The Mystery of

The Trinity

Thomas Keating

CENTERING PRAYER COMES out of the life of God moving within us. We may first have experienced this movement as a longing for more, a wordless desire for union with something or someone beyond ourselves. Moments of union may have come to us in a sense of the sacred in nature, hearing music, or seeing the stars on a clear night. This longing may be more defined by our religious practices like the prayerful reading of scripture, receiving the sacraments, or various devotional practices. We have been drawn to Jesus Christ and now we are moving ever more deeply into who he is.

Centering Prayer activates an existential relationship with Christ as one way of receiving the fullness of unconditional love pouring out of the depths of the Trinity into creation and into us. As we sit in Centering Prayer, we are connecting with that immense flow of the divine life within us. It is as if our spiritual will turned on a switch, and the current (the divine life) that is present in our organism, so to speak, goes on and the divine energy flows. It is already there waiting to be activated. “On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood up and exclaimed, ‘Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me as scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from within him’. This he said in reference to the Spirit that those who came to believe in him were to receive” (John 7: 37-39). Jesus of course, is referring to what might be called the contemplative dimension of the Gospel.
The source of Centering Prayer is the Trinity, God’s life within us, begun in baptism or whenever we enter into the state of grace. The doctrine of the Divine Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity is the most important of all the principles of the spiritual life. It means that God’s own life is being communicated to us, but beyond the level of our ordinary faculties because of what might be called, to use a modern scientific analogy, its high frequency, it is so high in fact that only pure faith can access the divine presence in its full actuality.

The doctrine of the Trinity affirms three relationships in the one God, whom tradition calls the Father, the Son (the Eternal Word of the Father), and the Holy Spirit. This is the principal mystery of the Christian faith.

“Father” in this context encompasses every human relationship that is beautiful, good, and true, but it especially evokes the sense of parenting, of “sourcing”. The doctrine of the Trinity has been developed in many different theological models over the centuries. Drawing on these models, we can affirm that the Father is the ground of all potentiality. The actualization of that potentiality within the Trinity is the Word. The Word is the Father coming to full expression of all that the Father is. In a sense, the Father is nothing until he speaks the Word. He knows who he is only in the Son, only in his interior Word. The Spirit is the common bond of love that flows between the Father and the Son in total self-giving love. In other words, the emptying of the Father—the actualization of all that is contained in infinite potentiality—is expressed totally in the Eternal Word within the Trinity. The Father pours himself into the Son. One might almost say that there is nothing left of Him. The traditional theological teaching affirms that the Father lives in the Son, not in himself. The Son, in turn, in confronting this immense goodness that has been handed over completely and freely to him, gives himself back to the Father in a kind of embrace, or what Fathers of the Church have called “the most sweet kiss” of the Father and the Son. The Spirit, then, is the love of the Father and the Son, their common heart, so to speak. In the Trinity, there is no self, no possessive attitude. Everything is self-surrender. Everything is gift. Everything is love. Hence St. John the Evangelist affirms unconditionally, “God is love.”

In the Trinity, there is no self, no possessive attitude. Everything is self-surrender. Everything is gift. Everything is love.
All creation comes into being in and through the Word. Thus the Word is the creative source of everything that exists (Prologue of St. John's Gospel), expressing itself in different ways throughout the different levels of creation. Creation consists of various manifestations of infinite Reality without in any way exhausting that Reality.

The emptying of the Word in becoming incarnate is the visible expression of what the Father is doing all the time in expressing his interior Word. Accordingly, when the manifestation takes place in creation it has to be expressed by some form of emptying. Divine love, when it enters creation, has to suffer because there is no way in which that love can be fully expressed in created terms without the Father in some sense dying. In creating, God in some way ceases to be God. At least, God ceases to be God in the way he was before creation. God must become totally involved in creation because each creature expresses something of the beauty, goodness, and the truth of the Eternal Word, who is the absolute fullness of God’s expression.

Jesus Christ is the fullest human manifestation of this extraordinary love that we call unconditional or divine love. This is the heart of the Christian mystery—mystery, not in the sense of an intellectual puzzle, but in the sense of wonder and awe, communicating a delight that is inexpressible and that demands, as the only adequate response, our total surrender in return. The Trinitarian relationships, of their very nature, invite us into the stream of divine love that is unconditional and totally self-surrendered. This boundless love emerges from the Father into the Son, and through the Son is communicated to all creation. The invitation is given to every human being to enter into the stream of divine love, or at least to venture a big toe into the river of eternal life. As we let go of our false self, we move into this stream of love that is always flowing and bestowing endless gifts of grace. The more we open our capacity to receive, the more we can give. And as we give, we open the space to receive still more. ✠

Based in part on chapter 12 in *Intimacy with God*, Crossroad Publishing Company.
Balance in the Contemplative Life

All who provide Contemplative Outreach services do so in consideration of, and in balance with their personal, family, and professional responsibilities.

Contemplative Outreach Administrative Principle #7

CONTEMPLATION IS BOTH silence and action. Therefore as Centering Prayer deepens, it sets in motion the deeper desire to share what we’ve received with others from the depth of our silence. We share with gentleness, ease and balance and we listen for just the right moment to do so. We are not interested in sharing our insights, reflections and practices for the sake of self aggrandizement. Rather we are motivated in serving from self-emptying love.

For those who offer their time and talents to Contemplative Outreach, we encourage careful discernment in response to the call of the Holy Spirit to volunteer their time. We may think God is calling us into service when in fact we are avoiding a difficult situation, by getting overly involved with “good works” and our volunteer commitments.

Balance in prayer – not too much and not too little – just enough silence, just enough action. The gifts we receive in contemplative practice enable us to bring an attitude of humility, listening and willingness in all our relationships – with ourselves, God and others. We stay awake to what is going on within us and around us and begin to notice where and when we are “out of balance.”

Silence, as it grows within us, has a way of finding our center and then in turn centering us. It is like riding a bicycle – we get on and center the bike underneath us and then pedal carefully until we find our balance. Once stabilized, we can direct our attention forward and

God is so secret, so close that you can’t put your fingers on Him, because you’re too close to Him. He is closer than anything you can imagine. And that is the insight that gradually emerges from allowing the Divine Therapy to accomplish its work and to bring you to a place where the feelings of absence or presence of God are totally irrelevant.

Thomas Keating
Who Is God?
peddle for miles. As the contemplative life progresses, more and more of life comes into balance through the stabilizing grace of the Indwelling Presence. Our will – our intention and attention – gently listens to the promptings of the Spirit and we are moved to respond. We notice when we need rest and allow ourselves the time to do so. We notice the balancing effects of exercise and healthy eating and engage our intention and attention in this direction. We notice when relationships have been strained and starved by busyness or past grievances and we simply engage again with the help and wisdom of the Spirit within.

A balanced contemplative life is very practical, because ordinary life is enlivened with the presence and action of the Spirit of God. Silence and action; prayer and work. Balance in time, money, work, volunteering and play. If we intend to do everything for the love of God, then even balancing our checkbook can become a prayer and a simple joy.

In the early days of Contemplative Outreach I felt compelled to be at the office and focus my attention on “getting things done,” with the mistaken notion that I was doing this for the love of God. I’ve since learned from my many years of daily Centering Prayer practice that God doesn’t have expectations; rather God loves first. This knowledge has helped me to love first - to intend to live with love as the most important value and activity, and to be grateful daily. This inner knowing encourages me to take time for leisure, to rejuvenate myself, to visit friends and family, to go to yoga class and to enjoy every moment of my life.

Balance in the contemplative life is the key to equanimity, peace and remaining centered no matter what happens. It is a strong sense of inner calm, well-being, confidence, and vitality which, like a ballast, keeps a ship upright in a strong wind. The commitment to a contemplative life of practice deepens and strengthens a healthy relationship with the Beloved One and a healthy relationship to all of life. After all, life and God are mysteriously one. ☺️
WHILE WALKING ALONG a sea wall path, I was amazed to see a gentleman working among the rocks creating what I now know as ‘rock sculptures’. I watched for 20 minutes in amazement. He came over to me and said, “Would you like to try it? It is very simple.” Always open to new experiences, I took a stone and attempted to balance it. He began to laugh and said to me, “You are forcing the rock to do what you want it to do. Allow it to find its own center.” I tried once again. It was not a matter of finding the flattest part and laying it on another rock. It was to allow the center of the rock find its own position, so to speak. My friends said I looked like a Zen master kneeling by the wall, cupping the stone with both hands with a look of intense attention and intention. At some point, the rock seemed to move itself into position and there it was – a seven-inch rock standing on its own. It was in harmony with the other rock. As I stepped back, I expected the ocean breeze to blow it over, but it just stood there. The gentleman explained to me that stones have a center of gravity and when you connect with it, it finds balance and harmony. All I know is the next day I passed the wall and my stone was still standing.

We all have a center of gravity and when we connect with it, one finds balance and harmony. Is this not what Centering Prayer is about – consenting to God’s presence and action in our lives?

Balance and harmony. Interesting concepts. Hard to define but easy to recognize when they are not present in one’s life.

Recently an email companion sent this to me: “Harmony exists when a perfect balance is arrived between one’s active and one’s passive life, as evident when one’s interior silence cultivated in one’s passive life becomes manifested fully within one’s active life.”
Irenaeus in the second century wrote, “If you are the work of God, wait patiently for the hand of the artist who makes all things at an opportune time … Give to Him a pure and supple heart and watch over the form which the artist shapes in you …”

Thomas Merton said, “The will of God is not a ‘fate’ to which we submit, but a creative act in our life producing something absolutely new … something hitherto unforeseen by the laws and established patterns. Our cooperation … consists not solely in conforming to laws, but in opening our wills out to this creative act …”

A few weeks later, I was in the mountains visiting with some friends. The owner of the house had a beautiful wildflower garden. The garden was surrounded by rocks. I could not resist - I decided to go for it. The photo you see is my little creation. It stood for a few days but the winds finally blew it down. An example of the letting-go of all we create.

What do you see when you look at it? I see a woman in the garb of older times. I think of how each of us must be firm in the ground of our being and upon that rock we can be created by the grand artist – loving God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our mind – creating from the three stones the living bread of divine life and presence. And in that center there is inner balance and outer harmony.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your Heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, “You shall love your Neighbor as Yourself. On these two commandments depends the whole Law and the Prophets.” (Mt. 22:37-39)
FR. CARL J. ARICO'S SCHEDULE 2011

Contact the Contemplative Outreach Resource Center for more information: 973-838-3384

FEB 15-20, 2011
INTENSIVE RETREAT
HOLY CROSS MONASTERY
WEST PARK, NY

MARCH 4-5, 2011
FORGIVENESS WORKSHOP
MARFA, TX

MARCH 7-16, 2011
POST INTENSIVE
AMARILLO, TX
(PARTICIPATING)

MARCH 19-23, 2011
PARISH MISSION
ST. MICHAEL CHURCH
FINDLAY, OH

MARCH 26-30, 2011
PARISH MISSION
ST. MARTHA
MIAMI, FL

APRIL 2-5, 2011
PARISH MISSION - ST. LUKE
ELLINGTON, CT

APRIL 6-10, 2011
C.P. AND GOSPEL OF
ST. JOHN RETREAT - FRANCISCAN
RENEWAL CENTER
SCOTTSDALE, AZ

APRIL 16, 2011
DAY OF PRAYER
BREEZY PT, NY

APRIL 20-24, 2011
HOLY WEEK RETREAT - DIVINE COMPASSION
CENTER
WHITE PLAINS, NY

APRIL 29 - MAY 5, 2011
7-DAY INTENSIVE RETREAT - CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL
DEVELOPMENT
ORANGE, CA

MAY 8-15, 2011
8-DAY POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
MARIS STELLA
LBI, NJ

JUNE 4, 2011
SPECIAL EVENT - C.O. OF ST. LOUIS

JUNE 5-12, 2011
INTENSIVE RETREAT
MARIANIST CENTER
EUREKA, MO

JULY 5-13, 2011
SISTER RETREAT - MARIAN CENTER
HOLYOKE, MA

SEPT 26 - OCT 2, 2011
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

OCT 7-9, 2011
C.O. OF TRINIDAD WORKSHOPS
WEST INDIES

OCT 21-27, 2011
HEARTFULNESS RETREAT
GARRISON, NY

NOV 4-6, 2011
WEEKEND GATHERING - BENEDICTINE CENTER
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

NOV 19, 2011
RENEWAL DAY - C.O. OF SAN DIEGO NORTH

DEC 3-6, 2011
PARISH MISSION - HOLY CROSS CHURCH
DEWITT, NY

DEC 10-13, 2011
PARISH MISSION - ST. GABRIEL CHURCH
POMPANO BEACH, FL

DEC 17, 2011
ADVENT DAY OF PRAYER - ST. WALBURGA
ELIZABETH, NJ
On September 22, 2010, Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. and Emory University signed an agreement to house the works of Fr. Thomas Keating at the Pitts Theological Library of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. The works will be processed into well-preserved and research-quality collections readied for scholarly research purposes. The University will also dedicate a high-profile web page showcasing the collection with several visuals of varying materials in a searchable key word interface. The library will work in collaboration with the Aquinas Center of Theology at Emory, as well as the Candler School of Theology at Emory, to integrate the Keating Papers into both the undergraduate and graduate programs. The materials will be exhibited, and academic speakers will periodically be invited to present on the materials.

Emory was an intriguing choice for Contemplative Outreach in part because of its “Collaborative for Contemplative Studies Initiative”. This is a strategic university-wide program aimed at broadening and deepening the knowledge of contemplative practices of the world’s religious traditions. Emory also has a relationship with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Emory was already teaching Centering Prayer, and Open Mind, Open Heart is required reading in one of the religious studies courses.

Contemplative Outreach’s Gift Committee established criteria for an archive to house Fr. Keating’s works and Emory met these criteria. The Keating collection will be given prominence, with great potential for broad and active use of the materials. Emory has committed a dedicated archivist to the materials, where researchers will have easy access to Atlanta and the University.

The University is a private, well respected institution with a large endowment. Contemplative Outreach is pleased to find a home for the works that will actively promote contemplative spirituality and Fr. Thomas’ teachings.
After reading Fr. Keating’s teaching on *Unity in Contemplation* in the June 2009 newsletter I was intrigued. He speaks of an understanding of the spiritual journey in terms of the Other/other. The first stage is becoming aware of the Other, then becoming the Other, and finally the realization that there is no Other. Through my continued practice of combining Centering Prayer with spiritual readings, especially the Psalms, I was able to write the following poem.

**A PSALM**

O God, it is true
that You searched me
until you found
yourself within me;
hidden away with Jesus
in the silent centre
of a loving heart.

For you Spirit was relentless,
always seeking itself
within this creation.
There was no shelter
as I faced your elements
that battered and beat
upon this rocky shore.

O Holy Spirit,
forever working to change
stone into flesh
and flesh into spirit.
One day when the work is done
and all is accomplished
I will rest.

Blessed be God
for never leaving us
and for keeping us safe
in steadfast love.
My Lord and my God,
you are One.
There is no other.

*Lori P. Dexter*
Gibbons, Alberta, Canada
Spirituality and Work: A Contemplative Experience

My whole life has been a dual path of seeking God and the “right work”—work that is aligned with my spirituality, allows me to use my gifts, is challenging but not overwhelming, and somehow contributes to the world. Whether I was working as a clerk at Joske’s Department Store (my worst job), a Director of Christian Education or a busy consultant, I’ve been evolving personally and spiritually. As someone with a contemplative bent, I want to reflect on just how work and spirituality interplay.

Spirituality and Work: Three Experiences

Separate Spheres
In the story of the Garden of Eden in Genesis, one consequence of Adam’s disobedience (breach of relationship) to God is that the plentiful garden becomes a place of hard labor. God says, “in toil you shall eat of it… by the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread until you are put in the ground…” (NRSV, 3:17f). At times work has been exactly this —sweaty toil, figuratively or literally. When I hoed weeds with our youth group in the Texas heat or re-did a personnel spread sheet for the eighth time, work felt like nothing more than hard labor. At these times, my work seemed to have no relationship to my spirituality. I’ve talked to others who experience this same split between spirituality and work. One young woman commented, “I can’t describe when they’re connected, but I sure know when they’re disconnected. In the legal firm I worked for, work was like a shell game. It seemed like nothing more than changing money. At the end of the day you haven’t done anything that has any meaning.” Another woman working in a high tech company added, “You feel disposable, like no one cares about you.” Yet another complained about how lonely she felt at work with colleagues who seemed neither to understand nor appreciate her, and with whom she simply couldn’t connect.

When work is like this, my spirituality seems completely separate from work. Work is not experienced as a place in which God can be found or the soul nourished.

Meaningful Work
At other times, spirituality and work have seemed inter-woven for me. Work was meaningful when it was of service to others and allowed me to share and develop my gifts and skills. Working in an environment in which I felt accepted, encouraged, and even cared for, I could be myself—funny, sometimes stubborn, and eager to make a difference. The middle years of working with children and youth in the church gave me an opportunity to be creative in producing plays, turning a 3rd grade school wing into the land of Narnia, or searching for new ways to keep youth engaged. Helping a CEO think through a difficult organizational issue, facilitating a discussion of why a project went off track, or assisting an elderly handicapped woman move to her new apartment—this work was deeply satisfying, pulled me outside myself, and required me to be fully present and engaged. I thrived on these challenges. For me, there is nothing more rewarding than the feeling that my work somehow fits into the bigger picture of God’s redeeming work in the world.

Work was not always like that, however much I have wished it was. My work in the church began to feel disconnected from the “real world” and suddenly I felt I wasn’t learning anything new. Challenging new work as a director of human resources became strained and worry-filled with the arrival of a new CEO with a special talent for making others feel small and insignificant. Then my sense of “godly work” was lost and I no longer found work to be a place where my soul was fed.

Not Two Things But One
Whether work feels like burdensome labor or is filled with excitement and meaning, I have come to see and experience it from another level—that of contemplative spirituality. The intuition of the mystics is one I share—that God is in all things and all places, including in us. Separation from God is an illusion, as Thomas Keating so often emphasizes. In Manifesting God, he writes: “There is no special place to go to find God. And no place not to go because he is already here…”

1. Manifesting God, p. 47.
I’ve come to experience work and spirituality as not two separate or related things, but one—the place where God dwells. I now see every situation in life, whether sitting in prayer, cleaning the house, laboring over a task that is almost beyond me, or struggling with an irritating colleague, as an opportunity to rest in and show forth the love of God, and to live out of that creative spark of God in me. Experiencing monastic life at Snowmass, spending hours in quiet and prayer on retreat, reading ancient and contemporary writings on spirituality, sharing Lectio Divina readings with others, conversations with my spiritual director, honest feedback from friends and family have all been part of the reformation of my perspective and approach to work.

Make no mistake, work is often hard and sometimes mean. Even my best intentions fall short. I lose patience, get discouraged, and at times just don’t care. I find I must start again each day, grounded in my Centering Prayer practice, to approach work with “lectio ears”—listening for God’s Word anew, opening myself to others, and trying again to bring light to a shadowy situation.

**Work as Desert**

In this sense, work has become my desert, serving as the wilderness of Egypt did for women and men of the 4th and 5th centuries. Work has become a place in which I leave behind certain comforts and an easy sense of belonging and allow myself to be stripped of defenses and attachments.

Cassian, a desert father of the 4th century writes: “What is the goal and end, which incite you to endure all these things so cheerfully? …The end of our profession is the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven: … but the immediate aim or goal, is purity of heart.”

Increasingly I have come to understand and consent to the work place as a rock tumbler, where my rough edges are smoothed and my color and texture polished. In this way, work serves as the desert did for the 3rd and 4th century Christians who put themselves in the most extreme of environments to seek God and be purified in the process. Working for that difficult CEO, I discovered that my inability to please the boss and gain appreciation for my sterling good intentions ironically helped loosen the stranglehold of that life-long coping strategy. Welcome, welcome, welcome this peeling away of another layer of ego!

If this seems like a joyless, painful process, it isn’t. I have known delight in seeking a path of learning and transformation (purity) rather than a path of perfection in which I must get it right, do it right, and be right. And in those moments when I allow myself to be immersed in the task at hand, in forgetfulness of self, or connect to the deeper longing of a co-worker, I have known a kind of satisfaction and peace from just being there in the right way. However difficult or challenging, work is certainly a place where God dwells.

I had a dream once that I saw a little girl fall into a lake, unnoticed by her mother. I called to the mother to save her child. But the mother couldn’t hear me, and hadn’t noticed. So I dove in. I could see the child sinking into the water and as I swam, I could almost reach her. But the current kept pulling the child deeper and deeper and no matter how fast I swam, I could not touch her. But the strange thing was that the deeper we went in the water, the more luminous the water became. The depth was brilliant with a light that was unlike any normal light, increasingly beautiful the deeper we were drawn. As the child was drawn further down, I knew that the child would die and the mother would be deeply grieved. But I also knew, with that mysterious dream-knowing, that this child, being drawn down into the very bottom of the lake, was not sinking into a place of darkness and destruction. She was being carried to a place of light, love, and peace—to the lap of God.

Work, like the rest of life, seems like that to me. It is that deep water into which I fall or dive, and in which I am carried by currents often beyond my control. But as I sink deeper, I am surrounded by a many-hued, vibrant light, and I find that I am moving not into bleakness but closer and closer to the heart of the Divine.

_Betsy Aylin_  
Austin, TX

---

2. _The Conferences of John Cassian_, p. 32-33.
Phoning Home

In the movie, when ET croaked that he wanted to “phone home,” I resonated with his words. The displaced extraterrestrial was giving voice to an often unconscious yet near-constant longing to communicate, to commune with - with what? ET uses the loaded word home as he gestures skyward with his illuminated finger. That word evokes memories and feelings on many levels. For me, it conjures images of a place of shelter and nurture where I first came to table as a member of a family. It also connotes a sense of well being in the here and now as I experience the goodness of being “at home in my own skin.” Besides giving rise to images from the past and feelings in the present, home conveys that pull into the future, that sense of longing as I sense myself being “homeward bound.”

Perhaps ET’s desire to “phone home” resonates so deeply with me because it echoes my desire to sit in Centering Prayer. In the silence, I consciously connect with the Source of shelter and nurture, I intentionally rest in Well Being, I consent to continuing on a spiritual journey - I phone home. The discipline of centering has allowed me to experience the insight and wisdom of another iconic movie character. With Dorothy of Kansas (from The Wizard of Oz), I can state that “there is no place like home.”

Carolyn Goddard
Nashville, TN

Prelude to Wordsworth

A Cinquain

I saw
One life and felt
It was joy with my eye
Of love’s imagination: the
Power!

Francis C. Spataro
Queens Village, NY
Reminiscing – 25 years with Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.

The flyer on the church bulletin board was simply an invitation to learn about contemplative prayer. More curious than intimidated, on July 11, 1985, I attended an Introduction to Centering Prayer workshop presented by Mary Mrozowski - and the direction of my life was changed forever. Mary was the greatest gift and challenge on my contemplative journey, and I am forever grateful to God for placing her in my life. After the workshop, I discovered a small group of men and women (later to be called Facilitators) whose work was to teach Centering Prayer, form support groups, and develop others who would be the new leaders in this fast growing movement. I knew immediately that this “centering prayer” was not a pious devotion, but a way of life, and jumped in with both feet. We formed a prayer group and I became a facilitator and served in leadership. My first task was to create a mailing list from a shopping bag filled with little pieces of paper containing names, addresses and telephone numbers. It seemed that once I said ‘yes’, the Spirit sent one thing after another, like serving as treasurer on the first Long Island board and creating the first Resource Handbook with Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler at her dining room table.

I loved attending Contemplative Outreach Board meetings, experiencing first-hand our growth on an international level and learning more about the wonderful people called together by the Holy Spirit and Fr. Thomas at Lama, New Mexico in 1983. These people became the new spiritual roots in my new life; I couldn’t get enough of listening to their stories about how God was forming this new community, and knew they were laying the groundwork for all that was to come for me and thousands of others. Many of the original 12 people at the 1983 Lama retreat are still contributing and making a difference.

After the Lama experience, Pat and Bob Johnson, David Frenette and Bob Bartel were inspired to come together in Snowmass, CO as a lay community, with Fr. Thomas as their spiritual teacher. While the Snowmass experiment ended after seven months, the groundwork was laid for a future live-in community. In September of 1985, Mary Mrozowski, David Frenette and Bob Bartel moved into a farmhouse in West Cornwall, CT and began to create Fr. Thomas’ vision of a community of lay women and men living a contemplative life in the world. Fr. Thomas was the Spiritual Father and the commitment to the community was for one year. They worked hard maintaining and improving the house, teaching Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina and offering the popular “Personal Days of Prayer” (days set aside during the month for participating in the life and work of the community). I first met Fr. Thomas in March of 1986 when I attended a 10-day intensive retreat offered by the community. Our deep friendship is one of the greatest gifts of my life. The live-in community moved to Long Island in the fall of 1986, and in the Spring of 1987 moved to Warwick, NY where the live-in community was named “Chrysalis House.”

It surprised no one when I joined the community in May 1988 with a six-month commitment and stayed for eight years. My focus was not on what was left behind, but what was ahead - the opportunity and challenge to deepen my relationship with God in contemplative service. My heart was ready to burst with gratitude. Our contemplative lifestyle included renewable commitments to consensus, simplicity and celibacy, which were made in the presence of Fr. Thomas and the community. We were members of the Board of Directors, contributing to and supporting the growth of Centering Prayer and Contemplative Outreach, especially by creating new practices and programs still available today, e.g., The Nine Month Course: The Practice of Contemplative Living; the Welcoming Prayer; and the Forgiveness Prayer. We staffed the first Presenters Training in 1989.

After 10 years of consenting more and more deeply to the Holy Spirit and service to Contemplative Outreach, the live-in community experiment came to closure, and we “let go” in May 1996 with a Welcoming Prayer weekend retreat. The decision was not without disappointment and challenges. I wasn’t sure if God failed me or
I failed God, and in that fear and insecurity, the fruit of my life at Chrysalis House was realized. I turned to God in the Welcoming Prayer, letting go of the intense feelings and emotions surfacing, and of the need to change or fix the event. All that ever has to change is my relationship with the person or event. What incredible peace and freedom this prayer practice has brought to my life! I was now ready to move on.

In letting go, a new invitation opened for me – to continue offering programs at St. Andrew’s Retreat House in Walden, NY. One of the most creative periods of my association with Contemplative Outreach began at St. Andrew’s in June of 1996 with a seven-day intensive retreat. Although I felt a great loss of community, this led to the creation of the Contemplative Living Communities and, over time, of a new chapter, Contemplative Outreach of Orange County, for which I was named Coordinator.

As Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. was growing and stretching, so were the programs at St. Andrew’s. In addition to weekend retreats and programs, we annually offered a Holy Week Retreat (with Fr. Carl Arico); a New Year’s Retreat (with Fr. Bill Sheehan); 6-day and 10-day intensive-post intensive retreats; 10-day post intensive retreats and the Nine Month Course. With the wisdom and guidance of Fr. Thomas, we developed and held the first Contemplative Living Gathering May 22-June 4, 1999; the first 21 Day Centering Prayer Immersion Retreat in January 2002; and Transformation for Everyday Life: A 40 day Live-in Experience in October 9-November 17, 2003; Fr. Carl did a Parish Mission in November 2003; we held annual Formations for Contemplative Outreach Service beginning in June 2003; the first Five Day Welcoming Prayer Immersion in March, 2005; a 6-day retreat with Rev. Cynthia Bourgeault, Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening, May 2005.

New invitations to serve kept coming. I was privileged to be on the Board of Directors, the Resource Faculty, the Welcoming Prayer Committee, the Pastoral Counsel, and serve as editor and co-editor of the Contemplative Outreach Newsletter. It was difficult to keep up with this contemplative organization that was moving by leaps and bounds and taking me along.

And moving I was - again! In 2006, the Sisters who owned the St. Andrew’s property put it up for sale. It was a sad time for all who had been served so generously since 1996. We closed the retreat work at St. Andrew’s with a 5-day Welcoming Prayer Immersion in November, 2006. In March 2007, I moved to an apartment in Cornwall, NY, and as Fr. Carl refers to it, began a new service as “retreat house broker” - simply making the retreat programs available at other retreat houses. We have offered retreats at four New York sites and one in New Jersey. Our programs have expanded: Cynthia Bourgeault has offered two Wisdom Schools in 2007/2008 and 2009/2010 (an Advanced Wisdom School will be offered in 2011/2012). Fr. Thomas and Cynthia offered the new Christophany Retreats in June and November 2009; and in June 2011 Gail and I will be offering an 8-day Heartfulness Retreat.

What now? Why, back to the beginning, of course! I continue offering Centering Prayer and contemplative living as an essential part of ordinary life in Orange County. It is as exciting to me now after 25 years as it was back in 1985 with the Long Island community. I cannot begin to say thank you to all who have inspired, empowered, nourished, supported and encouraged me through all these years. I have the wisdom not to try, for certainly I would leave out some of the most significant people. What comes to mind is the line by Claude Raines in Father Thomas’ favorite movie, Casablanca: “Round up the usual suspects.” You know who you are!

Cathy McCarthy
Coordinator; Certified Life Coach
Cornwall, NY
www.centeringprayernys.org
Radical Acceptance

Friends who have known me for a long time will say to me, with a sigh or a shake of their head, “You’ve been through a lot.” While I appreciate their compassion, this is a loaded statement for me. What does that mean, “I have been through a lot”? I can’t help but think that a part of them is blaming and judging me for the pain I have experienced in my life. I know that a part of me does. Accepting myself, and my life, just as it is in any given moment, has been the challenge and focus of my spiritual journey all of my adult life. I have realized that without this radical acceptance I can’t trust, I can’t surrender, and I can’t let go of my past and all of the obstacles to being one-in love-with my God.

I was born with a sensitive and open nature. This left me undefended for the painful experiences of my childhood, which cut deeply, leaving me fragmented and anxious. I have struggled throughout my life not to sink into sadness. In spite of all my earnest efforts to be happy, my unhealed trauma created unwanted drama. There have been times when I have felt such despair that I wanted out. I felt trapped in a life that was too difficult to live. God blessed me with children to keep me here, because only my love for them gave me hope for the future.

My desire to be happy has propelled me on a spiritual journey for over 20 years now, practicing yoga and meditation, studying Buddhism and attending countless workshops and retreats on spiritual development. I obtained a degree in Clinical Social Work, started a private psychotherapy practice, and completed a yoga teaching certification. I began teaching mind-body-spirit workshops on opening the heart and removing the obstacles to love. We teach what we need to learn, of course! Yet, after each workshop, no matter how successful it seemed, I would come away knowing I was still working on a surface level and I longed to go deeper.

The turning point for me was in October 2008, when my oldest son, at the time of his 21st birthday, was diagnosed with a rare, highly aggressive form of lymphoma. I had been a single mother for eight years, a choice I made as part of my journey. I was struggling to earn a living being self-employed in my practice, another choice I made. Both choices were instrumental for my growth. Yet, I felt burdened with responsibility. Trying so hard in often misguided ways to do it all, to get it right, to give my sons a better life than I had growing up.

After my son’s initial examination and testing at the Dana-Farber Cancer Clinic in Boston, one of the doctors said that it was a possible negative prognosis for him. The cancer had spread too quickly and there was a large tumor on his brain and one on his spine. When I was faced with the very real possibility of losing my son, it felt as though everything that had been holding me together began to give way. I was desperate for solid ground to stand on and give me the strength I needed to care for my son. I walked out of the hospital late that night, looked up at the heavens and screamed in my head, “Fine, have it your way! I give up!” Despite all of my efforts to control life and to protect my children, I had failed. I felt a shift deep within. In my moment of surrender, my spirit sighed in relief.

My son survived. His treatment was intensive and exhausting, yet the whole experience of his illness awakened within me a profound sense of gratitude. I turned 50 that year and I knew it was time to cross a threshold. I needed to let go of my past and the things that were no longer serving me, and to move into my future where God was waiting patiently. I became determined instead of depressed. When I focused on my work, I knew I was moving away from psychotherapy and into the direction of spiritual healing, although I wasn’t sure exactly what form that would take. I knew that I needed a practice and a community for support in order to do this. I turned again to the paths of yoga and Buddhism. I dove into my studies of the Bhagavad Gita, the yoga sutras and many writings by Buddhist teachers. It was reading Thich Nhat Hanh’s, Living Buddha, Living Christ, that helped me open to myself as a Christian.
Much to my surprise, I returned to the Catholic Church this past year and began exploring the Christian mystical traditions and practices. In doing so, I experienced profound healing, especially in my relationship with my mother, whose name is Marian Theresa. I realized that while she couldn’t protect me, she gave me my roots as a Christian at birth to hold me close to God during all that I was to experience in my life. In forgiving her, I could forgive myself for all of my imperfections and inabilities to protect my children from suffering. I had given my sons these same roots in receiving Baptism, and I had planted good seeds of faith, hope, and love in their minds. I had done what I could, as she had.

I was attracted to yoga and Buddhism because of their message of our basic core goodness. I needed to hear that message from Christianity in order to reclaim my roots, and I did in reading Thomas Keating’s *Open Mind, Open Heart*. It was a moment of great joy! I had come home and found my practice in Centering Prayer and my community in Contemplative Outreach. This is the deeper work I have been longing for, and it brings all the pieces of my life together. It also brings with it a challenge of being honest about what I have experienced in my life, instead of being ashamed. I know God wants me to give hope to others.

I have been faithfully practicing Centering Prayer for a few months now and I am seeing how this work of surrendering requires the constant willingness to let go, deeper and deeper. Recently, coming out of Centering Prayer, I began talking with God about my fears of not being able to support myself financially. It distilled down to the familiar “not being good enough”. (Yes, it’s still there at some level.) As I was whining about myself, I said, “I mean look where I came from!” I swear I felt God chuckle! “I mean really Marsha, where you came from?” Now I was chuckling. “You got me again, God!”

Since I began my Centering Prayer practice, one of the most profound moments of understanding I have experienced is that God wants me to be happy. If I’m not, it’s only because I’m getting in the way! Another moment happened after a consultation with an ENT surgeon. He told me I have significant hearing loss in one ear. While we discussed possible causes and prognoses, he said “It’s most likely been caused by a virus. The other less-likely possibility is a growth of some kind.” I flashed back to sitting in this same doctor’s office with my son two years ago when we heard similar words, “It’s most likely a virus not lymphoma.” As I left, stunned by what this could mean, I realized that God is always drawing me closer to him no matter what happens. I was still upset, but I had a stable core of peace to comfort me. This peace is what makes me happy.

Recently, as I drove my 19–year-old son back to college in Vermont, I looked over at him dozing peacefully, and I knew with my whole being that life is good. Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

*Marsha Snider*
Middletown, RI
Learning to See in the Dark

Did you know that when you stretch a rubber band it emits a small flash of light? Probably not, and your likely response to the question would be “How do you know that, and what possible relevance does it have to the spiritual life?” Let me explain.

These thoughts were inspired by Cynthia Bourgeault’s excellent book *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*, where she likens the shift to spiritual awareness brought about by Centering Prayer to what she calls “learning to see in the dark”. “Ridiculous!” was my immediate reaction upon reading that, “humans can’t see in the dark.” As a pet owner I observe that it is all the same to my dog whether the lights in the house are on or off at night. Her activities aren’t hampered by darkness whereas I stumble around the furniture groping for a light switch. Fortunately, Cynthia adds a gloss to her simile that makes it clear that what she is talking about is the phenomenon I know as dark adaptation. It’s familiar to all of us in some degree: we know our eyes can “get used to the dark”. You’ve probably noticed, for example, that it is much more comfortable to drive in total darkness than during the long summer twilight when you feel that you can’t see properly, but putting the headlights on doesn’t seem to help.

Once I had connected with what she meant, long-forgotten knowledge and experience came flooding back and the more I thought about it, the analogy got better and better. Because, although we’re not in quite the same league as cats and dogs, the ability of the human eye to perceive light is quite staggering; it’s just that most of the time we aren’t aware of it. This is particularly true here in England nowadays where light from street lighting, even in rural areas, means that it never really gets dark.

My first job out of college was with a photographic company and I had to spend considerable amounts of time working in a darkroom (this was 30 years ago when photographs were processed with chemicals, not computers). The films I was working with were very sensitive so I had to work in a total blackout. The walls of the room and everything in it were painted matte black and to get there I had to pass through double doors into a similar black corridor. As the door banged behind me, it felt as though I had arrived at the bottom of a deep dungeon so dark and disorientating that I began to doubt which way was down.

And yet, after half an hour or so I would become aware that light was streaming under the door and in through the air conditioning ventillator. Why? Because when your brain realises you can’t see, it gradually turns up the sensitivity of the light receptors in your eyes. You acquire a new way of seeing where there is no colour and little detail but you have a full visual awareness of the layout of the room and can make out shapes well enough to walk around without falling over things, find the tools on the bench and reach confidently for that all-important box of rubber bands. The eyes have become “dark adapted”. Where there is a small amount of light the experience of seeing is very intense. So, each time I stretched one of those rubber bands over a sheaf of film test-strips, I saw that tiny wink of light. And it was tiny: although the film was sensitive it was never ‘fogged’ by light that was clearly visible to me.

On one occasion I had to return quickly to my office to collect some forgotten tools and that was how I discovered the effect is persistent. Back in the darkroom a few minutes later, I expected to have to wait the usual 20 minutes before I could see again, but was delighted to discover that within about 30 seconds my vision was back. This is because it takes about half an hour in normal light for the brain to reverse the changes made in the eye.
Why do I think dark adaptation is such a good analogy for spiritual awareness? Compare these points with your own experience of the contemplative life:

The human body has an innate ability to see in the dark. It is only when the usual level of light stimulus is removed that we become aware of this ability. So it is with spiritual awareness, which is always present but only comes into consciousness when we still the noise of our ordinary awareness.

We have no conscious control over it. To bring it about you just have to go into the dark and wait. Similarly, we cannot actively enter into a state of spiritual awareness.

Once established, dark adaptation can be maintained over a period of time. Forays into the world of bright light take time to destroy it. This is in harmony with Fr. Thomas Keating’s analogy between inner silence and an antibiotic. Just as you have to maintain a certain level of the medicine in your bloodstream to benefit from it, so you have to maintain a level of inner silence by regular practice of Centering Prayer.

When you become dark adapted, you see things you wouldn’t normally see. Did you believe me when I said a stretched rubber band emits a flash of light? Perhaps not, in which case I should end with a warning about spiritual awareness: when you tell other people about what you have perceived, they probably won’t believe you.

*Stephen Pearce*

St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England
Who are seven-year-olds? A unique set of people, sandwiched between the exuberant six-year-old storytellers and the rather confident eight-year-olds, sevens are, generally speaking of course, a slightly morose bunch. They are quite tender-hearted, wanting to be treated like a true friend, but not sure yet how to be one. They yearn to help you: find your ball, do your math problem, get your lunch out of the basket, pick up your pencil. They are an inward-looking people, focused on themselves and their particular problems, whether it is a bleeding loose tooth, a three-day-old almost-invisible scratch, a tummy ache, a headache, a heart attack (oh yes, Peter told me yesterday that he thought he was going to have one). Well, you get the drift. They seem to be looking for the quintessential physician, and so, we show them into His Office, and tell them that only He has the Holy Medicine that will heal them of all their daily hurts.

What is Centering Prayer with sevens? This is a good question, and certainly, my teaching partner Ruth Kelly and I do not have all the answers. May I say that the practice is becoming more and more essential as I am finding words less and less necessary.
Last year, our first year, I read the little book, *Journey to the Heart*, (a children’s book on Centering Prayer) and then explained way too much about everything, thinking that they needed some sort of frame of reference in order to understand why, so they could get the most out of it. This year, we gathered, set our prayer table, lit the candle, and read the little book (not even all the way through). I guided them through getting their bodies comfortable, rang the gong, rang it again after 3 minutes, held up three fingers for them to see how long, (they like this practice) sang the Our Father, and on we went with our Religion lesson.

When do we practice Centering Prayer? Every day. We come in from Lunch Recess at 1:00, everyone has a bathroom break and I read a novel out loud while they draw illustrations. At 1:25, Ruth’s class comes in, sits, we all settle, I light the candle, we gather, and we “go to God”, as they say. Our “date” begins at 1:30. (I do tell them that Father Keating says it is essential to have a firm date time, because God loves us more than anything, and is always waiting for us like Mom and Dad when we first see them after school). Last year’s class was very punctual, and someone was sure to say, “We’re late! He’s waiting!” if the red second-hand swept across the twelve at 1:30. This year, after only 11 days of Centering Prayer with 38 little people, I struck the gong for our “coming back” after 7 minutes yesterday! We did not accomplish this amount of time last year for over a month. Also, last year, Ruth and I began practicing Centering Prayer around our own teaching schedules, so it was at different times each day. After a couple of weeks, one of our students, Lucy, who we had noticed right away as a contemplative, stood before me and announced that we needed to do Centering Prayer at the same time every day. And so we did. And we do.

Where do we practice Centering Prayer? My classroom is set up for it. I have the desks in a U shape. Our Prayer Table sits in the center of the U on a carpet. When Ruth’s children come in, if my children want to shift to the floor, they do, which frees up desks for some of Ruth’s children to use, if they desire to sit in a chair. The first six or seven days, we give up a lot of time, perhaps up to 15 minutes or so, to this settling. It is essential that each child finds comfort for the body so that the whole community can enjoy a good measure of stillness. The dignity of the child is the most important thing. Ruth and I respect the choices that the children make, only interfering when the natural guidance of the teacher is needed.

An example of this would be about the seventh or eighth day when the “very social” little people mysteriously end up in a mass back in the corner behind the piano!

Why practice Centering Prayer with seven-year-olds? What can I tell you? They are the perfect age. They are beginning to see the unfairness of the world. They are beginning to look within. They have a natural desire to help. Does it not seem practical for our Heavenly Father to call these people to Himself? He needs them to help Him bring peace to His world. A lasting peace. Does it not seem essential for us to help them to accomplish this work? One afternoon last year, in the most tender silence just after the gong, Liam spoke very quietly. “I wonder what would happen if all the seven-year-olds in the world did Centering Prayer?” And another child asked, “What would the world be like when we are old like Mrs. Falk?” And there you have it. The simple reason for taking our daily dose of Holy Medicine.

*Dianne Falk*
Tacoma, WA

---

*Please send your comments, suggestions and content submissions to Pamela Begeman at clp@coutreach.org*
This training gives you the practical skills for deepening your Centering Prayer as your relationship with Christ develops through the states of purification, illumination, union and unity. These new teachings are rooted in Fr. Thomas Keating’s essential guidelines on Centering Prayer, while extending them in skillful ways to support you on your deepening journey.

Too often we get stuck in Centering Prayer, searching for a lost experience of God when a more subtle level of God’s life has already found us. We are often trapped in effort, blinded in a dark night, or lack the practical skills to help us navigate the lengths, depths and breadths of the spiritual journey to unity in God and greater compassion for other people.

Building on the basic guidelines of Centering Prayer, you will learn how to recognize in your own experience the contemplative attitudes that allow your practice to develop. You will learn seven enfolded ways to practice with the different sacred symbols as your relationship with God unfolds. You will experience guided meditations that allow the attitudes and practices to come alive within you.

Sponsored by Contemplative Outreach Ltd., this retreat will be held within the beauty and hospitality of the Garrison Institute, a former Capuchin monastery set on 95 scenic acres above the Hudson River, 50 miles north of New York City.

This teaching benefits practitioners of every level: beginning, intermediate and advanced. You must have an established contemplative practice and feel drawn to a silent intensive Centering Prayer retreat. This retreat includes morning and afternoon teachings, and optional questions and answer sessions in the evenings. The retreat will held be in silence, with brief discussion in the mornings.

David Frenette has taught Centering Prayer under Fr. Thomas Keating’s guidance since 1984, including as a trainer for long-term practitioners in Contemplative Outreach. He co-founded and co-led a Centering Prayer retreat community for 10 years. He now teaches and gives spiritual direction at the Center for Contemplative Living in Denver, is an Adjunct Faculty in the Religious Studies Department at Naropa University, a member of the Integral Institute and has an M.A. in Counseling Psychology.

For more information and to register, go to www.contemplativeoutreach.org/DCLP2011 or call Olsiana at the Contemplative Outreach Resource Center: 973.838.3384.
Reflections on
“Deepening the Contemplative Dimension of Servant Leadership” in St. Louis, MO

Sue and Chris Hagen
Co-Coordinators,
Contemplative Outreach North San Diego

IT IS DIFFICULT to search for adjectives to express an experience that eludes easy description. We had no idea how deeply we would further our awareness and foster a scriptural understanding of the nature and essence of contemplative service.

On November 8, 2009, 31 of us participated in five days of deep prayer, periods of silence, reflection and learning together. Each day focused on different conferences and wisdom circles and ended after dinner with Lectio Divina. The conferences were presented by Susan Komis, Susan Rush, Sr. Maria Tasto and John Kelsey. The topics included:

• Thomas Keating’s Dispositions on Servant Leadership
• Spirituality of the Servant Leader
• Archetypes of Leadership
• Seven Deadly Attitudes
• Members of a Royal Priesthood; Jesus Christ, Model of Contemplative Service
• Humility: A Paradox
• What is Contemplative Discernment?
• Servant Leadership and Consensus

Each conference included time for lively and deep discussion by the participants.

We came from this time of prayer and formation reconnecting with previous acquaintances and forming new friendships with our contemplative companions who, like ourselves, are more deeply committed than ever in serving the Living Christ through the spiritual network of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. We are grateful for the opportunity to have been there and to continue our spiritual growth.

Deeper Center, Living Prayer:
Deepening Contemplative Practice
NINE-DAY CENTERING PRAYER RETREAT & TRAINING
MARCH 18-26, 2011

reflections on “Deepening the Contemplative Dimension of Servant Leadership” in St. Louis, MO

Sue and Chris Hagen
Co-Coordinators,
Contemplative Outreach North San Diego

IT IS DIFFICULT to search for adjectives to express an experience that eludes easy description. We had no idea how deeply we would further our awareness and foster a scriptural understanding of the nature and essence of contemplative service.

On November 8, 2009, 31 of us participated in five days of deep prayer, periods of silence, reflection and learning together. Each day focused on different conferences and wisdom circles and ended after dinner with Lectio Divina. The conferences were presented by Susan Komis, Susan Rush, Sr. Maria Tasto and John Kelsey. The topics included:

• Thomas Keating’s Dispositions on Servant Leadership
• Spirituality of the Servant Leader
• Archetypes of Leadership
• Seven Deadly Attitudes
• Members of a Royal Priesthood; Jesus Christ, Model of Contemplative Service
• Humility: A Paradox
• What is Contemplative Discernment?
• Servant Leadership and Consensus

Each conference included time for lively and deep discussion by the participants.

We came from this time of prayer and formation reconnecting with previous acquaintances and forming new friendships with our contemplative companions who, like ourselves, are more deeply committed than ever in serving the Living Christ through the spiritual network of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. We are grateful for the opportunity to have been there and to continue our spiritual growth.
Sacred Breath: Forty Days of Centering Prayer, by J. David Muyskens

When life takes an unexpected turn that leaves you reeling, sometimes you have to remind yourself to just breathe. But God is closer than the air you breathe. Grounded in Scripture and Christian tradition, Sacred Breath walks you through the practice of Centering Prayer and helps you breathe in deeply the presence of God. $16 USD

Heartfulness: Transformation in Christ, in DVD, audio CD, & NEW companion book

Both the DVD series and the book of edited transcripts from the series feature Fr. Thomas Keating and his most current wisdom on important topics — The Pursuit of Happiness, The Human Condition, Centering Prayer, Sin, Suffering, Redemption, Love and the Trinity, Divine Indwelling, and Divine Transformation. The interviewer, Betty Sue Flowers, draws out of Fr. Thomas the importance of silence and contemplative practice as a means of opening the heart, the mind, and one’s whole being to God, or the Ultimate Reality.

New companion book and edited transcript of the Heartfulness: Transformation in Christ series, with beautiful images and additional resources for further study, pondering and spiritual practice. 212 pages with over 90 four-color images, soft cover. $30 USD

Available in a 3-DVD set with guidebook (146 pages) and 10 reflection cards. DVDs are subtitled in Spanish and in English for the hearing impaired. $150 USD. Or, in a 3-audio-CD set with reflection booklet. $50 USD

All New Resources in the Bookstore

Invitation from God with Thomas Keating (DVD & booklet)

A wonderful introduction to the subject of contemplation and the spiritual journey and its implications for personal and global freedom. It could also serve as the enrichment in a retreat or for prayer groups. Danish film director, Marie Louise Lefèvre interviewed Fr. Thomas Keating in 2006 and what resulted was a spiritually enriching and stunningly beautiful film. $30 USD

CENTERING PRAYER

A training course for opening to the presence of God

Contemplative Outreach and Sounds True present a home study course in learning Centering Prayer. Includes more than nine hours of guidance and teachings on CD and DVD from Fr. Thomas Keating, Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler and Fr. Carl Arico. The package contains: 6 DVDs (7 hours, 36 minutes), 2 CDs (1 hour, 45 minutes), 1 Study Guide (91 pages). $105 USD in the bookstore. Also available as a Sounds True online course.

MENTORSHIP FOR CENTERING PRAYER PRACTITIONERS

Includes two, 30-minute phone conversations with an experienced and trained Centering Prayer practitioner. Prerequisite: Taken or in process with an Introduction to Centering Prayer, either in person, online, or through the in-home package program. $40 USD in the bookstore.

Online, On-Demand Courses

Four online courses are now available anytime, anywhere you have email and internet access.

Centering Prayer: An Online Course for Opening to the Presence of God

This new online course is useful for those who cannot attend an Introduction to Centering Prayer in person, or for those who would like to refresh their prayer practice. (Includes all the content found in the Centering Prayer package course, in addition to recorded teleconferences.) $149 USD

Lectio Divina

This online retreat focuses on learning the method of Lectio Divina and incorporating this contemplative way of praying the Scriptures into your daily practice. $34.95 USD

Forgiveness: A Growth in Love

This online retreat focuses on learning and practicing the Prayer of Forgiveness in various relationships and life events. $34.95 USD

Welcoming Prayer: Consent on the Go

This online retreat focuses on the method and practice of the Welcoming Prayer, a letting-go in the moment in the ordinary activities of ordinary life. $34.95 USD

For more information, go to www.contemplativeoutreach.org > Retreats & Workshops > Programs > Online Courses.
Calendar of Events

JANUARY - AUGUST 2011

For the most current and complete list of events, retreats and workshops, please check the online Calendar of Events at www.contemplativeoutreach.org

JANUARY 2-9, 2011
8-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE/POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Mary’s Sewanee
Sewanee, TN
Carol Wray
carolwray@aol.com
615-373-0613
Presenter: Rev. Thomas Morris

JANUARY 11-20, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Monastery
Snowmass, CO
Carol DiMarcello
coc@sopris.net
970-927-9376
*Full; Waiting List Available

JANUARY 26-30, 2011
5-DAY RENEWAL RETREAT
Cedarbrake Renewal Center
Belton, TX
Jeanette Norris
jnorris003@austin.rr.com
808-536-6090
Fr. Richard Rohr will be our guest speaker on March 22

MARCH 7-16, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
Amarillo, TX
Carol DiMarcello
coc@sopris.net
970-927-9376
*Full; Waiting List Available

MARCH 14-23, 2011
10-DAY LENTEN RETREAT
Cedarbrake Renewal Center
Belton, TX
Jeanette Norris
jnorris003@austin.rr.com
Presenter: Barbara Cook

MARCH 21-24, 2011
4-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Anthony’s Retreat Center
Honolulu, HI
Carol Alevizos
cohi@lava.net
808-536-6090
Fr. Richard Rohr will be our guest speaker on March 22

MARCH 27-31, 2011
5-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE/POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Mary’s Sewanee
Sewanee, TN
Carol Wray
carolwray@aol.com
615-373-0613
Presenter: Rev. Tom Ward

APRIL 3-12, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Monastery
Snowmass, CO
Carol DiMarcello
coc@sopris.net
970-927-9376
*Full; Waiting List Available

APRIL 20-24, 2011
5-DAY HOLY WEEK RETREAT
Divine Compassion Spirituality Center
White Plains, NY
Diane Harkin
diharkin@aol.com
914-423-4888
Presenter: Fr. Carl Arico

APRIL 26-May 1, 2011
6-DAY FORMATION TRAINING FOR CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH SERVICE
Cedarbrake Renewal Center
Belton, TX
Jeanette Norris
jnorris003@austin.rr.com
Presenter: Anne Mazza

APRIL 29-MAY 5, 2011
7-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
Center for Spiritual Development
Orange, CA
Marie Howard
MRHfamlife@aol.com
310-823-5863
Presenters: Fr. Carl Arico & Marie Howard

MAY 3-12, 2010
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Monastery
Snowmass, CO
Carol DiMarcello
coc@sopris.net
970-927-9376
*Full; Waiting List Available

MAY 8-15, 2011
8-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE/POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
Maris Stella Retreat House
Harvey Cedars, NJ
Leslee Anne Terpay
c-leslee@comcast.net
720-315-8120
Presenter: Fr. Carl Arico

MAY 10-15, 2011
6-DAY THE WISDOM JESUS RETREAT
Bethany Spirituality Center
Highland Mills, NY
Cathy McCarthy
cmcCarthy001@hvc.rr.com
845-534-5180
Presenter: Rev. Cynthia Bourgeault

MAY 13-15, 2011
WEEKEND RETREAT: CENTERING PRAYER & THE 12 STEPS, DIVINE THERAPY & ADDICTION
St. Charles Retreat Center
Lake Charles, LA
Midge DeBarge
midgedebarge@aol.com
337-912-0383
Presenter: Tom S.

FEBRUARY 15-20, 2011
6-DAY CENTERING PRAYER IMMERSION RETREAT
Holy Cross Monastery
West Park, NY
Guesthouse at Holy Cross Monastery
guesthouse@hcmnet.org
845-384-6660 ext 3002
www.holycrossmonastery.com/retreats
Presenter: Fr. Carl Arico

FEBRUARY 8-17, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER ADVANCED RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Monastery
Snowmass, CO
Carol DiMarcello
coc@sopris.net
970-927-9376
*Full; Waiting List Available
MAY 14-20, 2011
7-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
The Well Retreat Center
Smithfield, VA
Nancy Hess
nan.hess@cox.net
757-468-9256
Presenter: Fr. Bill Sheehan

MAY 15-22, 2011
8-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
Skalholt
Selfoss, Iceland
Ragnheidur Jonsdottir
ragnheidur.jonsdottir@kirkjan.is
+354-869-9882
Presenter: Pat Johnson
(pjconout@rof.net)

MAY 24-31, 2011
8-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE/POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
Benedictine Sisters Retreat Center
Cullman, AL
Diana Tschache
tschached@bellsouth.net
205-991-6964
Presenter: Fr. Bill Sheehan

MAY 24-JUNE 2, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Monastery
Saint Joseph, MN
Sr. Rita Budig, OSB
rbudig@csbsju.edu
320-363-7115

MAY 28-JUNE 7, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE/POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
Sr. Mary’s Sewanee
Sewanee, TN
Carol Wray
carolwray@aol.com
615-373-0613
Presenter: Rev. Tom Ward

JUNE 5-12, 2011
8-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE/POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
Mariannist Retreat and Conference Center
Eureka, MO
Annette Stamm
AStamm@mail.stcharles.k12.mo.us
314-434-0994
Presenter: Fr. Carl Arico

JUNE 6-13, 2011
8-DAY INTENSIVE/POST INTENSIVE RETREAT
Gethsemani Trappist Monastery, KY
Doreen Josephs
djosephs@insightbb.com
502-239-3966
Presenters: Fr. Bill Fickel and Sr. Jean Johnson

JUNE 7-16, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Monastery
Snowmass, CO
Carol DiMarcello
coc@sopris.net
970-927-9376
*Full; Waiting List Available

JUNE 13-22, 2011
10-DAY HEARTFULNESS RETREAT
Cedarbrae Renewal Center
Belton, TX
Jeanette Norris
jnorris003@austin.rr.com
Presenter: Mary Anne Best

JUNE 17-24, 2011
8-DAY HEARTFULNESS RETREAT
Carondelet Spirituality Center
Latham, NY
Cathy McCarthy
cmccarthy001@hvcrr.com
845-534-5180
Presenters: Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler, Sr. Peggy Murphy, Cathy McCarthy

JULY 3-10, 2011
8-DAY CENTERING PRAYER ADVANCED RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Retreat and Conference Centre
Winnipeg, MB Canada
sbenscentre@mts.net
204-339-1705

JULY 7-16, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE/POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
Moye Spiritual Center
Melbourne, KY
Sr. Micki Martin
violamickimartin@hotmail.com
859-441-0700 x349

JULY 12-21, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Monastery
Snowmass, CO
Carol DiMarcello
coc@sopris.net
970-927-9376
*Full; Waiting List Available

JULY 13-17, 2011
5-DAY MEN’S RETREAT
Cedarbrae Renewal Center
Belton, TX
Jeanette Norris
jnorris003@austin.rr.com
Presenter: Tim Cook

JULY 17-24, 2011
8-DAY INTENSIVE/POST INTENSIVE RETREAT
Mount St. Joseph Retreat Center
Owensboro, KY
Kathy McCarty
kathy.mccarty@maplemount.org
270-229-0200

JULY 18-25, 2011
8-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE/POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Therese Retreat Center
Honolulu, HI
Carol Alevizos
cohi@lava.net
808-536-6090

AUGUST 2-11, 2011
10-DAY CENTERING PRAYER POST-INTENSIVE RETREAT
St. Benedict’s Monastery
Snowmass, CO
Carol DiMarcello
coc@sopris.net
970-927-9376
*Full; Waiting List Available

AUGUST 7-11, 2011
5-DAY FORMATION TRAINING FOR CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH SERVICE
St. Scholastica Monastery
Duluth, MN
Meridith Schifsky
maschifsky@lakenet.com
Presenters: Margie Tomlinson, Sr. Virginia Matter, Meridith Schifsky

AUGUST 10-14, 2011
5-DAY CENTERING PRAYER INTENSIVE RETREAT
Mercy Center
Burlingame, CA
Eileen Halliburton
ehalliburton@comcast.net
510-763-1829
Presenter: Fr. Tommy Brennan

AUGUST 17-21, 2011
5-DAY FORGIVENESS RETREAT
Cedarbrae Renewal Center
Belton, TX
Jeanette Norris
jnorris003@austin.rr.com
Directory

For a complete listing of the Contemplative Outreach contacts, please visit the Community section at www.contemplativeoutreach.org

U.S.A.

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Marie Howard
310-823-5863
MHHamilton@aol.com

PACIFIC COAST/WEST REGION: AZ, CA, HI, NV

John Kelsey
919-467-0045
srcoutreach@bellsouth.net

EASTERN REGION: CT, DE, DC, KY, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV

SOUTHERN REGION: AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN

Susan Komis
636-327-0637
susankomis@charter.net

MIDWEST: KS, IA, IL, IN, MI, MO, NE, OK, WI

SOUTHWEST REGION: CO, NM, TX, UT, WY

UPPER NORTHERN: AK, ID, MN, MT, ND, OR, SD, WA

ARKANSAS

MORRILTON
Emily Bost
emily@stpaulsfay.org

CALIFORNIA

BREA
Bob Blair
714-990-2508
bobblair@d5extreme.com

CARPINTERIA
Annette Colbert
805-684-6344
w.colbert4@verizon.net

Sr Suzanne Dunn SFCC
805-684-3012
srh41@yahoo.com

ENCINO
Sr Linda Snow CSJ
818-784-4515 x317
srldinda.snow@gmail.com

FAIRFIELD
Deni Harding
707-425-8138
dhrading22@earthlink.net

FRESNO
Beverly Garcia
559-251-4013
prayersongs@yahoo.com

Everardo Pedraza
559-230-9736
epedraza@yahoo.com

LA QUINTA
Evie Connell
760-554-1899
ev.center@verizon.net

LONG BEACH
Pat Metzger
562-243-8460
patriciametzger@gmail.com

OAKLAND
John Neville
510-655-2796
johnnev@sbcglobal.net

Bety Wharton
510-531-6124
betywharton27@gmail.com

ORANGE
David Hoover
714-456-9891
dhoover@csjorange.org

PASADENA
Brian O’Neil
626-240-0115
ddscls@dy-dee.com

PIEDMONT
Eileen Halliburton
510-763-1829
ehalliburton@comcast.net

SACRAMENTO
Janice Boyd
916-368-1568
cossa@conout-norcal.org

SAN DIEGO
Kathy Di Fede
619-749-4141
kathyjoannemarie@gmail.com

SAN DIEGO (NORTH)
Chris & Sue Hagen
760-745-8860
sue.hagen@sbcglobal.net;
chris.hagen@sbcglobal.net

SAN FRANCISCO
Mary English
415-282-8075
maryagain@hotmail.com

STOCKTON
Susan Turpin
209-659-8840
cossa@conout-norcal.org

STUDIO CITY
Mary Shear
818-763-1662
shear_mary@yahoo.com

WOODLAND HILLS
Sr Michele Harnett SSL
909-720-6159
micheleall@netzero.net

COLORADO

BOULDER
Patricia Laudisio
303-939-8851
patludisio@me.com

COLORADO SPRINGS
Sr Theresa O’Grady
719-633-0655
stogals@hotmail.com

DENVER
John Congdon
303-355-1731
jcongdon@att.net

Sr Bernadette Tesdale ASCJ
303-698-7729
sbrc@contemplativeoutreach-co.org

ESTES PARK
Mary Ann Kundtz
970-586-1779
marlee@beyondbb.com

FORT COLLINS
Dr Christine O’Brien Travers
970-206-1154
daniel.travers@comcast.net

LONGMONT
Michelle Danson
33-652-3659
madanson@cs.com

Alice Anne & Will Pilkington
303-772-7804
wepilkington@q.com

SNOWMASS
Beth Berkeley
970-927-3315
bethberkeley@gmail.com

Carol DiMarcello
970-927-9376
coc@sopris.net

CONNECTICUT

HAMDEN
Sr Carolyn Severino ASCJ
203-407-1048
carolyn2000@yahoo.com

DELAWARE

HOCKESSIN
Beverly Roberts
302-239-2145
bk92649@aol.com

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WASHINGTON
Suzanne Kindervatter
202-686-6816
skindervatter@interaction.org

FLORIDA

APOPKA
Elmer Seiffert
407-884-6349
eseifert5@cfl.rr.com

BRADENTON
Kaethe Perez
941-756-3326
kaethe_pi@msn.com

DAYTONA BEACH
Katherine Kotas
386-255-6670
kathyopen@cfl.rr.com

HERNANDO
Patrick Ulm (Korean)
352-270-3732
patrickhm40@gmail.com

JUPITER
Mickey DiSiena
561-748-4291
mdisiena@comcast.net

MIAMI
Mary Dwyer
814-873-7310
sycamore50@gmail.com

Ricardo Lopez
305-223-7310
maria@bellsouth.net

NAPLES
Vincent Cinque
239-566-2937
ocinque05@comcast.net
DIRECTORY

ORLANDO
Ilse Reissner
407-767-8271
ireissner@uno.com

RIVIERA BEACH
Dr Ellen McCormack
561-860-7700
ellenccopb@gmail.com

SARASOTA
Edward Savoy
941-923-5706
savoy71@juno.com

TAMPA
Jeffrey Carr
813-215-6697
jcarr@deloitte.com

GEORGIA
DECATUR
Roberta Oster
404-299-2670
robertaoster@bellsouth.net

HIAWASSEE
Vernon & Mary Joyce Dixon
706-896-8275
vandmj Dixon@windstream.net

MARIETTA
Cathy Highower
770-973-6243
cigho h@ aol.com

HAWAII
HONOLULU
Carol Alevizos
808-536-6090
cobi@lava.net

KALAHEO
Liedeke Bulder
808-332-9831
liedekestudio@hawaii.rr.com

WAILUKU
Br. Jim Vornndran SM
(808) 244-4147
jimvonndran@gmail.com

ILLINOIS
BLOOMINGTON
Chris Kraft
309-838-2414
nonnakraft@gmail.com

Florrie Dammers
309-664-5921
fadammers@gmail.com

Br Ramon Garcia
812-330-7714 ext. 51063
oslence2@yahoo.com

BOLINGBROOK
Robert Gordon
630-679-1797
chaplain-bob@comcast.net

ROCK ISLAND
Sr Catherine Cleary OSB
309-283-2250
ccleary@smn sisters.org

INDIANA
COLUMBUS
Dr Lanny Lawler
812-372-1531
lanny@northchristianchurch.com

FERDINAND
Sr Maria Tasto OSB
812-367-1411x 2656
mariah@thedome.org

FISHERS
Gwen Goss
317-842-6778
g goss@isdnfishers.org

INDIANAPOLIS
Marjory Webb
317-852-7987
marjorywebb@sbcglobal.net

JASPER
Jim Birk
812-482-6371
jobirk@insightbb.com

LAFAYETTE
Becky Dick
765-497-2283
becky dickle@comcast.net

IOWA
CORALVILLE
Cathy Chenard
319-354-2414
frognowm@mchsi.com

DES MOINES
Christoffr Frantsvog
515-306-1221
christoffrfrantsvog@centeriowa.org

Paul Wirmer
515-279-3658
paul wirmer@msn.com

LONG GROVE
Lolita Dierickx
563-285-7242
ltdierickx@gm tel.net

WATERLOO
Juli Rowell
319-232-6855
julirowel lm@mchsi.com

KANSAS
LENEXA
Rev Rob Carr
913-438-5821
tc c9@earthlink.net

TOPEKA
Robert DuBois
785-267-3111
rdubois@sbcglobal.net

KENTUCKY
LEXINGTON
Wayne Moore
859-255-3668
moorewayn@gmail.com

LOUISVILLE
Dot Poppe
502-426-9399

LOUISIANA
BATON ROUGE
Monica Freeman
225-924-3812
freemonica2003@yahoo.com

LAKE CHARLES
Charlotte Hine
337-855-9123
chach ehine@camtel.net

NEW ORLEANS
Vivien & Ed Michals
504-944-4000
vived2@cox.net

SHREVEPORT
Alan Prater
318-797-8721
aprat er@ bellsouth.net

MICHIGAN
DETOUR
Lisa Lyon
248-855-1371
lilyon@umich.edu

GRAND RAPIDS
Molly Keating
616-855-4124
2mkeating@comcast.net

HOLLAND
Joy Ziemke
616-437-6731
joy. ziemke@gmail.com

MINNESOTA
COHASSET
Nicholas Elgroth
218-999-5053
elgroth@paulbunyan.net

DULUTH
Meridith Schlsky
218-525-9363
maschlsk y@lakenet.com

SAINT JOSEPH
Sr Katherine Howard OSB
320-363-7187
khoward@csbju.edu

STAPLES
Carol Weber
218-894-3631
rcwebers@gmail.com

MISSISSIPPI
CLINTON
Tom Lewis
601-924-1040
rcia@saintrichard.com

TUPELO
Nancy Bridges
662-844-7226
nbridges@bridgesdental.com

MISSOURI
FLORISSANT
Kathy Dunn
314-837-8876
hk dunn5@yahoo.com

JEFFERSON CITY
Sr Laura Magowan
573-893-4776
laura.magowan@amormeus.org

O FALLON
Rita Sturgeon
636-272-5241
dsturgeon000@centurytel.net

SPRINGFIELD
David Fromme
417-823-8359
c o spr@m sn.com

CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH NEWS
DECEMBER 2010

28
INTERNATIONAL

ARGENTINA

BUENOS AIRES
Marcela Ferro
483-31774
ocargentina@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

CANBERRA, ACT
Peter Ahern
01-61-02-62547168
peter.ahern@bigpond.com

WILBERFORCE, NSW
Sr Sheila Normoyle
02-4575-3059

BOX HILL SOUTH, VICTORIA
Dr Stewart Sharlow
03-9899-4350
ssharlow@bigpond.net.au

COBURG, VICTORIA
Chris Morris
61-03-386-6671
c.morris@bigpond.com

NORTH BALWYN, VICTORIA
Sue Barker
61-03-9859-8295
smbarker@hotmail.com.au

BHANAS

NASSAU
Lynn Lightbourn
242-322-7037
lynn_i_lightbourn@yahoo.com

BELGIUM

BOUSSU-LEZ-WALCOURT
Stephen Pitt
32-0-71509914
on5rev@gmail.com

BRAZIL

BELO HORIZONTE, MG
Jandira Soares Pimentel
55-31-3241-8129
oracocentrah@yahoo.com.br

RIO DE JANEIRO, RJ
Sergio de Azevedo Morais
55-21-2579-9809
sdmorais@terra.com.br

CANADA

EDMONTON, AB
Fr Raymond Sevigny
780-469-4375
rsevigny@aquin.ca

VANCOUVER, BC
Anne Larochelle
604-944-2742
marlan2@telus.net

STE ANNE, MB
Jack Klaverkamp
204-866-3692
fish3@rainyday.ca

WINNIPEG, MB
Sr Catherine Labinovich OSB
204-338-4601
catherineosb@yahoo.com

HALIFAX, NS
Sr Anne Veronica MacNeil
902-425-2701
sissanne@ns.sympatico.ca

LEAMINGTON, ON
Marlene Kelly-Kolorylo
519-434-0118
kolkel@sympatico.ca

TORONTO, ON
Carolyn Gratton
416-922-6451
carolyn.gratton@sympatico.ca

SHERBROOKE, QC
Fr Bernard Dionne
819-563-3078
b-d@videotron.ca

SASKATOON, SK
Kevin McGee
306-668-0338
kgmcgee@hotmail.com

CHINA

HONG KONG
Elia Kwan Ying Chan
chinesecontemplative@gmail.com

COLOMBIA

Fr Jose Heli Osorio
josehos@hotmail.com

COSTA RICA

SAN JOSE
Annabelle Quesada
506-273-0635
bejava@gmail.com

CROATIA

ZAGREB
Maja Filipovic
maja.filipovic2@zag.t-com

CUBA

HABANA VIEJA
Gilberto Walker
011-53-7-861-8606
grwcm@enet.cu

DENMARK

VAERLOESE
Patrick Glynn
45-4448-6412
patrickglyndk@yahoo.com
Please help to support the publication and distribution of this newsletter. A small contribution from everyone goes a long way in offsetting newsletter costs. Please see the enclosed donation envelope. We thank you!

Listening to the word of God in Scripture through the practice of Lectio Divina is encouraged, particularly its movement into contemplative prayer, which a daily practice of Centering Prayer facilitates.

Contemplative Outreach Theological Principle #3

www.contemplativeoutreach.org
Tel: 973-838-3384
Fax: 973-492-5795
email: office@coutreach.org