



**2013 Circle of Service Report
Annual Conference
Snowmass, Colorado
October 24 - 27, 2013**

The essential thing that we are called to contribute is to serve the coming into humanity in our time of a deeper awareness of the love of God ...

- ❖ To see Christ as present in everything and everyone.
- ❖ To create a context in which the transformation of humanity can take place.
- ❖ To make the practice of Centering Prayer and the conceptual background as available as possible.
- ❖ To heed the call to be transformed and then to rely on God to enable us to pass on the mercy, forgiveness, compassion and love to all humanity that we have received.
- ❖ To acknowledge that any good accomplished is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Thomas Keating, Circle of Service Meeting, St. Benedict's Monastery, May 30, 2011

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Description of the Circle of Service ~

The Circle of Service (COS) consists of designated representatives that collectively uphold the spiritual and service aspects of the Contemplative Outreach Community consistent with the Vision, Theological and Administrative Principles. Presently, there are seven circles: Operations Team (Ops team), Extension Contemplativa Internacional (ECI), International, Chapter Program and Services (CPS), Keating Legacy, and Research and Technology, a convener and a coordinator.

The **Operations Team Circle** consists of the Officers of the Board of Trustees. The operations team exercises the ordinary affairs of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. with full decision-making authority for the Corporation, legal, financial, business functions and activities.

Extension Contemplativa Internacional Circle consists of persons whose mission is to support the Latin American and Hispanic CO communities throughout the world.

International Circle consists of persons whose mission is to support the emerging chapters in countries outside the United States.

Chapter Program and Services Circle consists of persons that provide communication, networking and supportive programs and services to chapter servant leaders.

Keating Legacy Circle consists of persons who oversee the intellectual property received from St. Benedict's Monastery and Fr. Thomas Keating consistent with the Joint Gift Policy Statement. COS and COL jointly establish and maintain a Legacy Committee.

Research and Technology Circle consists of persons who identify and address research questions pertaining to contemplative spirituality and transformation.

CIRCLE ACTIVITY REPORTS

Keating Legacy Circle ~ The members: Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler, Father Carl J. Arico, Mark F. Nowak, Isabel Castellanos and Father Thomas Keating as an ex officio member for as long as he is able to serve.

Duties relative to the intellectual property are to gather, review, archive, protect, consult with Fr. Thomas; report to COS and COL; to recommend, to publish, to initiate new studies; and to encourage the promotion of these materials. Our work this year focused on:

Reviewed *A Rising Tide of Silence*, a film about the life of Thomas Keating produced by Peter Jones; initiating four days of filming of Fr. Thomas interviewed by Fr. Carl in July 2013; explored streaming video of Fr. Thomas from St. Benedict's Monastery, proposed for 2014; editing 30 minute videos of Fr. Thomas from his visits in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Monterey, Mexico to be made available to CO community; reviewed draft of a new book by Fr. Thomas, a collection short essays; exploring a creation of a curriculum based on the Sounds True edition of the Spiritual Journey series; discussing gathering the works of Fr. Basil Pennington, William Meninger and Thomas Keating in one place. Fr. William has agreed to place his archives at Emory University. Communication continues with Robert V Presutti, Curator of Keating Archives at the Aquinas Library at Emory.

Research and Technology Circle ~ represented by Ron Barnett on the Circle of Service (COS). This is the newest COS circle and provides guidance to Contemplative Outreach (CO) and the COS on matters of research and information technologies including social media. In the area of research the primary activity during the past year has been the provision of consultation to several academic researchers with interest in investigating the effects of Centering Prayer in human and social development. In the area of information technology the circle has served in an advisory capacity to support CO program evaluation, web based project collaboration, and digital communications, as well as the development of a leadership blog and mobile application.

Report of International Coordinator ~ represented by David Muyskens. Ildiko Viczian went to Europe this summer. She gave encouragement to the leaders of groups in Paris, France and Hungary. She was scheduled to conduct a workshop on Centering Prayer but it was canceled due to opposition from a bishop. Groups are being formed in Kenya, Africa due to the work of Martin Ogalla at the Assemblies of God Church in Sondu Town in Nyakach District, Kisumu County in Kenya. There are people practicing Centering Prayer in South India; Mathew Nedumkunnel has corresponded regarding the practice of Centering Prayer in and around Kochi, India. Martin Johnson has started a new group in Beijing, China. It is a group of ex-patriots connected with a Catholic Church in Beijing. Fr. Carl Arico has recently received the permission of two people in Poland to be Contact Persons for that country. The International Outreach Team continues to function having oversight over many regions of Contemplative Outreach including South Africa, England, Ireland, Iceland, Philippines, and other places of the world. Joy Ziemke, who is completing her M.Div. at Catholic Theological Union and has completed a Masters in Social Work at Loyola University, is assisting David as Coordinator of International Outreach of CO. He hopes to be able to send her on some international trips to become acquainted with leadership of various regions of the world.

Extension Contemplativa Internacional (ECI) ~ represented by Isabel Castellanos. Extensión Contemplativa Internacional (ECI) is currently serving groups in the following countries: the United States, Mexico, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Spain, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. Through our online groups we are also serving *individuals* in Uruguay and Chile.

In 2012-2013 we offered intensive retreats in Mexico, El Salvador, Venezuela, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Cuba. The United Day of Prayer was also celebrated everywhere.

In 2014 Contemplative Outreach and ECI will be co-hosts of the Annual Conference which will be held in Miami. We are looking forward to celebrating as one the 30th anniversary of Contemplative Outreach. Simultaneous interpretation will be offered to attendants who do not speak English.

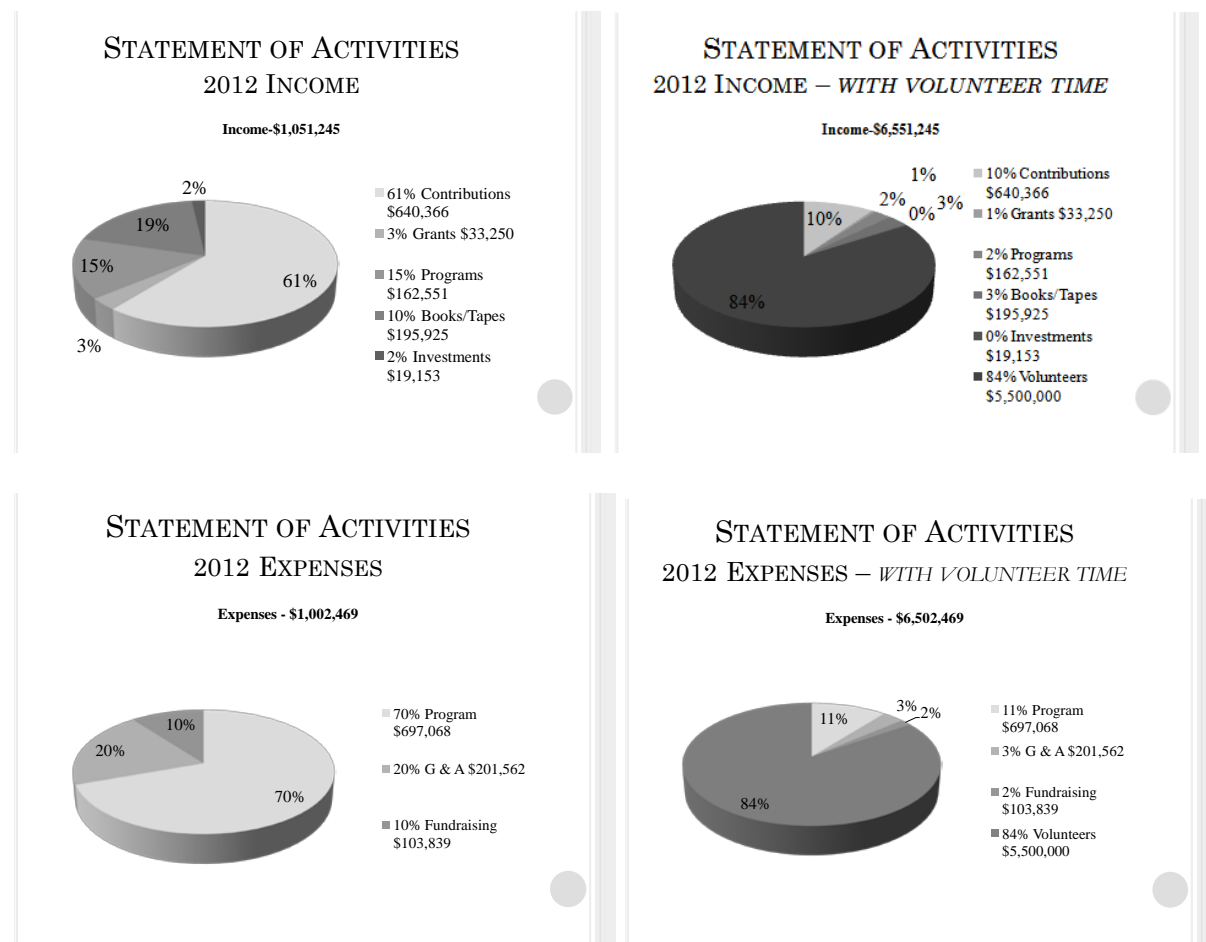
We have collected numerous videos of lectures offered by Father Thomas during his trips to Spanish speaking countries. Since these conferences offer consecutive interpretation into Spanish, we intend to make them available to all by posting them on Vimeo and listing them on the ECI website.

ECI has two internet groups and offers online courses and practices. Oracion Centrante Uno has 379 subscribed members and Oracion Centrante has 278. These groups have become true virtual communities where formation is offered and members share with each other. Most participants have been together for a number of years and this promotes deepening the practice.

ECI counts with an extensive group of volunteers in various countries who devote a considerable number of hours to serving our Centering Prayer groups. Our entire work in Latin America and Spain is carried out by volunteers.

Chapter Programs and Services (CPS) ~ represents some of the ongoing programs and the chapter services of Contemplative Outreach. The teams include: 12 Step Outreach, Lectio Divina, Living Flame, Welcoming Prayer, Centering Prayer Introductory Program, Retreats, Servant Leader Formation, Presenter Formation and Chapter Program and Service consultants.

Operations Team Circle ~ 2012 Statement of Activities – Income and Expenses



Graphs include the actual income and expenses generated during 2012, as per the audited financial statements. Next to the actual income and expenses graphs are additional graphs which include the value of the inkind services generated by volunteers. Volunteer time includes the following:

- 1) 3,100 hours for the International COS representative and the 15 members of the Circle.
- 2) 1,220 hours for the volunteer Operations Team members
- 3) 1,250 hours for the COS convener
- 4) 320 for the Research and Technology representative
- 5) 20,000 hours for ECI volunteers
- 6) 4,000 for CPS service teams
- 7) 76,500 hours for chapter coordinators and contact persons
- 8) 105,000 hours for prayer group facilitators
- 9) 9,000 hours for Intro. To Centering Prayer presenters

Total volunteer hours: 220,390 ÷ 2,000/yr. = 110 staff equivalents x \$50,000 avg. = \$5.5 million (value of contributed volunteer time)

Projects and Programs and Events of COL ~ “Practicing Spirituality with Thomas Keating” ran as a Lenten offering as part of Spirituality & Practice’s spiritual masters series. 816 people took the course worldwide. A live re-run of the Welcoming Prayer online retreat was hosted August 5-30, 2013. Therese Saulnier, Cherry Haisten and Mary Dwyer all co-hosted. Over 800 people took the course, which far exceeded expectations for a live re-run. The WP online retreat is now the largest retreat S&P has ever run, as its combined registration for the first offering, the re-run and the on-demand versions exceeds anything they’ve ever offered.

Lean In, Lighten Up & Let Go: September 5 – October 4 ~ This online retreat with Mary Dwyer was the first CO experiment in offering an online retreat without a partner. We estimated 200 participants and ended up with 330 (including CO staff and about 23 scholarship recipients). Evaluations are now just coming in; overall responses are very positive. The month-long retreat consisted of one email, one short video of Mary and one live teleconference per week. A community forum was also added.

Mobile App ~ The Centering Prayer timer app is currently in development for Apple platforms only. It is expected to be completed in December. Depending on Apple’s approval process, the free app will hopefully appear in iTunes later in December or January 2015.

e-News Bulletin ~ The e-news bulletin is sent to almost 17,000 email addresses each month. It is also being promoted via Twitter and various Facebook sites. Response continues to be very positive and encouraging. The website traffic spikes each month after the enews bulletin is sent out, and store purchases also increase.

Printed newsletter, *The Contemplative Outreach News* ~ The newsletter will continue to be produced within its \$30,000 budget, primarily by producing a smaller issue (16 pp) and reducing the print quantity. 17,000 are being mailed out within the U.S twice per year in June and December and PDFs are posted on the website.

Website ~ A weekly staff call continues to monitor web priorities and activities, as well as to share other projects that involve staff time. New content continues to be added to the website each month. Online video and blog functionality were added to the site this year.

United in Prayer Day ~ An experiment was conducted this year to offer a virtual United in Prayer Day, where a person could participate remotely via a private retreat. A suggested schedule was offered, as well as online video access of the *God is All in All* enrichment video, and online access of all other supporting materials. The following week, a teleconference was hosted with Gail and Fr. Carl and over 90 people participated; a free mp3 recording was made available of the call.

New Community Leadership Blog ~ A new blog was introduced for all worldwide Contemplative Outreach coordinators and contact persons. The purpose of this blog is to foster *communication* and *connectedness*. This is an online

peer-to-peer wisdom circle for volunteers to ask questions and share with one another, and also for communicating announcements, resources, tips, Q&As, etc.

Annual CO Census Survey ~ A report of the 2012 census results was published to COL staff at the end of July. (See appendix I).

Contemplative Life Program ~ Prices were marked down for most products, to reflect CO's current pricing levels, as well as to align the individual booklet sales with the year-long subscriptions and e-versions. Bulk discounts are now available in the store for anyone who purchases 10 or more booklets (15% discount) or 20 or more booklets (20% discount). No new booklets are planned for 2013.

COL Events ~ *The Gift of Life* Retreats were hosted at Garrison Institute and St. Mary's Sewanee; *Embodying the Presence of God* was hosted at St. Mary's Sewanee; Annual Conference in Snowmass; and the Servant Leadership Formation in St. Louis.

WORKING GROUPS ~ are made up of COS members and others, as needed, to research, study and develop a plan to present to the COS for discussion and consideration in future planning ~

Partnerships ~ A small subset of the COS members, Susan Komis, David Muyskens and Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler explored partnerships and discussed many aspects of partnering with Contemplative Outreach. Our approach was to identify those people, groups and organizations with which we have existing and on-going partnerships. The general vision for potential partners is simply that we agree to a shared commitment to contemplative life and practice, with a growing understanding of its implications for transformation of the world. The purpose of partnerships is to build and sustain connectivity and alliances with those who have a shared vision/mission and seek out others that are interested in becoming partners. We identified some of our longstanding partners as St. Mary's Sewanee, Garrison Institute, World Community of Christian Meditation, Center for Action and Contemplation, Spirituality and Practice, Sounds True, Spiritual Pathways and Incarnational Contemplation. We are forming new alliances with Shalem Institute, Global Alliance for Peace and Charter for Compassion. A directory of existing partnership was drafted and will be kept in the database so it can be updated and kept as a historical reference for future leaders.

Young Adults ~ The COS formed a Young Adults Working Group in early 2013 to explore the general question of how CO might enhance its outreach to young adults. To date, the working group, consisting of COS and non COS members, has considered a broad range of questions including: How do young adults perceive CO as an organization? Do such perceptions influence their receptivity to what CO offers? Would outreach be enhanced if our communications and media were tailored for young adults specifically? Given young adults are technologically savvy are we considering the adoption of existing and emerging information technologies such as mobile computing? In reflecting upon these and other questions the group was surprised that at times our considerations migrated beyond young adults per se and led us to consider larger frames of reference. For example, how does CO presents itself to the public in general and who is the "audience" to whom we speak? The goal of the group is to provide recommendations to the COS by the end of 2013.

School ~ "The gradual training in consent is the school of divine love in which God invites us to accept the divine plan to share the divine life with us in a way that transcends all that the human imagination can foresee." ~ *Thomas Keating, Invitation to Love*
With the intention of further serving the vision of transformation of Christ, the COS formed the School Working Group in early 2013 to explore the idea of a 'School.' The group began by asking: How could such a formal structure serve the vision in ways that are not already provided – both within and without CO? Following the larger discernments, the following would be addressed: How could existing resources, offerings and programs be repackaged and/or augmented to develop a curriculum? How would new media offerings fit? CO is content and program rich, offering entries and depth in the contemplative life through online courses, DVDs and other educational materials, prayer groups and a support structure for these prayer groups, workshops, retreats, the annual conference, and a worldwide community of practitioners. Following numerous discussions over the months, the Group is looking at a way of framing offerings under the umbrella of an annual intention in order to heighten accessibility, commitment and build the sense of community-based spiritual companionship for a contemplative way of life. The curriculum would integrate the many

existing resources into an online-based curriculum. Formation of the specifics will be outlined between now and the end of the year.

Succession and Transition ~ The purpose of the Succession Group is to study and propose a succession process for the CO organization and the present leadership. So many have asked what will happen when Thomas Keating is no longer with us. His reply has been that the Vision and the Theological Principles will be our guide. He asked the COS to come up with a plan. Mark Nowak, Isabel Castellanos and Fr. Carl Arico serve on this working group. This group initially identified and affirmed CO's **values** and **strategic direction**. The Vision Statement, Administrative and Theological Principles and the attributes listed on the letterhead and website together summarize our mission and values – Silence, Solitude, Solidarity and Service. These contemplative values can also inform and permeate the way we organize ourselves in service to others and inform our process.

This group has conducted interviews, invited participation in conference calls and reviewed materials from similar nonprofit organizations. A questionnaire was created and was completed by all present members of the COS. The questions were: what is your personal commitment to your position within your Circle in the future and what do you envision as the goals/direction of your Circle in the future? Presently the COS is processing the responses, creating an expansive plan for discernment in the Circles and beyond, and identifying new leaders in their respective Circles. The goal is to implement a plan by September 2014 at the Miami Convention at our 30th anniversary celebration.

TASK GROUPS ~ are developed to build consensus and implement various tasks.

The Circle of Service Purpose, Priorities and Configuration ~ Members: Susan Komis, David Muyskens, Isabel Castellanos, Marie Howard, and Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler. This task group met several times via Skype to discuss the purpose, priorities and configuration of the COS. We agreed that the description set forth in the By-laws adequately defined the purpose and configuration (which is previously described in this document).

Priorities for the Circle of Service –

1. To model and live the values of the Christian contemplative dimension of life and of contemplative service.
2. To model simplicity in the use of our human and earth resources. Simplicity of life and materials.
3. To review the Vision, Theological and Administrative Principles from time to time and make changes as needed.
4. To think globally.
5. To set policy for the CO community pertaining to any major shifts in our Vision and/or Mission.
6. To make decisions by discernment and consensus where ever possible with prayer and silence accompanying every decision.
7. To add and eliminate Circles on the COS as needed to adequately represent everyone within the CO community.
 - a. To flow information from the COS representative to the group they represent.
 - b. To receive information from the representative group to COS members.
8. To be prayerfully watchful over the human and financial resources of CO
 - a. To make decisions pertaining to major expenditures.
 - b. To ratify the Contemplative Outreach Annual Plan/Budget
 - c. To provide transparency regarding our economic resources.
 - d. To have oversight of the budgeting process by the COS because persons who benefit from the budget should not be the sole decision-makers.
 - e. To be mindful of serving those who cannot afford our resource materials and services.
 - f. To provide scholarships.
 - g. To make sure that all COS members have a written copy of our scholarship policies.

Communications ~ The COS Communications Team was formed in 2012 for the purpose of enhancing COS communications. The team has made recommendations to the COS for how communications could be enhanced a) among members of the COS as a body, b) between members of the COS and their respective areas of representation, e.g., circles, committees, groups, interest areas, and c) between the COS and the CO community at large. To date, the following recommendations from the Team were adopted: a) use monthly COS conference calls for circles to share information with the COS (ongoing); b) silent communication - begin all face-to-face meetings with Centering Prayer (ongoing); c) publish a regular bi-annual COS column in the CO newsletter authored by either the COS, COS circles or individuals on the COS (ongoing); and d) publish an information page about the COS on the CO website. Potential future initiatives under discussion include: quarterly reports from each circle to the COS; periodic self-assessment of the COS; each circle on the COS develops a written communications plan for how its circle will ensure quality bi-directional communications between itself and the COS.

For further discussion and follow up to this report there will be a teleconference in November, 2013 – the date and time and agenda will be emailed to CO chapter leaders. You may email the Contemplative Outreach Resource Center with questions as well – office@coutreach.org ...

Thank you

Appendix I~ Annual Census for 2012 Summary Report - July 31, 2013

Objectives:

1. Overall: to collect program & program participation data used for
 - a. monitoring the growth of the organization
 - b. auditing purposes
 - c. seeking financial support from various organizations

Audience of survey:

1. Worldwide chapter coordinators, co-coordinators, or contact persons.
2. Estimated population = emailed to 279 contacts

Overall Results:

- 58 individual surveys received (includes chapters and locations - 51 U.S. and 7 international). This is about a 21% response.

- by comparison, 72 surveys received in 2011; 62 in 2010; 60 in 2009; 56 in 2008 (only from US & Canada) and 83 for 2007.

Specific program & participation results:

- 210 Centering Prayer introductory workshops (various formats)

... served 4344 participants

- 330 retreats (various formats 1-7 days)

... served 7280 participants

- 47 8 &10-day intensive/post-intensive retreats

... served 827 participants

- 648 Centering Prayer support groups

... served 5372 participants

- 18 training or formation programs

... served 228 participants

Total estimated programs for 2012 (incl prayer groups): At least 1253

Total estimated participation for 2012: At least 18,051

Comparison to previous years:

Because the 2006 survey was totally different in structure and content than the 2007 census, a direct comparison cannot be made. Additionally, a few questions changed between 2007 and 2008, as well as the lack of international participation. However, in general:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of programs*	1150	1473	987	1236	1331	1353	1253
Number of persons*	19437	19760	11902	19435	18682	16615	18051

*Note: the 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 survey form was identical.