

Contemplative Outreach Newsletter

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1



Centering Prayer — God's Presence Within

Centering Prayer is a means of enabling us to go beyond the superficial, and to experience God's presence. During the time of prayer, our attention is "centered" on God's presence within. Afterwards, in active life, our attention moves outward to discover His presence everywhere else. Centering Prayer is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer, but puts them into a new perspective. Centering Prayer presents the teachings of earlier times in an updated way that is designed to encourage us to bring order and regularity to our prayer life.

The experience of interior silence or "resting in God" is beyond thinking, images and emotions. This awareness tells us that the core of our being is eternal and indestructible, and that we, as person, are loved by God and share in His divine life. The ripe fruit of Contemplative prayer is to bring into the routine of daily life, not just the *thought* of God, but the spontaneous awareness of the abiding Divine Presence in, through and beyond everything.

GENESIS AND HISTORY

In the 1970's, at the guest house of St. Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts, a group of Trappists — including Fr. Thomas Keating (then Abbot

of St. Joseph's), Fr. Basil Pennington, Fr. William Menninger and Fr. Raphael Simon — began presenting the method of Centering Prayer. Since then interest in Centering Prayer has gone far beyond the guest house. The method has been offered to a growing number of clergy and laity in America. Centering Prayer groups have sprung up in local parishes, religious centers, and in private homes throughout the United States and Canada.

SUPPORT NETWORK

This growing interest led to the creation of Contemplative Outreach, that is committed to human transforma-

tion in the Christian Contemplative tradition by helping people to love the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in the midst of an active life within our contemporary society.

Contemplative Outreach offers programs that introduce persons to Contemplative Prayer. They include — 1) introductory workshops in Centering Prayer, 2) a format for weekly support groups, 3) intensive Centering Prayer retreats, 4) information about books, articles, tapes. We hope to facilitate an informal network of individuals and faith communities practicing Contemplative Prayer.



Snowmass V Intensive, October 1985

Purpose of the Newsletter

1. To announce activities.
2. As an introduction to new people.
3. To announce books and audiovisual materials.
4. To share a nationwide network of contact persons.

Contemplative Outreach Project —

New York Pilot Program

In 1984 in the Archdiocese of New York, the Thomas Merton Center for Religious Studies, directed by Rev. Paul Dinter, sponsored a pilot project to offer Centering Prayer to parishes in the New York area. The experimental program's goal was to determine if there was interest in learning Centering Prayer on the parish level.

The project was conducted under the Chairmanship of Fr. Thomas Keating. Thanks to the efforts of the coordinators, Mary Mrozowski, Gus Reininger and Ed Bednar, over 1,800 persons attended the parish Introductory Workshops in Centering Prayer. Workshops ranged from 250

(Continued on overleaf)

people at Holy Trinity Church to a group of seven Sisters at St. Hilda's House.

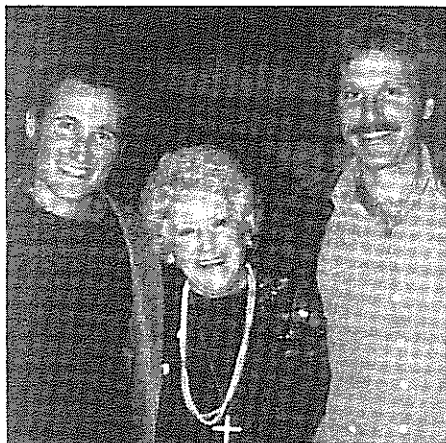
The Pilot Project also developed teaching materials and course formats for introductory workshops, support groups and intensive workshops. It also began a computer project that created a network of individuals and groups interested in contemplative prayer. A training program for Facilitators — persons who teach Centering prayer — was also developed.

The interest in Centering Prayer created by the Pilot Program resulted in an overwhelming number of requests for Centering Prayer retreats. Contemplative Outreach established a retreat center at West Cronwall, Connecticut, in the foothills of the Berkshires. It is staffed by the Contemplative Outreach Community and supports for the projects in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Contemplative Outreach Community

by David Frenette

In September 1985 Fr. Thomas Keating celebrated a Mass to open the Contemplative Outreach Community, a live-in contemplative community under his guidance. Our first core-group members are Mary Mrozowski, Bob Bartel, and myself. Our initial



Bob Bartel, Mary Mrozowski, David Frenette

months have been spent establishing our communal life. We established a schedule of morning and evening, hour-long sessions of contemplative prayer, a brief office, a common meal and five or six hours of work. Slowly

we have grown into a center of prayer in which others can share. This March, six months old, the Community hosted a ten day intensive program for 12 Facilitators led by Fr. Thomas.

We offer intensive practice weekends, intro-workshops and other programs. Our house accommodates 10 people for overnight stays and weekend retreats. Weekday visits, Monday through Friday, are currently available. The address: R.D. Box 330, West Cronwall, CT 06796. (203) 672-0091.

Centering Prayer Learning Facilitators

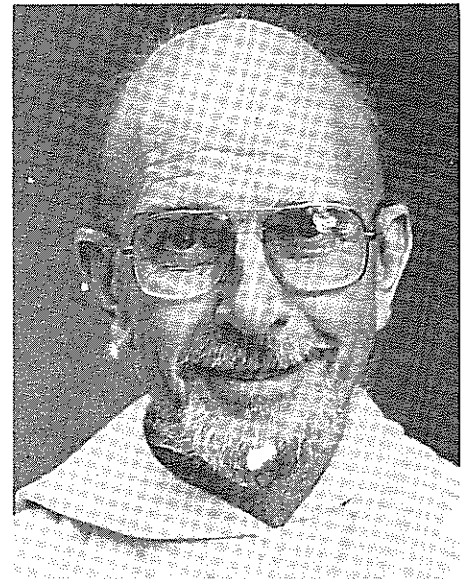
The ideal way to learn Centering Prayer is to attend a workshop led by a trained Facilitator who has had enough exposure to Contemplative Prayer to teach from their own personal experience. Learning Centering Prayer is the transmission of a process, not just the understanding of concepts.

Contemplative Outreach has developed a program for the training of facilitators that involves an intensive Centering Prayer experience — 5 hours a day for 10 to 14 days — as well as a conceptual framework for understanding and teaching Centering Prayer to others.

There are a limited, but growing, number of Facilitators who give introductory workshops. Contemplative Outreach, through its networking, might be able to put you in touch with someone in your area.

NEW YORK FACILITATORS

They have undertaken a semi-monthly introductory workshop series designed to introduce people to Centering Prayer. History, theory, and practice are offered at workshops attracting upwards of 20 people from all walks of life. Introductory Workshops will be given October 10th and 11th, 1986 at St. Jean Baptist Church, 184 East 76th Street. A Retreat will be held November 14th and 15th, 1986 at St. Frances of Assisi, 135 West 31st Street. Contact person: Mary Colleen Jenkins, 410 West 24th Street, Apt. 31, New York, N.Y. 10011.



Father Thomas Keating

From Prayer Into Action

Two outstanding social initiatives are sustained by the Centering Prayer experience. The SHARE PROGRAM, established by Deacon Carl Shelton of San Diego is a self-help program for feeding the poor in the United States and Mexico that has spread to other cities, including New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, Newark and Southern Virginia. For information, write to Share Program, 5255 Lovelock St., San Diego, CA, 92110.

FOOD FOR THE POOR, founded by Ferdinand Mahfood, sends trailer trucks loads of food regularly to ghettos in Jamaica and Haiti. At the beginning of this year, FOOD FOR THE POOR has sent over 20 Million dollars in supplies. For information, please write FOOD FOR THE POOR — 1301 West Copans Road, Pompano Beach, Florida 33064.

ALIVE IN NEW JERSEY...

The Mount St. Mary House of Prayer in Watchung, New Jersey makes Centering Prayer available to people in suburban New Jersey. Rev. Carl Arico, director of Personnel in Ministry of the Archdiocese of Newark, and the three Sisters who administer the House of Prayer facilitate a weekly support group meeting on Tuesday evenings.

Newcomers are welcome to join those already practicing Centering Prayer groups. The support group meeting consists of a period of Centering

Prayer, a contemplative walk, lectio divina (spiritual reading in common) and a time for discussion and sharing. For more information, call Sr. Theresina at (201) 753-2091.

In Butler, New Jersey a support group meets every other Sunday evening at the home of Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler (201) 838-3384.

ON LONG ISLAND, QUEENS AND BROOKLYN...

Over a dozen support groups are now offered by facilitators. Flourishing for the past five years these groups hold weekly meetings and have organized retreats at the Contemplative Outreach Community.

The leaders of the Brooklyn/Queens Diocese Charismatic Renewal Group recently held an Introductory Workshop for their organization.

For more information on activities in this area, please contact Sally Sleeman at (516) 735-5393, 135 Elm Drive, Levittown, N.Y., 11756. Leonarda Durante, 204-49 10th Ave., Rockaway Point, N.Y., 11697, (718) 634-3053. Ann Mazza, 31 Atlas Ave., Malverne, N.Y., 11565, (516) 599-0957.

FLORIDA — EAST AND WEST...

Centering Prayer in South Florida has seen a lot of expansion through the service of Raul Garcia-Cassariego and Father Bill Sheehan, the director of the Ministry of Priest's Center of the Archdiocese of Miami.

Father Basil Pennington led a Centering Prayer retreat in the Spring of 1985 and in January of this year, Fr. Thomas Keating conducted an intensive, ten-day workshop for 40 persons already practicing Centering Prayer.

From these initiatives, several support groups have organized and meet regularly including an Hispanic group. Contact either Father Bill at the Spiritual Life Center, 19330 N.W. 12 Ave., Miami, FL., 33169 or Raul at P.O. Box 650295, Miami, FL., 33265, (305) 559-1612.

On Florida's West Coast, St. Boniface's Episcopal Church in Sarasota, hosted an introductory workshop with Fr. Keating. Contact Pat Ferre, 7403 Sanderling Rd., Sarasota, FL., 37242, (813) 349-8327.

There is also a support group in the Tampa area. Contact Monica Freeman, 302 1060th Terrace Dr., Redington Beach, FL., 33708, (813) 393-7224.

BOSTON AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS...

The Paulist Center in Boston has two Centering Prayer support groups. Contact Rev. Vincent McKiernan, C.S.P., Paulist Center, 5 Park Street, Boston, MA., (617) 242-4460.

The Tabor Contemplative Center sponsored a recent introductory workshop led by Fr. Basil Pennington and Fr. Thomas Keating. Contact: Tabor Contemplative Center, 35 Bowdin St., Boston, MA., 02114, (617) 522-7688.

In Springfield, Adele Millete, (413) 782-6004, and Connie Daniel, (413) 253-9451, facilitate weekly support groups.

CHICAGO...

In the Archdiocese of Chicago, Rev. Wayne Prist, the director of the Center for Pastoral Ministry, sponsored an introductory workshop at the Cardinal Strich Retreat House this February which was attended by 25 priests from the Chicago area. For information, please call Fr. Prist at (312) 337-3537.

THE ROCKIES AND BEYOND...

Fr. Thomas Keating continues to conduct 10 day intensive workshops (facilitator training) in Centering Prayer at the guest house facilities at

St. Benedict's Monastery, in Snowmass, CO., where he resides.

Pat Johnson (who staffs the St. Benedict's and works as Father Thomas' aide) also coordinates Introductory workshops and retreats to groups in the Aspen/Snowmass area. For information please call Pat at (303) 927-4160.

In Denver, Canon David Morgan, of St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, coordinates three weekly support groups as well as retreats and quiet days throughout the year. Rev. Morgan can be reached at Box 824, Denver, CO., 80201 (303) 832-7309.

NEW MEXICO...ALBUQUERQUE

Exodus Center, devoted to fostering contemplative prayer, directed by Father Ray Gunzel, hosted an introductory weekend workshop for priests of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Archbishop Robert Sanchez and 30 priests attended.

Father Ray offers introductory workshops and retreats at the EXODUS CENTER, 4202 San Ysidro N.W., Albuquerque, NM., 87107, (505) 888-4055.

AND ELSEWHERE...

In the past year or so, introductory workshops have been offered in the following areas. Some contacts are listed below:

ASPEN, CO. — Contact Kristan Hughes, Aspen, CO., (303) 920-1198.

BOULDER, CO. — Rev. Terry Ryan, 904 14th St., Boulder, CO., 80302, (303) 443-8383.

Mailing List for Contemplative Outreach Newsletter. If you have friends or members of a Centering Prayer support group who'd like to be on Contemplative Outreach's mailing list, or if you have a change of address, please use this form.

Name (Please Print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Introductory workshop attended? _____

Date _____ Location _____ Teachers _____

PLEASE CUT OUT AND MAIL TO: Merton Center/Contemplative Outreach, 405 West 114th Street, New York, N. Y. 10015

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO. — Rev. Tom Dentisi, Box 4198, Steamboat Springs, Co., 80477, (303) 879-0671.

FORT COLLINS, CO. — Jim Reid, 1308 Lakewood Dr., Fort Collins, CO., (303) 484-3356.

SEATTLE, WA. — Paul Peterhans, 714 21st Ave., Seattle, WA, 98122, (206) 329-6182.

LOS ANGESES, CA. — Maurizio and Sonia Smith, 1259&1/2, Elysian Park, Los Angeles, CA., (818) 352-5354.

SAN DIEGO, CA. — Episcopal Cathedral of St. Paul — Centering Prayer Group, 2728 6th Ave. (15th & Nutmeg St.), San Diego, CA., 92103, (619) 298-7261.

LA JOLLA, CA. — Mrs. Daniel Kripke, 8437 Sugarman Dr., La Jolla, CA., 92037, (619) 453-6427.

ST. PAUL, MN. — Mary Ellen Barrett, 2282 St. Clair St., St. Paul, MN., 55105, (612) 690-0089.

HOUSTON, TX. — Sr. Jean Ann Godsell, Villa de Matel, 6510 Lawndale Ave., Houston, TX., 77023, (713) 928-6053.

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — Rev. Stimpson Hawkins, 330 Lynn Lane, Winston-Salem, N.C.

WASHINGTON D.C./BALTIMORE — Rev. Americo DiNorcía, Pastor — St. Martin's Church, 201 So. Fredrick Ave., Gaithersberg, MD., 20877, (301) 840-1830 Donald Jackson (301) 963-1618, Mary McDonnel (301) 926-0841.

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New York, N. Y. 10025

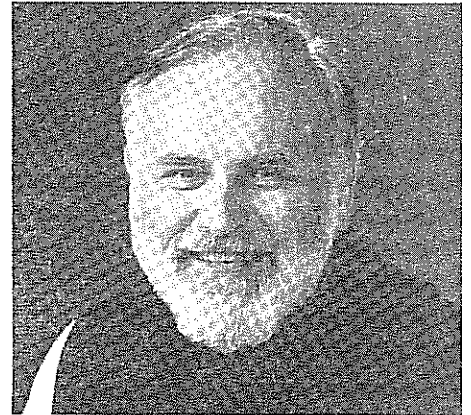
Fr. Basil Pennington—California Summer Workshops

20 miles South of San Francisco, in Redwood City, Fr. Basil will conduct an Introductory Workshop June 30—July 4 at the Mt. Alverno Conference Center. There is a contribution of \$50 for the workshop and \$100 for room and board.

July 4—6, Fr. Basil will conduct an advanced workshop/retreat at Mt. Alverno. Contribution is \$20 and room and board, \$60. Contact Sr. Monica, (415) 369-1725, Mt. Alverno Conference Center, Box 1028, Redwood City, CA. 94064.

In San Diego, July 7—9, Fr. Basil will lead an Introductory Workshop at San Diego University. Contact Cathy Waller (619) 260-4586.

Fr. Basil recently completed a new book entitled *Centered Living*. It will be released by the publisher, Doubleday, in September.



Father M. Basil Pennington

DETROIT, MI. — Dick Marquis, 1054 Riverbank, Lincoln Park, MI., 48146, (313) 388-5947.

IN MONASTERIES...

The Centering Prayer Method has also been introduced in Several Benedictine Monasteries, including St. Vincent's, Latrobe, PA. and St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, MN.

The Trappist Monasteries of men and women around the country have monks or nuns who are familiar with the Centering Prayer practice and might share information and instruction about the method.

Fall Newsletter — Let Us Hear From You!

Information for the Fall Newsletter is being collected. If you have news from your area or could use an announcement to help in your Centering Prayer work, please let us know. Send information to Mary Mrozowski at the Contemplative Outreach Community.

Any and all contributions to help allay the costs of this Newsletter would be greatly appreciated.

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The Contemplative Bookshelf

Available from Amity House

The Cornerstone of Contemplative Outreach

OPEN MIND, OPEN HEART

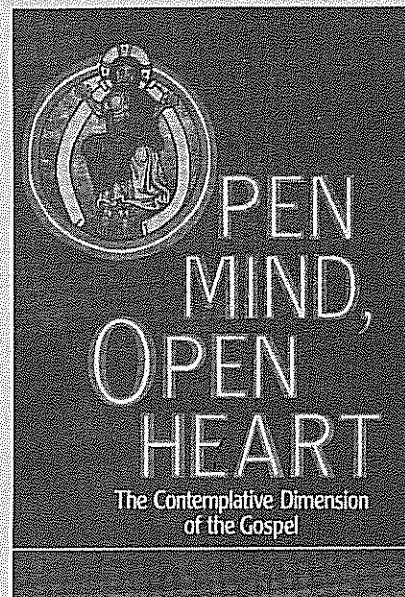
By Thomas Keating

"The leader within the Catholic world in the task of recovering our Christian contemplative heritage."

Ewert H. Cousins, General Editor, *World Spirituality, An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest*

The fundamental principles and practice of contemplative living reflecting the practical wisdom of Father Keating's lifetime as a spiritual friend to countless laity, clergy and religious.

A Wellspring Paperback Edition 186 pages \$8.95



Audio Tapes:

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A three part practical initiation in the art of contemplation by Father Keating. Opens us to deeper streams of consciousness closed off by distractions of daily living.

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Of Special Interest

Video Tapes:

Christ of the New Creation

A Dialog Between Abbot Thomas Keating and Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios

Two of the leading spiritual teachers of our age address our most pressing religious questions on the eve of the 21st Century: major failures of Christianity and how they can be overcome, Christian values which need affirmation, religion and science, woman and feminine values, secularization, war and violence, convergence of world spiritual traditions, the family, the crisis of art and architecture to name some of the themes, presented in two parts:

The Christian Challenge.

The Crisis Within: The Spiritual Life of the Contemporary Church.

One 60-minute tape of two 30-minute segments. \$49.95

The Global Challenge.

The Crisis Without: The Contemporary Church and the Modern World.

One 44-minute tape of two 22-minute segments. \$49.95

BISHOP MAR GREGORIOS is President of the World Council of Churches for Asia and metropolitan of The Syrian Orthodox Church of the East.

AMITY HOUSE



The Contemplative Bookshelf (Continued)

Books on Centering Prayer

Thomas Keating *Finding Grace at the Center*, St. Bede's Publications, (1985) Paperback (Please inquire regarding availability and price.)

Basil Pennington *Centering Prayer*, Doubleday/Image Books, (1976) Paperback \$4.50

Centered Living, Doubleday Hardback (Available only in late September 1986)

SPIRITUAL BACKGROUND

de Caussade *Spiritual Letters*, Doubleday/Image Paperback (This is presently out of print and available only from libraries.)

Dom John Chapman *Spiritual Letters of Dom Chapman*, Sheed & Ward, (1983) (This is presently out of print and available only from libraries.)

Thomas Keating *Crisis of Faith*, St. Bede's, (1982), Paperback (Please inquire regarding availability and price.)

Heart of the World, The Crossroad Publishing Company, (1980), Hardback \$8.95

Thomas Merton *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New Directions Paperback \$5.50

Seeds of Destruction, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, (1964) Paperback \$6.95

Basil Bennington *A Place Apart*, Doubleday, (1983) Paperback \$5.95

Francis Nemeck & Marie Coombs *Contemplation*, Michael Glazer Inc., (1982) Paperback \$5.95

THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

William Thompson *Christ and Consciousness*, Paulist, (1977) Paperback \$5.95

The Jesus Debate, Paulist, (1985) Paperback \$12.95

Campbell & McMahon *Bio Spirituality*, Loyola University, (1985) Paperback \$6.95

PSYCHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Gerald May *Will and Spirit*, Harper & Row, (1983) Hardcover \$24.95

Ken Keys *Handbook to Higher Consciousness*, Living Love Publishing, (1978) Paperback \$3.95

ANTHROPOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Ken Wilber *No Boundary*, Shambhala Press, (1981) Paperback \$7.95

Up from Eden, Shambhala Press, (1983) Paperback \$8.95

AUDIO TAPES ON CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

William Menninger *Contemplative Prayer*, 4 tapes, (259 minutes total), Ligouri Publications, 1 Ligouri Drive, Ligouri, MO. 63057 \$29.95

Basil Pennington *A Centered Life*, 8 tapes, NCR Tapes, Box 181, Kansas City, MO. 61441 (Please inquire regarding availability and price.)

VIDEO TAPES ON CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

Basil Pennington *How to Center Your Life*, 4 half-hour lectures, St. Joseph's Abbey, Spencer, MA. 61562 (Please inquire regarding availability and price.)

Matter of Love, 4 half-hour tapes, NCR Tapes (Please inquire regarding availability and price.)

All of the above Books and Tapes can be obtained from:

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TELEPHONE (914) 258-4078