meetings, telephone conferences, and written suggestions. We are asking each leadership body and each of you as a voting member, and all those in the broader membership, to make further suggestions or to point out what still seems unclear.

The broader the consultation the more likely we are to get a better result. We are asking you to talk to your constituency about it; your small groups, chapters or clusters, and perhaps put some ideas together to



Photo by Eldion Habazaj

see if they fly in your local chapter, and then let us know, and we will certainly take them very seriously.

The reason I think this is important is because the experience of these Theological Principles and the Administrative and Structural Principles, some of which also have a theological or experiential side, have proved to be extremely useful. We don't have any direct hierarchical accountability at this point. The chief thing we have that can unite us for the years to come is our consent to the Vision Statement. We must

affirm what we consider the spirit of Contemplative Outreach and a faithful articulation of its fundamental nature without claiming a specific text to be the last word on the subject. It may need to be changed again or reaffirmed in another ten or twenty years. In any case, this is the spirit in which I invite you to look at these modifications.

Contemplative Outreach has been growing, so an objective criterion to which to bring our day to day experience is what we are trying to present. In many chapter newsletters, the

custom has arisen of printing the Vision and the Theological Principles as they have been articulated until now. The new text is not to replace them, but simply to add a few more points that were not in the former and to find clearer ways of expressing them. Of course, we cannot articulate that which is a mystery. We can only point to it or hint at it as in poetry. Much of scripture is poetry or myth in the sense of trying to express truths that are beyond prose or the ordinary way of articulating things. It is out of respect for the mystery that we do not presume that we can encompass it in a few words, statements, or propositions once and for all, or to inscribe it in stone.

In any charismatic movement or in the foundation of religious communities in the Christian religion, once the founder passes away, the next generation, out of loyalty to their experience of the mystery and sometimes to the founder, tends to make rules, policies, and structures to preserve the spirit that was enjoyed in the early days of the movement.

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THE VISION STATEMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH

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The spirit cannot be preserved that way. We need structures and policies, but these need the flexibility to adjust to new situations and ideas. An ongoing evaluation from the heart of those who hold positions of servant leadership is important.

What you need to be careful of after my departure as chairman of Contemplative Outreach is not to overdo loyalty to what we are doing now or to me as the last word on any subject. I'm just a channel of the charisma we have received. I couldn't have done anything that has happened without the collaboration, inspiration, and creativity of our various structural bodies, board members, and dedicated membership. It is a corporate project and hence it is constantly changing. That is one of the principles of listening to the Spirit whose voice is extended not just through the leader-



Photo by Eldron Habazaj

ship but throughout the whole organization. This is a characteristic of the rule of Benedict which says that when everyone has to be consulted the youngest members of the community should be included. In Benedict's view, God sometimes speaks through the young, as he did in the case of a number of the prophets in the Old Testament.

In this consultation what we are looking for is the guidance of the Spirit, especially through the Gift of Counsel, one of the seven Gifts of the Spirit that gives the discernment, flexibility, openness, loyalty, and integrity to sense when something is off-center and to consult with senior teachers, and sometimes, when a matter concerns the whole membership, to consult them also.

Our proposed new Vision Statement has been extended to include the Theological, Structural, and Administrative Principles instead of being a compressed summary of them. Thus the whole package is now the Vision. We ask you to read it in the spirit of *Lectio Divina*.

Fidelity to the integrity of any spiritual movement seems to be two-pronged. One is to maintain the wisdom of the past along with its experience and senior teachers. One consults the tradition, in other words, with great respect and willingness to learn, and then one sees whether new situations or new inspirations are calling us out of certain structures into others that might be more effective or that might incorporate new ideas and programs into the original inspiration. Even if the new and refined Vision is

In this consultation what we are looking for is the guidance of the Spirit, especially through the Gift of Counsel

not articulated in the most precise and exact terms, my feeling is that the Spirit has given us already all we need to know. A refined text can only help to support our ongoing experience of the Vision and its spirit, as well as to relate to the continuing expansion of Contemplative Outreach. The Principles may need to be adjusted to other cultures, circumstances, and possibilities.

For instance, we have tried to adapt to prison ministry, to the homeless, and now we are trying to move into youth outreach, hospice, seminaries, universities, and to ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue at the university level. We are open to any truth that throws light on the vocation we have received. Our vocation is to bring the experience of the love of God into this world.

And that means into every part of the world and every level of knowledge from kindergarten to graduate school and old age. We don't want to think small about this, because it is not our idea. It is God's idea, who is infinite. We have the support and movement of *That-Which-Is*, and therefore needs to express through us, insofar as we can, the divine mercy, goodness, tenderness, courtesy, freedom, forgiveness, collaboration and cooperation—all the things humans are supposed to be doing anyway, but which they cannot do without the contemplative experience. We are committed not just to our own personal self-perfection. We are interested in the whole world, all humanity, past, present and to come; and all of science insofar as it is genuine and true. In our time science has become a new form of the revelation of God. The infinitesimal of quantum mechanics, the infinitude of space of astrophysics, and the cellular structure of living things are teaching us

about God's thoughts in a way that was never before available.

This is especially true for inter-religious exchanges where dialogue has reached a spiritual level that has never before been possible in the history of the world. We still have to cultivate the unity of Christians, which is greatly enhanced by the bonding that takes place in the silent prayer that the ecumenical movements have fostered. This doesn't mean we don't respect differences or follow our own particular belief system according to the loyalties of our respective religious commitments. But in sharing silence we find a level of unity that transcends differences and enables us to be united, at least in prayer and meditation with all our Christian brothers and sisters.

Obviously, to be baptized into the body of Christ is a much bigger factor than any other in the ecumenical scene, but because of historical circumstances, it is going to take a generation or two for the rank and file of believers to get the message. After that, it may take a few more generations for people to realize that all of scripture and indeed all religions are preaching about the oneness of the human family and our accountability for each other. Few until now have listened. Contemplative prayer accessed through practices such as Centering Prayer can bring this experience of God into the world, into social institutions, economic development, political affairs, and

ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue.

Other moral issues are arising. We are not asked to solve them all, but to live in a world that has them. We have to deal with them in our own way. We have found through the practice of Centering Prayer that our ability to be strengthened within by the presence of Christ enables us to maintain a certain equanimity in the midst of our own personal struggles in daily life and work, and even in the horrendous tragedies and various forms of violence that are taking place daily in the world and all over the world.

Our experience as contemplatives doesn't dispense us from trying to find remedies with our contemporaries in any way that is possible and to try to bring not only justice and charity into the world, but utmost charity. This is the kind of love that is ready to lay down one's life for everyone else in the human family; the kind of love that is prepared to forgive everything and everyone, because that is the kind of love we have received and are receiving from God. It is that mystery that we are try-

ing to convey as we let go of our false selves and allow the divine Spirit to awaken in us the image of God that is always there, but which for whatever reason, we may think isn't there.

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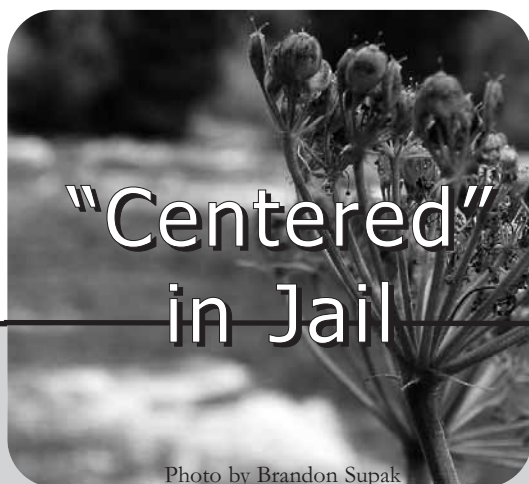


Photo by Brandon Supak

Sister Catherine Marie Bazar, O.P.
Chaplain
Century Regional Detention Facility

In response to jail violence in Los Angeles, the Sheriff's Department moved 2,400 female inmates out of maximum security to make way for more violent offenders. These women, mostly poor, homeless, addicted, abused, and mentally ill, were removed to a facility fifteen miles away.

This new environment has allowed chaplains to conduct Centering Prayer sessions and various forms of meditation in almost every unit, something not possible before. These sessions are so popular that over 2,000 women freely attend or return weekly over a period of one month. Deputies are astounded that 80 to 100 women whose nerves cause them to yell, fight, and cry so much during the day can sit for twenty minutes in absolute uninterrupted silence and emerge in such peace. Some deputies have even joined in to learn the secret.

The peace that arises from inner stillness through silent prayer is absolutely essential in this kind of environment. Though

conditions here are an improvement, jail is still jail. Bad food, sensory deprivation, hunger, stealing, lockdowns, minimum visiting, lack of privacy, delayed or unresponsive medical care, loud yelling from guards, slamming doors, etc., are conditions that women live with day in and day out. Teaching them how to go deeper beyond the exteriors of their confinement and find a safe place within their "secret chamber" where they meet their God, their Healer, their Support, and then to leave them there, unleashes a huge pool of grace from which they can draw strength to face their challenges, deal with their issues, and experience Pure Love without cost. "Unloading" during the first session always occurs and is powerful, emotional, and cleansing for them.

Women who have gone on to prison have written asking for the handouts so that they can start small groups in their facilities. Though they do not have all the traditional training or even a full-scale workshop, the Holy Spirit works marvels beyond imagination through such a simple method that requires only a "yes!"

The Contemplative Life Program

Study and Practice in Community



*Thank you
for such a
wonderful
program!
You have
greatly improved
my life and
helped me
to live with
dejection-caused
depressions.
Had it not
of been for
these courses
(Year One - CLP)
I would not
have become
aware of these
depression causes!
I owe you my life
and much
appreciation
for allowing me
a scholarship
when the chips
were down.
Someday
I will repay
you that gift
two-fold!
- K.K.*

The Contemplative Life Program (CLP) explores how to be a practicing contemplative, abiding in the presence of God in the midst of ordinary life.

The CLP provides the tools, the Christian contemplative teachings and the support necessary to live and embody the contemplative dimension of the Gospel.

Two opportunities to participate in 2007

Year One: For new subscribers, this program includes seven journeys through the core contemplative practices. Each booklet includes excerpted teachings, inspirational quotes, scripture, beautiful images, practices and suggested readings. Cost: \$140 USD

- Centering Prayer
- Welcoming Prayer
- Lectio Divina
- Discernment
- Forgiveness
- Active Prayer
- Attention/Intention

Year Two: For continuing subscribers, this program deepens practice by exploring contemplative attitudes and dispositions that emerge from the contemplative life. Subscribers will recognize the same beautiful, prayerful booklet format as presented in Year One. Cost: \$140 USD

Developing Contemplative Attitudes Through Practice

- Spirituality of Money
- Contemplative Service
- Silence and Solitude
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Forty Days to a Closer Walk with God

Reviewed by Susan Supak

Forty Days to a Closer Walk With God, The Practice of Centering Prayer, by J. David Muyskens, has recently been released by Upper Room Books. Before I had even finished reading this book, I ordered two copies; one for a friend who had long expressed a desire to learn Centering Prayer, but wasn't quite sure about committing to learning the method, and another for a young man in recovery, looking for a method to practice the 11th Step of Alcoholics Anonymous—"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out."

It is clear from the very first day's readings that David Muyskens is a knowledgeable and experienced guide along the path of contemplative prayer. He guides the reader slowly and gently on a 40-day journey of daily Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, and journaling in a simple way that can be easily accomplished by the busiest "Marthas" among us.

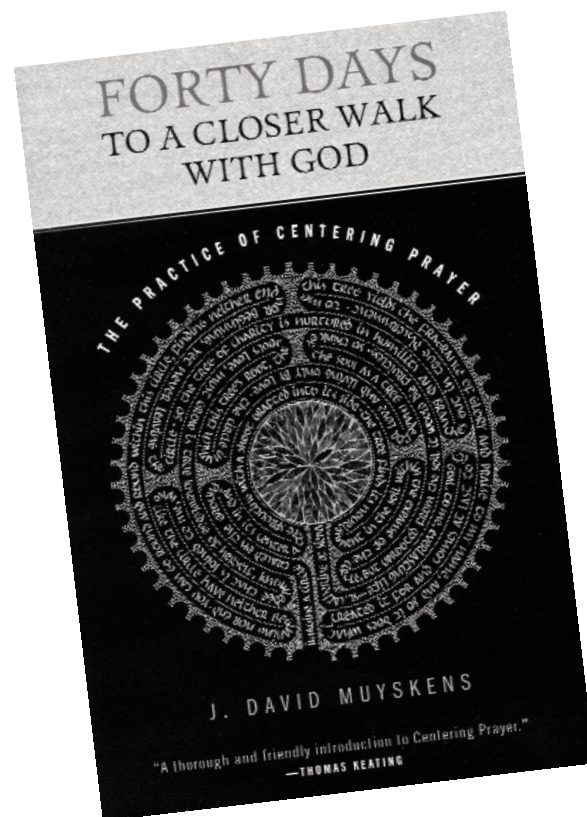
Each day's period of Centering Prayer is enhanced with a simple reading of Scripture and a short, journaled response. What is revealed by a reading of the personal journal at the end of the 40 days is the listening and responding of a conversation between the reader and the Word of God, a delightfully wonderful chat with the Lord.

The beginner will find that the guidelines and information presented in an Introductory Workshop for Centering Prayer are interestingly explained in small, easy to understand bits of information; each day building on the next, as Muyskens uses personal experiences to describe and enhance them.

The seasoned Centering Prayer practitioner who is stuck in the flat sea of the inevitable "dry spell" will find Muyskens' insightful 40-day journey providing wind to "fill the sails", revitalizing and deepening the experience of daily prayer.

As well as being a gifted and talented writer, J. David Muyskens is an ordained minister of the Reformed Church in America, a commissioned presenter of Centering Prayer and Coordinator of the West Michigan Chapter of Contemplative Outreach. He is a spiritual director and a graduate of the Spiritual Guidance Program of Shalem Institute in Bethesda, Maryland.

Further details and ordering information for *Forty Days to a Closer Walk with God* can be found on Page 14.



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Open Mind, Open Heart is designed to initiate the readers into a deep, living relationship with God and provides step-by-step guidance in the method of Centering Prayer.



**Forty Days
to a Closer
Walk With
God** By J. David Muyskens
B-53 \$13.00

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Through Muyskens' insightful guidance, you'll explore a simple, biblical practice of prayer that leads to a deep communion with God and encourages a way of life motivated by the divine, perhaps untapped, Presence at the center of your being

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CHAPTER UPDATES

12-Step Outreach

In January, 12-Step Outreach held their 3rd annual Leadership/Formation Retreat at St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado. During the retreat, the 12-Step Outreach Leadership Team met to review 12-Step Outreach progress during 2006, conduct the annual planning process for 2007, and develop assignments for 2007 for key committees that included Newsletter, Web Site, Finance, Conference, and Writing Traditions. Fr. Thomas was able to attend several of the planning sessions to provide his perspective and guidance. Formation Training was conducted for presenters for the Introduction to Centering Prayer as an 11th Step Practice Workshops (1-day), facilitators for Centering Prayer as an 11th Step Practice 3-day Weekend Retreats (3-day), and individuals involved in the growing number of other 12-Step Outreach activities. Fr. Thomas also delivered three talks on Centering Prayer followed by question and answer sessions that were video-taped and may be available in the future in either video, CD or transcribed format. **Jenny Adamson, 12-Step Outreach**

California, North San Diego

Our North San Diego 2007 Calendar has offered and continues to offer many spiritually enriching opportunities for our membership. In January we gathered for a Half Day Retreat entitled "Sacred Steps." To honor this "movement" we rotated through three circles which included a labyrinth walk, a chant circle and a sacred movement and breath circle. In March we participated with our San Diego "Metro" Chapter and contemplatives around the world in the United in Prayer Day. Our membership welcomed Marie Howard, our Regional Chapter Service Representative, in May for a Visioning Day during which time we prayerfully discerned how to best foster and support the growth of our Chapter. In June we had another Half Day Retreat entitled "The Contemplative Life" which featured a video filmed at the St. Benedict's Monastery with Fr. Keating and the monks. Upcoming Events include presentations by Cynthia Bourgeault, Bryan McNutt and our annual "Time of Renewal" Advent Event. On another note, our Outreach Hospice Team is actively involved with Silverado Hospice and is serving many end-of-life patients with their contemplative presence. Having completed our first year as a new Chapter, we look forward to another dynamic year serving our membership and the Vision of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.

Sue and Chris Hagen, Co-Coordinators, 760-745-8860, sue.hagen@sbcglobal.net; chris.hagen@sbcglobal.net

California, San Fernando

We in the San Fernando Valley Chapter have established our Servant-Leadership Team to function as a team along with our Coordinator Mary Shear. This wonderful team effort brings years of knowledge and active Centering Prayer practice into our decisions and efforts. We are extremely grateful to Sr. Linda Snow for her many years of guidance and her continuing participation in our Chapter. We continue to be blessed with our access to Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino and the graciousness of the Sisters of Social Service. This past year we hosted Introductory Workshops; a 5-day Formation for Contemplative Outreach Service attended by 24 individuals, including attendees across the U.S. and Canada; and Silent Saturdays which were well attended and indicated to us the public's need for the peace of silence. We were grateful to have Cherry Haisten's presentation for our "Welcoming Prayer" weekend. We look forward to our annual 8-day Post Intensive Retreat taking place at Holy Spirit Retreat Center June 24th through July 1st.

California, Northern

Contemplative Outreach of Northern California now has two chapters. The first chapter covers San Francisco, Marin County and the Peninsula and is headed by Mary Wyman, the new San Francisco coordinator replacing Mark Lodico, who has entered the Episcopal seminary. All members of both chapters are grateful to Mark for arranging numerous workshops by Fr. Keating over the past 13 years. The second chapter covers Oakland and East Bay, and is headed by co-coordinators Eileen Halliburton and John Neville. Activities in the San Francisco, Marin and Peninsula areas include Introductory Workshops, an annual Triduum retreat and a 10-day Intensive and Post Intensive retreat offered by the Mercy Center Retreat House in Burlingame, California. Mercy Center also will offer the Living Flame Program beginning October 13, 2007 and continuing once a month for seven Saturdays through May, 2008. Details and online registration can be found on the website: www.mercy-center.org or by calling Catherine Regan, Centering Prayer Coordinator at 650-373-4528. In San Francisco, the Most Holy Redeemer Parish group, operative for more than 13 years, lost its faithful co-coordinator, Tom Olszewski to cancer in early Spring. Mary English, former CO Board Member, reports that her group at St. Cecilia's Church in San Francisco has been meeting for more than 12 years. There are six faithful members and the seventh has been serving for more than four years as a lay Maryknoll missionary in Mombasa, Africa. The San Francisco chapter's Prison Ministry serving San Quentin prison has continued uninterrupted for ten years, led by faithful volunteers Sr. Marguerite Buchanan, RSM, Sr. Suzanne Tooland, RSM, Vickie Bolts and George Biniek. Vicki Bornstein, Pastoral Minister at St. Hilary Catholic parish in Tiburon, began an organizational effort to interest volunteers from all the parishes in Marin County to practice Centering Prayer with inmates at San Quentin. She has had excellent support from all priests in the Marin Parish Deanery. An

Introductory Workshop was held on March 24 which incorporated Centering Prayer formation, elements of Taize and an overview of Prison Ministry. Father Keating will visit the new program in Marin County on November 3, 2007. For further details, please call Vicki Bornstein at 415-435-1122. Jane Ferguson and Valerie Lozowicki have been organizing Centering Prayer groups throughout the San Jose area. Jane presented Centering Prayer at Santa Clara University, and she and Valerie gave an Introductory Workshop in Pascagoula, Mississippi, a sister parish to theirs in Los Gatos. Eileen Halliburton, Co-Coordinator of Oakland-East Bay area, attended formation for leading retreats at Snowmass and has scheduled a 4-day retreat at Mercy Center in Burlingame (near the San Francisco airport) which she will lead with Fr. Justin Langille, February 14-17, 2008.

For reservations or information, contact Eileen at 510-763-1829

Colorado, Denver

After ten years in our current location, the Center for Contemplative Living in Denver is now in the process of looking for a new home. We hope to open our doors in the fall in a location that will carry us forward into the next stage of our growth here in Colorado. We ask for your prayers that the Holy Spirit will lead us to our new home. Spring 2007 brought an air of excitement as we prepared for our March Annual Conference. This year, we welcomed two of our founding Fathers – Fr. Thomas Keating and Fr. William Meninger to address the “Companions of the Cloud”. People from across Colorado and the country come to experience the teachings of our spiritual leaders and to reconnect with the greater community of Contemplative Outreach. We continue to present new programs such as our Thursday night spirituality seminars and David Frenette’s “Heart of Contemplation” to support prayer practitioners no matter what their level. We hope to carry forward these successful programs into Fall 2007, in addition to our Introductory Workshop, *The Spiritual Journey Series*, Saturday Immersions Experiences, Days of Prayer and the Nine Month Course. Our annual October mini-retreats, our Advent Retreat at Sacred Heart Retreat Center, and a growing network of prayer communities along the Front Range offer other opportunities to deepen our prayer practices and our spiritual growth. Our servant leadership teams and volunteer staff are blessed to serve a growing community of seekers.

Sr. Bernadette Teasdale, Coordinator, 303-698-7729, Srb@contemplativeoutreach-co.org

Colorado

We continue to reach out to a growing number of people who are interested in learning about the contemplative way of life. David Frenette led our fall weekend retreat as we explored how Centering Prayer opens us to the gift of seeing God in our daily lives and relationships. For our weekend Advent Retreat Fr. Terry Ryan presented some reflections on Fr. Thomas Keating’s book, *Manifesting God*. Both retreats were held at the Abbey of St. Walburga in Virginia Dale, Colorado. The leadership team from St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish held the 7-week Introduction to Centering Prayer course. Fr. Terry Ryan has presented several half and full-day workshops on the Mystics. His teachings are very popular and instrumental in introducing people to contemplative spirituality. His presentations are both informative and experiential with one or two twenty-minute periods of Centering Prayer included. His subjects have included Jean-Pierre De Caussade’s *Abandonment to Divine Providence*. Also on his agenda is a parish mission at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish entitled, “St. Therese of Lisieux: A Spiritual Journey through Suffering”. This spring, David Frenette will present the Welcoming Prayer in a 1-day-workshop at St. Thomas. Fr. Terry Ryan will teach at two mini-retreats. The St. John’s team will teach the 7-week introductory course. Our Lenten Retreat will be directed by Sr. Scholastica England, OSB, and our annual 7-Day Post Intensive Retreat will be held in the peaceful and serene mountain setting of St. Walburga. Susan Komis will be with us for a Visioning day and an afternoon of enrichment. We look forward to this time of planning for the future of our chapter and renewal for its members. **Barbara Hayden**

Dominican Republic

In October we were truly blessed by a visit from Sr. Margaret Funk, who came to us with her loving message. We were taken with her gentleness and humility in conveying her teachings on how strongly thoughts influence our behavior, and giving us tools that, on becoming aware of these thoughts, would help us to free ourselves from their influence. This year will be a year of spiritual treasures for the growth our community. We enjoyed a visit from Sr. Maria Tasto in early May for Lectio Divina workshops in Santo Domingo, and our retreat house, Montesacro, in Polo, Barahona, where some of our facilitators will have the opportunity to become presenters. Another gift will come to our community in the person of Fr. William Meninger, who will visit us in September for conferences in the city and a three-day retreat at Montesacro. In October, we look forward to our 10-day Intensive Retreat, which will also take place at Montesacro. Joined in prayer may we share the blessing of this our journey. **Vicky Acra**

CHAPTER UPDATES CONTINUED

Florida, Tampa Bay

The Tampa Bay Chapter has established the 2007 Events Calendar including both national and local presenters, with both morning and afternoon Centering Prayer sits. Fr. Bill Sheehan presented "The Inner Room" on January 13, while the United Day of Prayer was held in several locations. Sr. Maria Tasto conducted a *Lectio Divina* workshop on May 12, as well as training for our commissioned presenters on May 13. Forgiveness will be Janet Gallagher's topic on September 8, and "Contemplative Service: Attention/Intention" will be presented by Bob Fasulo and Ed Savoy on October 13. We will finish the year with "Reflections of Humility" presented by Marge Rafferty. Contemplative Outreach of Tampa Bay is thankful to have use of the St. Anthony Hospital facilities in St. Petersburg, which include a chapel, auditorium, cafeteria and meeting rooms. Epiphany Cathedral in Venice continues to welcome our programs. Introductory Workshops are scheduled in north, mid, and south areas of Tampa Bay. Rickey Cotton has been traveling to Pensacola and Jacksonville, giving support to small, yet dedicated groups. Our core group is expanding and will be developing service teams to support our continued growth in future years. **Kathe Perez, Coordinator**

Georgia, Atlanta

The Atlanta and North Georgia Chapter of Contemplative Outreach continues to grow and build on the good foundation that it started with under the direction of Roseanne Havird. Roseanne had to leave us to move back to her roots in Pennsylvania where she has been named a Regional Coordinator with the chapters of that area. Roberta and Cathy, co-coordinators, along with all the leadership here, have kept pressing on to carry on the work to introduce and establish Centering Prayer in our state of Georgia. In June, we represented Contemplative Outreach with books and tapes at the Atlanta Diocese's "Eucharistic Congress" and had a wonderful opportunity to speak to many people about Centering Prayer. A highlight for all of us was a "Day of Prayer and Discernment" held in August, whereby each member made a commitment for one year. The Introductory Workshops even went as far as the city of Savannah, where they had a good response, and the first prayer group in this area was established. Our 5-day Intensive Retreat at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers in September went very well, also with a good turn out and a meaningful time for all. With Roberta's and Cathy's hard work, as well as our leadership group, we have planned a very exciting 2007, with our usual emphasis on Introductory Workshops, along with the United in Prayer Day in two locations in Atlanta on March 17. Highlights that we're really excited about are; our first Prayer Group Facilitator Workshop on April 28, Centering Prayer as an 11th Step Practice 3-day Weekend Retreat on May 25-27, our first Welcoming Prayer Workshop on June 30, the Eucharistic Congress annual participation on June 2, our first time to host The Contemplative Service Formation, a 5-day training for future presenters, at Ignatius Retreat center on August 12-18, our Annual 5-day Intensive/Post Intensive Retreat at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit August 17-21, and finally, our first Leadership Weekend Retreat with Rev. Tom Ward for all facilitators and leadership service people on September 21-23. **For more information contact Roberta Oster, robertaoster@bell-south.net or Cathy Hightower, chighatl@aol.com**

Ghana, Kumasi

Contemplative Outreach of Kumasi Ghana continues to grow, slowly, but steadily. For the past five years the focus has been initiating women and men religious in the Centering Prayer practice. There have been workshops from north to south, east to west, and these have been well received. A wonderful experience took place in January; three parishes planned two Introductory Centering Prayer workshops. Sessions were held in two locations and 30 lay women and men participated throughout. Each parish has arranged for follow-up meetings; attendance has been very encouraging in these sessions. The hunger for silence and deeper relationship with God manifests everywhere. Two years ago I introduced the Essentials to eight religious. They had been involved in Centering Prayer for several years. They are now teaching the prayer and establishing groups in their various areas. Our resources (basic books, tapes, CDs and DVDs) are very limited. We share them and also have a "lending library" to facilitate the weekend workshops. We adapt the process as needed, but are very faithful to the Essentials. Yearly in the spring, there is a 7 to 8-day Intensive Retreat. There are usually between 12-15 participants, with several people returning annually. *The Spiritual Journey* tapes (we have all but the first six) are used, as well as the other enrichment tapes, such as Welcoming Prayer, Forgiveness Prayer and recent talks given by Fr. Thomas at the annual conferences. Like all mission areas, we have some real needs. If there are chapters of CO in any area of the U.S. that would like to assist Ghana with resources (used copies of OMOH, or other basic books, tapes, etc.) the Ghana CO would welcome them with open arms, with their gratitude and prayer. I usually attend the International CO meetings and would be glad to speak to any individuals or groups interested in knowing more about Ghana, or in assisting us with resource materials or financial support. **Medasi!! Thank You!**
Sr. Therese Jacobs, BVM, jacobsbvm@aol.com, Centre for Spiritual Renewal, PO Box 870, Kumasi, Ghana, West Africa

Indiana, Indianapolis

On January 13, 2007, Susan Komis and Kay Powers, Regional Representative, met with 35 people to discern formation of a Contemplative Outreach chapter in Indianapolis. After an explanation of the Contemplative Outreach Network and the organic growth of Chapters, we were led through a prayerful process of visioning. From participation in visioning both communally and individually, the chapter Contemplative Outreach of Indianapolis, Indiana was formed. Please join us in prayer as our Leadership Team and Service Teams emerge to serve the needs of this newly formed contemplative community.
Laurel Simon, Coordinator, 317-876-0147, laurelsimon@sbcglobal.net

Louisiana, New Orleans

Just as the city of New Orleans will take years and years to rebuild, our depleted Centering Prayer community will take time to regain numbers but our practice is guiding us through these still difficult times. Right now we are bolstered by the contingent from across Lake Ponchartrain (who come to us over a 26-mile bridge) and the people from the Gonzales and Baton Rouge areas (close to two hours away from us in present traffic). Central office continues to inspire and encourage us. Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler helped us renew our commitment to Centering Prayer and the Welcoming Prayer practice in February, and led us to a new understanding of consent as the essence of Centering Prayer. Our first Post-Intensive Retreat, planned for July 20-27, will be led by Fr. William Sheehan. Little by little, we step forward as individuals and as a community. **Vivien Michals, Coordinator, 504-944-4000, vived2@cox.net**

Michigan (West)

In the winter and spring of 2007 several events have been held for the chapter: A Facilitators Workshop was held February 17; a United Day of Prayer on March 17, both at the Dominican Center in Grand Rapids and a 1-day retreat in April at a cottage on Lake Michigan. Four new groups have been organized and several churches are having a group read the book *Forty Days to a Closer Walk With God*, with those reading the book meeting weekly for Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina. We are planning a Welcoming Prayer Retreat in the fall.
Rev. David Muyskens, Coordinator, 616-452-2234, jdavidmuyskens@cs.com

Missouri, St. Louis

Last fall our Chapter Visioning Day produced a desire to get "back to the basics" - introducing Centering Prayer to interested individuals and supporting our Prayer Groups. The core activities this year will include Days of Prayer, Silent Saturdays, Weekend Retreats, and 8-day Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreat, a 12-Step Retreat and regularly scheduled Introductions to Centering Prayer. Almost four dozen volunteers have made a commitment to helping us realize this year's Vision with a particular emphasis on reaching out to the wider geographical area that our Chapter covers. In February alone, we presented three Introductions in St. Genevieve and Columbia, MO and Belleville, IL. It is so encouraging to have many requests for these presentations and to be blessed with volunteers who delight in bringing Centering Prayer to others. Additionally, we are planning a Prayer Group Facilitator Formation Gathering for current and prospective facilitators some time in September, if not before. We're simply focused on devoting 2007 to nurturing and nourishing the contemplative community in Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois.
Marsha Hatfield-Baker and Jim McElroy, Co-Coordinator, 314-918-8288, 618-416-1767, hatfield-baker@charter.net and 314-725-7944, jmac150@sbcglobal.net

**New York, Cornwall
formerly Walden**

This last 18 months has been a time of great upheaval and transition for both St. Andrew's Retreat House (which hosted so many wonderful Contemplative Outreach programs), and for me personally. In February 2006, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity who owned St. Andrew's Retreat House decided to sell the property which meant relocating the programs and finding a new place to live. In May of 2006, Fr. Carl Arico offered Mass giving thanks for all the incredibly wonderful people and programs experienced during the 10 years, and asking the Spirit's guidance for the future. In October 2006 we had our first event at *Bethany Spirituality Center in Highland Mills, NY*, a six day retreat with Cynthia Bourgeault. Holy Week of this year was celebrated at *Divine Compassion Retreat Center in White Plains, NY*. As of this writing, I am working with two other retreat houses. March 1 of 2007, I moved into a senior complex in Cornwall, NY, and love it (however, can't believe yet that I'm a senior!!!). The words that have come to me during this time are *expansion* and *integration*...and that is certainly happening. We are hosting the Wisdom School with Cynthia Bourgeault at Bethany, as well as our Nine Month Course and August 10-Day Post with Bill Sheehan. Our Formation, 21-Day Centering Prayer Immersion Retreat and 5-Day Welcoming Prayer Immersion are being held in White Plains...and who knows what is to follow. Please visit our website www.centeringprayernys.org for updates. I continue to be so grateful to God, Contemplative Outreach and all of you for the wonderful support and love given and received during this transition period. *Contemplative Outreach of Orange County is alive and well, and it appears, on the move...such an exciting time!* **Cathy McCarthy, 845 534-5180, cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com**

New York, New York

Greetings to all from the New York City chapter. This fall we began a new program that we entitled “Journeying in the Spirit.” Held one Saturday a month, the day includes opportunities to join together for Eucharist, Centering Prayer, viewing of one of the Spiritual Journey videos, and brunch with fellow practitioners of Centering Prayer. For Advent, the Chapter Leadership Team co-facilitated a Quiet Day based on the theme “Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord” that included reflections of John the Baptist’s message to “repent” and Jesus’ invitation to repent or “change the direction in which you are looking for happiness”. In Lent, we held a Lectio Workshop at St. Bartholomew’s that was presented by Stephanie Iachetta, with continuing sessions led by Rebecca Barnes and James Reho, a seminarian at the General Theological Seminary in New York. Additionally, this year we are also holding the United in Prayer Day, hosted by St. Luke in the Fields Church and facilitated by Richard Kigel, in conjunction with the larger Contemplative Outreach network. I am also happy to announce that we have had two prayer groups reactivate and a third new group form. In the past few months, we’ve also been seeing an increased interest from various media organizations. An article on Centering Prayer, for which Fr. Thomas and local chapter members were interviewed, is slated to be released this spring in the *New York Times Magazine*, and an article on Centering Prayer in New York was published by *Time Out New York*, as well. We are encouraged by this interest and grateful to be able to share the joy and impact Centering Prayer has had in our lives with the mainstream press.

Rebecca Barnes, Coordinator, 212-222-8109, r_barnes36@hotmail.com

New York, Westchester

Sr. Rose Vermette, RCD, will become coordinator of Contemplative Outreach of Westchester when Diane Harkin and Stephanie Iachetta complete their three-year terms as co-coordinators, effective August 21, 2007. Sr. Rose is the former coordinator for Contemplative Outreach of Rockland County. The annual Centering Prayer Weekend Retreat at Graymoor, co-sponsored with the Graymoor Centering Prayer group, is scheduled for the weekend of October 27. Fr. Bill Sheehan is the program leader. For information, contact Diane Harkin, 914-423-4888, diharkin@aol.com

Sr. Rose Vermette, Coordinator, 914-961-1559, vermettercd@aol.com

Ohio, Mid

The growing interest in Centering Prayer in Mid Ohio did not go unnoticed. Contemplative Outreach of Mid Ohio was formed on July 31, 2006, and it includes the Columbus, Toledo, Mansfield, Sandusky geographic areas, with several longtime members of the Contemplative Outreach network. Our first event was a Day of Enrichment where members from prayer groups in Columbus, Granville, Fremont, Lexington, and Mansfield joined to pray together and to celebrate our new chapter. Thanks to the gift and talents Mary Guilbert so generously blessed us with, the Contemplative Outreach of Mid Ohio website is up and running to announce our scheduled programs, including a 4-day retreat in July. I hope to see you soon at one of our upcoming events! **Anita Donnan, Coordinator, 419-610-8520, www.contemplativeoutreachmidohio.org**

Ontario, Southwest

Centering Prayer has been blossoming in this part of the world! As you are aware there has been a Centering Prayer Group meeting in Windsor for approximately ten years with Rose-Marie McIsaac as the contact person. For over a year there has been a Centering Prayer Group meeting at St. Michael’s Church in Leamington with Marlene Kelly-Kolotylo facilitating. The Holy Spirit has been at work and since that time there has been growing interest in Centering Prayer with inquiries being made to us. Last fall, we held two Introductory Workshops with Rose-Marie McIsaac and Fr. Joe Quinn C.S.B. presenting and Marlene facilitating. One was held at the Holy Family Retreat Center in Oxley (Essex County) and one in Windsor at John XXIII, the Regional Diocesan Office. They were both well attended. Out of these workshops two new groups in Centering Prayer have been formed and are meeting on a weekly basis. We were pleased to have Sr. Yvonne Parent, CSJ to facilitate the new group at Assumption Church in Windsor. The second group is being hosted at Holy Name of Jesus Church in Essex with Marlene Kelly-Kolotylo facilitating it. We are very inspired and enthused, and feel the support as a service team with the contacts we have made over the past year through meetings with Bishop Fabro CSB., Bishop of London Diocese—our Bishop, with the Deaneries in Windsor and Essex County, as well as with the inspiration and spiritual growth of each other in the groups and through the service team meetings. We are also very grateful for the resources made available to us through the International Contemplative Outreach Network and Contemplative Outreach Ontario for the mutual support we experience. We are looking forward to the August Visioning Weekend in Contemplative Outreach Canada. Recently we have taken steps to form a Southwestern Region of Ontario Chapter of Contemplative Outreach Ontario and now the Southwestern Region of Ontario Contemplative Outreach Chapter is a reality! The Service Team is comprised of Rose-Marie McIsaac, Fr. Joe Quinn, Marlene Kelly-Kolotylo and Sister Yvonne Parent CSJ. The contact person for Windsor is Rose-Marie McIsaac and Marlene Kelly-Kolotylo for Essex County. **Marlene Kelly-Kolotylo, kolkel@sympatico.ca**

Tennessee, Mid

This has been a rich year for us. In October Thomas honored the University of the South, Sewanee by receiving an honorary doctor of divinity degree. He and Gail were also available to us to work on a plan for offering Centering Prayer through the structure of the Episcopal Church. We are currently implementing that plan in the Dioceses of Alabama and Mississippi. On that same visit we entered into an agreement with St. Mary's Sewanee to offer six additional Contemplative Outreach events in 2008 at that retreat center. They are as follows: March 7-9, Forgiveness Retreat with Carl Arico; March 10-11, Clergy Enrichment with Carl again; April 6-10, Welcoming Prayer Immersion Retreat with Cathy McCarthy; May 12-18, Formation for Contemplative Service with Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler; Oct 19-23, Lectio Divina Workshop & Formation with Maria Tasto; and Dec 12-14, Advent Retreat with Justin Langille. This is in addition to the two 8-Day, three 3-Day, and one 5-Day retreats that we have offered for many years. We are grateful to Thomas, Gail, and John Kelsey (the new coordinator for our region) for their cooperative leadership in furthering the growth of Contemplative Outreach in Middle Tennessee. Also, please see our new website at: <http://www.centeringprayermidtn.com>

Carol Wray @ 615-373-0613, carolwray@aol.com, or Tom Ward @ 931-598-9063, tward@sewanee.edu

Virginia, Richmond

In the fall of 2006, Contemplative Outreach of Richmond, with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, began to have a Second Saturday Quiet Morning for Centering Prayer every month. With the help of newspaper notices, about twenty-five people came, from across the city and from many denominations – Episcopal, Baptist, Catholic, and Presbyterian. Praying people are welcome to come for any part of the morning or for all of it, 9:00 am until 11:15 am. Leaders are available to teach about Centering Prayer or to talk.

Henry Burke

Washington, DC

Encouraged by ever increasing interest in Centering Prayer in our area, the Contemplative Outreach of Metropolitan Washington (COMW) leadership team is learning how to listen to the real needs of the community and how to share the tasks of responding to them. The Virginia Service team (NOVA), under the leadership of Laurel LaCivita, is a group of people of great talent and enthusiasm. They undertook planning for the Living Flame Program I and now have 38 participants, meeting once a month at Great Falls Presbyterian Church, and the feedback from it is very good. They are now preparing to bring Living Flame II here. Carol Leach and Bob Gullo gave the first ever Introduction to Centering Prayer in Baltimore to 40 people from a Ministerium of churches of several denomination, and the Intro has spawned three follow-up groups and possibly four new Centering Prayer groups. We invited all the Centering Prayer facilitators in the DC area (many who had never met each other before) for our first Facilitator Appreciation Dinner this past month. One guest said, "Centering Prayer must do something for people, because the group assembled at your home was the nicest bunch of folks one could hope to meet!" Another said, "This type of event is important, since at other events we spend most of the time "centering" and in silence, which makes it more difficult to network!" The COMW Leadership team made its first tithe to CO, Ltd. We feel good about the decision and blessed to be a part of CO. This year we have sponsored a weekend retreat and are planning a 5-day Intensive Retreat. In the process we have discovered how much work this entails and will be analyzing the results. Henry Burke, coordinator for Richmond, Virginia, has planned a Regional Refined Essentials Workshop for Memorial Day weekend, and 16 presenters are signed up. Moira Notargiacomo edits our quarterly newsletter, and Carol Leach updates our website www.comwcp.org, that was created by Phil Stone of www.findthedivine.com. Gig Ross, a three-year member of the leadership team and Washington, DC contact person, has stepped down and we will miss her greatly.

Guy and Dana Semmes, Coordinator, 301-983-1857, thesemmes@comcast.net

Wisconsin, Southeast

A sunny June evening in 2006, welcoming hugs, and a simple potluck of sub sandwiches, salad, fresh fruit and dessert formed the backdrop for a Centering Prayer small group reunion. At St. Leonard Parish in Muskego, Wisconsin, some Centering Prayer-ers had drifted away from the weekly gathering of a small group, largely due to a shifting in personal schedules and family responsibilities. So, an invitation went out to all present and previous small group members to gather for an informal evening of reacquaintance, food, Centering Prayer, video, and discussion. After supper the transition to 20 minutes of Centering Prayer was made by reading from *Psalms for Praying*. The group then viewed a portion of Fr. Keating's video from the 2006 United in Prayer Day. A brief discussion followed. This one and a half hour get-together was successful, it seems, because as people were leaving everyone said, "Let's do it again next year!"

Judee Weber, Coordinator of COSEW

CALENDAR OF EVENTS JULY-DECEMBER 2007

Welcoming Prayer *Weekend* Retreats - a method of actively letting go of thoughts and feelings that support the false-self system. The workshop introduces participants to the actual method, and provides an opportunity to practice. Weekend includes conferences on the Human Condition and the false-self system. An established Centering Prayer practice is a pre-requisite.

Date	City/State	Contact Person	Telephone #	Email Address	Comments
Oct 26-28	Manhasset, NY	Barbara Sullivan	516 481-0472	sullivan2@adelphia.edu	

Welcoming Prayer *Immersion* Retreat - an in-depth introduction, review and immersion into the Welcoming Prayer practice to establish it as a part of our daily lives and to deepen our relationship with God. Prior Centering Prayer experience required.

Date	City/State	Contact Person	Telephone #	Email Address	Comments
Nov 7-11	White Plains, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com	5 day

Introduction to Centering Prayer - a contemporary presentation of the discipline of Centering Prayer as silent communion with God beyond concepts, words and images.

Date	City/State	Contact Person	Telephone #	Email Address	Comments
Aug 31-Sep 2	Cullman, AL	Gloria Garrison	256 734-8302	retreats@shmon.org	
Oct 26-28	Jerome, ID	Br. Selby Coffman	208 324-2377x215	selby@idahomonks.org	

Centering Prayer *Weekend* Retreats - includes conferences reviewing the method of Centering Prayer, and a moderate amount of Centering Prayer in common.

Date	City/State	Contact Person	Telephone #	Email Address	Comments
Sept 14-16	Frenchville, PA	Nicole Fedder	814 263-4855	bethanyadult@pennswoods.net	
Sept 14-16	Melbourne, KY	Micki Martin	859 441-0700x349	mickimartin76@hotmail.com	
Sept 21-23	St. Louis, MO	Annette Stamm	314 434-0994	annettewstamm@sbcglobal.net	
Sept 23-25	Sewanee, TN	Carol Wray	615 373-0613	carolwray@aol.com	
Oct 5-7	St. Joseph, MN	Rita Budig, OSB	320 363-7115	rbudig@csbsju.edu	
Oct 12-14	Capetown, SA	Sylvia Collier	011.27-021-9134576	syldon.xsinet.co.za	
Oct 17-19	Uithuizen, NL	Sr. Anje	011-31-595-435600	deboracommunititeit@zonnet.nl	
Oct 19-21	Delhi, OH	Michele Fischer	513 347-5300	michele.fischer@srcharity.org	
Oct 26-28	Garrison, NY	Diane Harkin	914 423-4888	diharkin@aol.com	
Nov 2-4	Lake Charles, LA	Barbara Tomme	337 855-4239	tommeb@bellsouth.net	
Nov 9-11	Frenchville, PA	Nicole Fedder	814 263-4855	bethanyadult@pennswoods.net	
Nov 9-12	Vancouver, BC	Anne Larochelle	604 944-2741	marlanz@telus.net	
Nov 15-18	Santo Domingo, DR	Vicky Acra	809 548-6480	lic.acra@codetel.net.do	
Nov 30-Dec 2	St. Joseph, MN	Rita Budig, OSB	320 363-7115	rbudig@csbsju.edu	
Nov 30-Dec 2	Racine, WI	Sr. K.Kobelinski	414 282-7310	kkobelinski@ssnd-milw.org	
Dec 7-9	Hastings, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com	Advent
Dec 7-9	Frenchville, PA	Nicole Fedder	814 263-4855	bethanyadult@pennswoods.net	
Dec 7-9	Cullman, AL	Gloria Garrison	256 734-8302	retreats@shmon.org	
Dec 7-9	Encino, CA	Sr. Linda Snow	818 784-4515	srlinda@adelphia.net	
Dec 12-14	Uithuizen, NL	Sr. Anje	011-31-595-435600	deboracommunititeit@zonnet.nl	
Dec 29-Jan 1	Highland Mills, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com	New Year's

Centering Prayer as the 11th Step *Weekend* Retreats - "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." **Step 11 of the 12 Step Programs.**

Nov 9-11	St. Louis, MO	Jim McElroy	314 725-7944	jmac150sbcglobal.net
Nov 30-Dec 2	Jerome, ID	Grace C.	208 423-4033	grace@safari.myrf.net
Dec 6-9	Jerome, ID	Grace C.	208 423-4033	grace@safari.myrf.net

Centering Prayer *Intensive Retreats - 4 to 10 days* - An in-depth retreat for those with experience in Centering Prayer, in an atmosphere of silence, solitude and community. Videotapes of the Spiritual Journey series with Fr. Thomas Keating are shown. The **10 Day** features Parts I, II & III of the Spiritual Journey series.

July 5-12	St. Louis, MO	Annette Stamm	314 434-0994	annettewstamm@sbcglobal.net	8 Day
July 7-14	Frankfort, IL	Benita Jasurda, osb	630 725-6011	bjasurda@shmlisle.org	8 Day
July 8-15	Melbourne, KY	Micki Martin	859 441-0700x349	mickimartin76@hotmail.com	8 Day
July 12-15	Austin, TX	Lisa Genung	512 347-9673	officemgr@consciouharmony.com	4 Day-Men's
July 13-16	Fremont, OH	Sr. Gloria	419 332-6522	sgloriaaer@ezworks.net	4 Day
July 16-23	Honolulu, HI	Cathie Jordan	808 536-6090	cohi@lava.net	8 Day
July 20-27	Winnipeg, MB	Sr. Catherine	204 338-4601	catherineosb@hotmail.com	8 Day
July 22-29	Edmonton, Alberta	Sr. Mary Coswin	780 701-1852	mcoswin.ab.ca	8 Day
July 24-29	Barranquitas, PR	Milagros Carbonell,rscj	787 857-3131	mamilcar@hotmail.com	5 Day
July 25-29	Frenchville, PA	Nicole Fedder	814 263-4855	bethanyadult@pennswoods.net	4 Day
Aug 7-16	Jerome, ID	Br. Selby Coffman	208 324-2377x215	selby@idahomonks.org	10 Day
Aug 12-16	Austin, TX	Lisa Genung	512 347-9673	officemgr@consciouharmony.com	5 Day-Couples
Aug 17-21	Conyers, GA	Vernon Dixon	706 896-8275	vandmjdixon@alltel.net	5 Day
Aug 17-21	Anchorage, AK	Rosemary Insley	907 346-2343	rinsley@holyspiritcenterak.org	5 Day
Aug 20-27	Cullman, AL	Diana Tschache	205 991-6964	tschached@bellsouth.net	8 Day
Aug 21-26	Highland Mills, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com	6 Day
Aug 22-26	Weston, MA	Fran Ricciarelli	781 749-4273	frances749@juno.com	5 Day
Sept 10-13	Pittsburgh, PA	Ruth Hofmann	412 741-2403	rchofmann47@msn.com	4 Day
Sept 12-16	Austin, TX	Lisa Genung	512 347-9673	officemgr@consciouharmony.com	5 Day-Women
Sept 19-24	Port of Spain	Sister Paul	1 868 624-8267	srpaul@tstt.net.tt	5 Day
Sept 23-30	Dublin, IRL	Sr. Christina Connell	053-9366634	staidansferns@eircom.net	8 Day
Oct 9-18	Snowmass, CO	Carol DiMarcello	970 927-9376	coc@sopris.net (wait list)	10 Day
Oct 18-21	Frenchville, PA	Nicole Fedder	814 263-4855	bethanyadult@pennswoods.net	4 Day
Oct 24-31	Lafayette, OR	Norman Carlson	541 754-9945	ndcarlson@msn.com	8 Day
Oct 31-Nov 4	Germantown, MD	Dana Semmes	301 983-1857	thesemmes@verizon.net	5 Day
Nov 4-8	Sewanee, TN	Carol Wray	615 373-0613	crolwray@aol.com	5 Day
Nov 5-11	London, England	Elizabeth Smith	011-44-1772-620746	elizabethcouk@btinternet.com	5 Day
Nov 25-Dec 2	Valle Crucis, NC	Thomas Morris	336 667-4231	stpaulrector@earthlink.net	8 Day
Dec 5-9	Austin, TX	Lisa Genung	512 347-9673	officemgr@consciouharmony.com	5 Day

Post Intensive Centering Prayer Retreats - 4-8 Days - Provides an opportunity for intensive Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, solitude and silence in community. Prior Centering Prayer Retreat experience required

June 24-July 1	Encino, CA	Sr. Linda Snow	818 784-4515	srlinda@adelphia.net	8 Day
July 5-12	St. Louis, MO	Annette Stamm	314 434-0994	annettewstamm@sbcglobal.net	8 Day
July 7-14	Frankfort, IL	Benita Jasurda, osb	630 725-6011	bjasurda@shmlisle.org	8 Day
July 8-15	Melbourne, KY	Micki Martin	859 441-0700x349	mickimartin76@hotmail.com	8 Day
July 16-23	Honolulu, HI	Cathie Jordan	808 536-6090	cohi@lava.net	8 Day
July 20-27	Ponchatoula, LA	Viv Michaels	504 944-4000	vived2@cox.net	8 Day
July 22-29	Frenchville, PA	Nicole Fedder	814 263-4855	bethanyadult@pennswoods.net	8 Day
Aug 2-9	Winnipeg, MB	Sr. Catherine	204 338-4601	catherineosb@hotmail.com	8 Day
Aug 17-21	Conyers, GA	Mary Joyce Dixon	706 896-8275	vandmjdixon@alltel.net	5 Day
Aug 20-27	Cullman, AL	Diana Tschache	205 991-6964	tschached@bellsouth.net	8 Day
Aug 21-26	Highland Mills, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com	6 Day
Oct 24-31	Lafayette, OR	Norman Carlson	541 754-9945	ndcarlson@msn.com	8 Day
Nov 2-9	Snowmass, CO	Carol DiMarcello	970 927-9376	coc@sopris.net (wait list)	8 Day
Nov 5-11	London, England	Elizabeth Smith	011-44-1772-620746	elizabethcouk@btinternet.com	5 Day
Nov 12-19	Snowmass, CO	Carol DiMarcello	970 927-9376	coc@sopris.net (wait list)	8 Day

10 Day *Post Intensive Retreats*

Jul 31-Aug 9	Snowmass, CO	Carol DiMarcello	970 927-9376	coc@sopris.net (wait list)	10 Day
Aug 3-12	Highland Mills, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com	10 Day
Aug 7-16	Jerome, ID	Br. Selby Coffman	208 324-2377x215	selby@idahomonks.org	10 Day
Oct 25-Nov 5	Santo Domingo, DR		809 548-6480	lic.acra@codetel.net.do	10 Day
Dec 4-13	Snowmass, CO	Carol DiMarcello	970 927-9376	coc@sopris.net (wait list)	10 Day

Advanced Centering Prayer Retreats - Provides an opportunity to deepen the practice of Centering Prayer in an atmosphere of silence and community support. The Advanced Intensive usually features Part IV of the Spiritual Journey Videotape series by Fr. Thomas Keating. Prior Centering Prayer retreat experience required.

July 20-27	Winnipeg, MB	Sr. Catherine	204 338-4601	catherineosb@hotmail.com	8 Day
July 29-Aug 7	St. Joseph, MN	Rita Budig, osb	320 363-7115	rbudig@csbsju.edu	10 Day
July 30-Aug 5	Leicester, England	Elizabeth Smith	011-44-1772-620746	elizabethcouk@btinternet.com	7 Day

Centering Prayer Immersion Retreat - Unique opportunity for those already established in Centering Prayer to deepen the experience of living the commitment to the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in daily life. Each week has a new presenter and theme.
Fr. Thomas Keating Fr. Carl Arico, Mary Dwyer

Sept 8-28	White Plains, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com	21 Day
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Formation for Contemplative Outreach Service - Training and practice in communicating the essential elements of an Introductory Workshop on Centering Prayer, and an opportunity to look at our own Centering Prayer practice in light of the Essentials. Prerequisite: prior attendance at a 10 Day Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat and daily practice of Centering Prayer. Includes periods of Centering Prayer and presentations by staff and participants.

June 11-17	Boise, ID	Br. Selby Coffman	208 324-2377x215	selby@idahomonks.org	7 Day
June 22-29	White Plains, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com	8 Day
July 11-17	Cedar Brake, TX	Myrna Toohey	830 981-4151	mjt@satx.rr.com	7 Day
Aug 12-18	Atlanta, GA	Roberta Oster	404 299-2670	robertaoster@bellsouth.net	7 Day

Coordinator/Servant Leadership Formation - This program offers anyone who is in service to Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. (coordinators, contact persons, presenters, facilitators) a unique opportunity to come together in prayerful community to discuss in-depth issues of Contemplative Outreach chapters and the spirituality of servant-leadership.

Aug 17-24	St. Meinrad, IN	Susan Komis	888 350-5088	susankomis@charter.net	8 Day
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Nine Month Course: The Practice of Contemplative Living - An ongoing process of formation enabling participants to create their own unique contemplative lifestyle in the contemporary world. Commitment is for one weekend a month for nine months, September through May. Prayer, contemplative living and the integration of contemplation and activity are cultivated; the process is aided by the development of relational prayer through contemplative prayer practices. For information contact:

Cornwall, NY	Cathy McCarthy	845 534-5180	cmccarthy001@hvc.rr.com
Denver, CO	Rose Meyler	303 863-0932	rcmeyler@gmail.com

Parish Missions/Retreats by Fr. Carl Arico

Contact: C.O. International Resource Center, 973 838-3384

July 8-15	Melbourne, KY	Intensive/Post Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat	8 Day
Sept 8-13	White Plains, NY	Lectio Divina - 21 Day Centering Prayer Immersion Retreat	6 Days
Sept 26-30	Houston, TX	Annual Contemplative Outreach Conference	
Oct 13-17	Denver, CO	Parish Mission - Risen Christ	5 Day
Oct 27-30	Easton, MD	Parish Mission - SS Peter and Paul	4 Day
Nov 3-6	Pittsfield, MA	Parish Mission - St. Charles Borromeo	4 Day
Nov 9	Harvey Cedars, NJ	Day of Prayer - Maris Stella	
Dec 1-4	Ft. Smith, AR	Parish Mission - Immaculate Conception	4 Day
Dec 15	New Jersey	Day of Prayer	

For Information About Contemplative Outreach in the United States

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Juneau	Fr. Thomas Weise 907-299-7307 frthomas@acsalaska.net	ID Boise	Ken Eklund 208-343-0413	ken eklund@gmail.com
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Pelham	Diana Tschache 205-991-6964 tschached@bellsouth.net	Bolingbrook	Robert Gordon 630-679-1797	chaplain-bob@comcast.net
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Carpinteria	Sr. Suzanne Dunn 805-684-2181 srd41is@yahoo.com	Chicago (NW)	Margie Tomlinson 847-391-0997	matomlinson@comcast.net
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La Quinta	Evie Connell 760-564-1899 ev.center@verizon.net	Topeka	Robert Dubois 785-267-3111	rbois@sbcglobal.net
La Verne	Sr. Michele Harnett, SSL 909-720-6159 michelessi@netzero.net	Wichita	Charissa Jochems 316-685-4850	jochems@southwind.net
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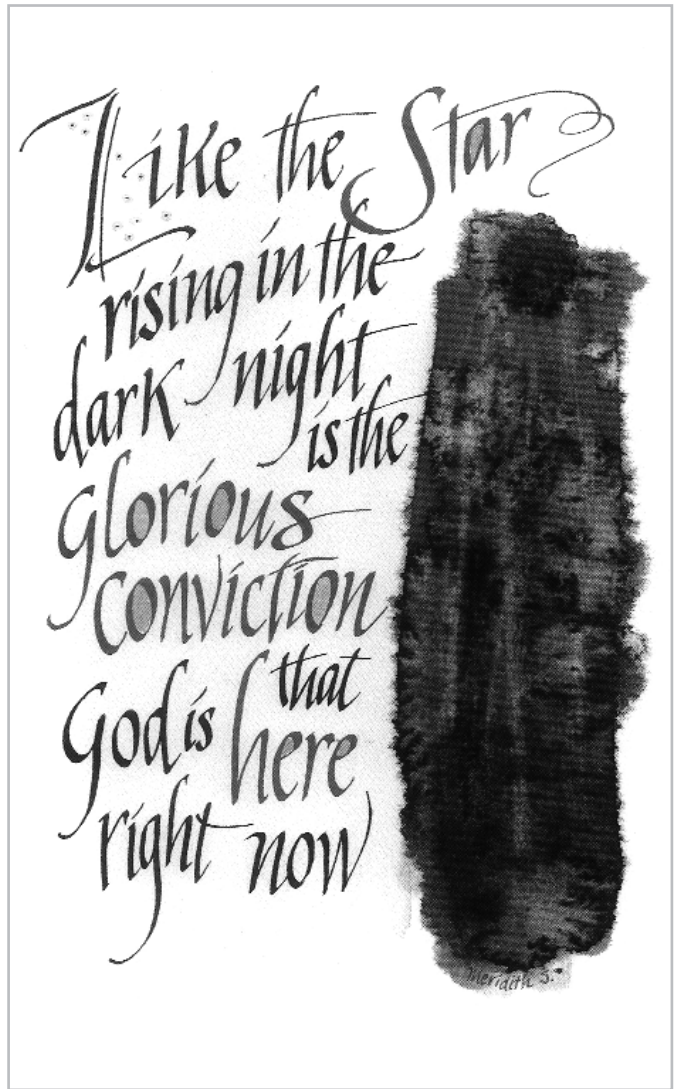


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*Proposed Revision of the
Vision of Contemplative Outreach*

Purpose

The purpose of Contemplative Outreach is to support one another in the process of Divine Transformation through the practice of Centering Prayer.

Who We Are

Contemplative Outreach is a spiritual network composed of individuals and small faith communities committed to living the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in everyday life. A commitment to the regular practice of Centering Prayer is the primary expression of belonging to the spiritual network.

Networking, resources, & workshop presenters are available at the Contemplative Outreach International Resource Center

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