



We embrace the process of transformation in Christ both in ourselves and in others, through the practice of Centering Prayer.

Contemplative Outreach is a network of communities and individuals seeking the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit and to contribute to the renewal of the Christian contemplative tradition through the practice of Centering Prayer. Vision Theological Principal 1

Dear Fellow Mystics,



4,000 people attended Contemplative Outreach International's conference where Cynthia Bourgeault presented "Oneness: The Secret Embrace - Thomas Keating's Final Gift to the World" last week from April 30th to May 2nd via Zoom. I am working on typing up the notes; I hope to finalize them when we receive the recordings in a few weeks.

Cynthia clarified Fr. Thomas' final vision of Oneness by revealing how his poems in *The Secret Embrace* were "his final theological outpouring in haiku form." As we examined these poems, she helped us observe Fr. Thomas' documentation of the "final and complete shredding of the self; taking on the combined principal body of humanity to the collective post of the role he was now playing."

She connected the spare words of Fr. Thomas' poems to illustrate the theological parameters of the landscape of Oneness. We would not be able to plumb the depths of the poems' revelatory meaning without Cynthia's guidance. Poem VII sums it up:

What Matters

Only the Divine matters,

And because the Divine matters,

Everything matters.

Last week I had the privilege of joining OLA's group on Monday, our group Tuesday night, Transfiguration's group Wednesday morning, St. Anthony of Padua's group Wednesday night, our group Thursday afternoon, and Christ Church's group Saturday morning. We now have many more, new opportunities to join our fellow members in Centering Prayer! Participation has greatly increased with Zoom and other virtual means. People who moved away from the area, participants from all over the world, and participants previously unable due to time and travel constraints have joined our groups, increasing our participation a lot.

We encourage you to join a group if you have not already. Zoom has placed restrictions on all meetings to prevent any hacking. To honor and respect each group's privacy and confidentiality, we ask that you request an invitation from the Centering Prayer group leader personally. You can find their contact information on our website at <https://www.contemplativeoutreachatlanta.com/centering-prayer-groups>. Additionally, Contemplative Outreach Ltd. offers many varied time and day slots for groups to join at <https://contemplativeoutreach.org/join-community-prayer-online-meditation-chapel>.

We are continuing to observe social-distancing with our groups through May 31st with the anticipation it will be extended into the summer to ensure everyone's safety. We are also planning how we can present Introductory Workshops via Zoom. Contemplative Outreach Ltd. Is working on developing these programs. More to come soon.

We are in a new time. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, may we discover and live Christ's new way of being with each other by loving and trusting.

Maggie



Everybody, meet Leslie Geer! Born and raised in Denver, Colorado, mother of an almost 30-year-old son, Leslie attended 141-year-old Sacred Heart Catholic Church there growing up. After moving to Atlanta in 1986, she joined St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church where she served as Director of Faith Based Formation for 10 years. In addition to cantoring in their choir, she leads the St. Anthony of Padua Centering Prayer Group on Wednesday nights and mini retreats on Saturday mornings now by Zoom. Leslie will soon train to become a commissioned presenter of Centering Prayer Workshops in our 2020 Commissioned Presenter Mentor training.

Becoming a contemplative Leslie transitioned from a verbal prayer life into contemplative when her spiritual director guided her using Lectio Divina and eventual resting in God in reflective silence. She has been practicing Centering Prayer for 15 years.

What it's all about "Centering Prayer is about relationships. We want to spend time with someone we are close to, so we make an effort to make our time together meaningful, like cleaning the house and making tea. Here we have someone who knows us, understands us, and loves us most, whom we want to find time to know, understand and love, being comfortable with in the silence.

Don't do this "Don't give up. Persevere. Just accept. Stick with it. Just sit, even on days you think you can't even be still for 15 minutes. Don't give up."

Do this "Be part of a group and share. Others are going through what you are going through too. It is critical to read and delve into *Open Mind, Open Heart*."

Community of Saints Leslie felt a powerful presence attending the interspiritual contemplative book-signing on January 12th at Mary and Martha's Place with Rebecca Parker, Lerita Coleman Brown, Stuart Higginbotham, and Carl McColman. She experienced the community of prayer as the community of saints! (*Our Revolutionary Contemplatives group is planning a future gathering—physical or virtual, details coming soon.*)

Where it all fits "Reflecting back on my life, the Holy Spirit reaches everywhere. Centering Prayer is most beneficial where we accept that God is working in our life, and it is not something we control. If we are just dabbling and not intentional, we miss it. What happens might not look like what we thought it would, but we know everything is going to be ok."

Bet you didn't know After completing a Landmark Forum course in 2015, Leslie started working with Pastor Anita Lane of Jars of Clay Outreach to the homeless. She developed the Handbag Project where people donate gently used handbags filled with socks, toiletries and baby supplies to be given away at Christmas. With Jars of Clay, Seven Bridges to Recovery, Atlanta Missions, Coventry House, Georgia Law Society for the Homeless, and St. Anthony Feed the Hungry, Leslie has distributed thousands of handbags.



Coming Soon

Lerita Coleman Brown, Ph.D. - Meditations of the Heart - Saturday, May 16, 2020 - 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

In his book, *Meditations of the Heart*, mystic and theologian Howard Thurman shares his insights from having quietly and deeply communed with the Eternal. Dr. Brown's book, *When the Heart Speaks, Listen*, illustrates how hearts are available for solace and overflow with divine guidance. Both books offer an invitation for deeper listening. Our enrichment day will include contemplative prayer, readings, silence, and a guided session of active imagination, to explore the spiritual wisdom of the mystical heart.

Sign up at <https://www.holyfamilyretreat.org/calendar/meditations-heart>

This program will be offered online via the Zoom platform. Information on how to access the program will be emailed to registered participants on Friday, May 15.

Registration deadline is Thursday, May 14, and is limited to 30 participants.

Offering: \$45

In order to keep the sacredness of a retreat atmosphere, the event will be limited to 30 participants. Lerita will be donating her honorarium to Holy Passionist Retreat Center since they have lost so much revenue during the pandemic.



A Zoom Conversation with Ilia - The Sacrament of Everyday Life: *The only way God can break into our world.*

Friday, May 8th, 4:00 pm – 5:30pm, ET USA (UTC/GMT-4)

We draw hope from Fr. Thomas' encouragement: "In Centering Prayer, by participating intentionally in the Paschal Mystery, our prayer periods become a liturgy without words, a celebration of one's own union with Christ and of participation in the inner life of the Trinity, Every little drop of experience is of almost inconceivable value and vastly transcends ourselves. In other words, the Divine Energy that is accessed by each one's participation in Christ's passion, death and resurrection becomes a kind of universal prayer for the needs of the whole human family. It has a radiation that is truly apostolic, apostolic in the sense of transmitting the grace of Christ into this world..." *Intimacy with God*

Register at

https://omegacenter.info/the-sacrament-of-everyday-life-a-zoom-conversation-with-ilia/?utm_source=The+Omega+Center&utm_campaign=ac4e2346c1-

[EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_07_07_38_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e83a6f2991-ac4e2346c1-474464566&mc_cid=ac4e2346c1&mc_eid=6cc098ab7f](https://omegacenter.info/the-sacrament-of-everyday-life-a-zoom-conversation-with-ilia/?utm_source=The+Omega+Center&utm_campaign=ac4e2346c1-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_07_07_38_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e83a6f2991-ac4e2346c1-474464566&mc_cid=ac4e2346c1&mc_eid=6cc098ab7f)





On-Line and Virtual Opportunities

“The Shepherd Song (In Fast and Feasting)” by Paul Reeves

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wx47QoZR46o>

“In Pursuit of Silence” movie free for a little while: <http://watch.pursuitofsilence.com>

Entertaining Angels – about Dorothy Day (dramatization) free on Amazon Prime

<https://www.amazon.com/Entertaining-Angels-Dorothy-Day-Story/dp/B07629LN8X/>

Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story (documentary) – Free on PBS

<https://www.pbs.org/video/revolution-of-the-heart-the-dorothy-day-story-lwz697/>

The Work of the People – breathtaking films for spirituality and transformation with significant work about the pandemic- <https://www.theworkofthepeople.com/>

Center for Action and Contemplation offers daily reflections and online courses at www.cac.org .

Encountering Silence Podcast by Carl McColman, Cassidy Hall, and Kevin Johnson at

<https://encountering Silence.com/>

James Finley Podcast: “Sink into the Taproot of Your Heart”

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/bonus-sink-into-the-taproot-of-your-heart/id1494041647?i=1000469272203>

James Finley Podcast: “Turning to the Mystics”

<https://cac.org/podcast/turning-to-the-mystics/>

Cynthia Bourgeault’s Northeast Wisdom School offers three opportunities:

Divine Exchange Wisdom E-Course

Ongoing Virtual Wisdom Meditation

Virtual Easter Retreat and Practicum

at

<https://mailchi.mp/07d4d7bd3a8d/with-gratitude-an-appeal-from-my-heart-to-yours-5381637?e=21a7b09408>

Have a Holy Interruption Retreat at <https://shalem.org/programs/online/holy-interruptions/>

To find a Centering Prayer Group near you, go to

<https://www.contemplativeoutreachatlanta.com/centering-prayer-groups>

Join the online Meditation Chapel at Contemplative Outreach Ltd. Several times available at

<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/join-community-prayer-online-meditation-chapel>

Calendar of Events

We will continue to suspend physical gatherings at least until May 31st with the expectation it will be extended into the summer. Details will be developed as we receive more information.

Quarterly Coordinating Team Gatherings for 2020 will be on Zoom until further notice: Sundays – 1-3 pm June 14, Sept 6, Dec 6. To receive an invitation to the Zoom gathering, please contact Maggie at coatlantageorgia@gmail.com.

Reflection Gathering by Zoom

- ❖ **June 28, 2020** – Mary & Martha’s Place at St. Dunstan’s Details TBD

Physical Retreats are currently on hold until further determination.

- ❖ **July 17 to 19, 2020** - Ignatius House- Centering Prayer, Mindful Walking, and Yoga TBD
- ❖ **October 28 to Nov 1, 2020** - 5 Day Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreat Monastery of the Holy Spirit – To register contact Patti Wilson at (770) 760-0959 or retreat@trappist.net TBD
- ❖ **May 12-16, 2021** – 5 Day Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreat at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, Conyers, GA. To register Patti Wilson at 770) 760-0959 or retreat@trappist.net TBD
- ❖ **November 7-12, 2021** – 5 Day Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreat at Ignatius House. TBD

Be still and know that I am God. Ps 46:10

Silence Solitude Solidarity Service

“The Father might be described as ‘Infinite possibility.’ The Son is the actualization of all those possibilities...And the Spirit is kind of reconstituting the relationships as they eternally give themselves away.” From the video “Heartfulness 18” Thomas Keating

Contemplative Outreach Atlanta is a chapter of **Contemplative Outreach Ltd,**
1560 Union Valley Rd #909, West Milford, NJ
07480 973.838.3384 Mary



Contemplative Outreach

Jane Yates, Administrator
maryjane@coutreach.org



Contemplative Outreach *Atlanta*

Contact us at

<https://www.contemplativeoutreachatlanta.com>

Coordinator Maggie Winfrey coatlantageorgia@gmail.com

Find a Centering Prayer group, read our newsletters, and see what is coming soon.