

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,

Greetings of love and peace from Two Thomases' Hermitage, now day 463.

Leslie Geer led our team of Tomeka Barris-McGhee, Leslye Colvin, Xandra Garanzuay, Paula Hamilton, Nayoung Kim, Angela Linton, and Chris Thompson to present our **We Gather Together Big Sit for Justice** on June 12th. 55 people contemplated on justice-based scriptural readings that shaped our Lectio Divina, Centering Prayer, reflections, and petitions. One commented, "I loved the pace. It was sacred and unrushed. CP, Lectio, the reflection, then closing cp. Just wonderful. Also, the people leading each session were welcoming and inviting." Find the recording on our [COA YouTube channel here](#). Leslie Geer's Juneteenth interview is on page 2, and Leslye Colvin's reflection "To Unbind" is on page 3.

What is your Centering Prayer story? Our CO Ltd. administrator Mary Jane Yates wants to hear our stories. We ask our CP groups to tell and record them in writing or Zoom at your next few meetings. [Please send them to me](#) by July 1st. I will compile and share them with everyone by July 15th. Let one or more of these questions guide your stories:

1. What does Centering Prayer mean to you? How has it changed your spirituality?
2. What activities are happening in your CP community?
3. What difference are they making/not making?
4. What do you want to continue/let go of? What vision do you have for your group? What supports are needed to help your community to live into the vision?
5. Let ["Voices of Gratitude"](#) video clips give you great story examples.

Some Centering Prayer groups began meeting in-person with a Zoom option. On Wed, June 9th, two Transfiguration groups centered in Mabry Park. Ken Hatcher, of St. Julian's, rejoiced, "I really cannot find the words to express how good it was to see everyone in person again." As we cautiously return to centering together in-person, we treasure the gift of each person's presence both in-person and on Zoom. My three Centering Prayer groups will continue to Zoom because our members live all over the place. Many groups will continue to meet by Zoom. To find out how your group is gathering, [contact CP group leaders here](#).

Join our Carl McColman's free celebration of his book *Eternal Heart* June 29th by [signing up here](#).

[Sign up here](#) for our "That We May Be One" one-day Centering Prayer retreat on July 17th with Vernon Dixon, Fr. Thomas, David Frenette and me. Scholarships available.

Our next Contemplative Outreach Atlanta Coordinating Team Meeting will be in July on Zoom. Everyone is invited to the team. I'll send you the meeting day/time from survey results.

Love draws us closer,

Maggie



Juneteenth Interview with Leslie Geer,

leader of St. Anthony of Padua Centering Prayer groups and
Team for Justice Big Sit on June 12, 2021



This week celebrates the 156th anniversary of Juneteenth, Freedom Day or Jubilee Day, honoring the end of slavery in 1865, 2 ½ years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, when federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas to take control of the state and ensure that all enslaved people be freed. You've probably been hearing a lot about it lately, as Congress debates making it a national holiday. For more information on Juneteenth, its history, and what we can do to fight racism and intolerance, I sat with Leslie Geer for her perspective.

- 1. What does Juneteenth mean to you?** It is a day when our freedom was documented, the day that inspired hope.
- 2. How did you learn about Juneteenth?** Growing up in Denver, Colorado, we've been celebrating Juneteenth since I was a teenager. I am going home this weekend, and my family and I plan to attend the events going on in my old community. There is a two-day festival with arts, booths and food, as well as the annual parade Saturday morning.
- 3. What stories did your family tell?** I had not heard about the Tulsa Black Wall Street Massacre. I do remember reading about Emmett Till in *Jet* and *Ebony Magazine* articles, with the published photos of his body. It was devastating. I believe my folks told me just enough so that I would be **aware**, but not to be so horrified that I would feel like I couldn't have a life.
- 4. What would you like us to know?** That no matter what, people of color walk out the door and into all rooms with our color. We don't know how we will be received, perceived, or accepted on any given day. We are not all the same, and we all have our biases. However, it truly takes our prayerful and close relationship with God to understand how we are supposed to love. It is through prayer that our eyes and ears are opened: "Open Mind, Open Heart," right?
- 5. What do you wish others could know and do?** I wish that others would take the time to learn, study, find out, and take interest in African American history.

I'm in a group that my friend and his partner started last year during Covid. We've found that there are many things we are all learning at the same time. Our dialogue has not always been easy, although we have known each other for many years. I'm also in a core group of 14 parishes who are working diligently to form an antiracist platform to establish a "conversation" for the Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta.

The contemplative part of Centering Prayer really is God's action within. Just like reconciliation is difficult and uncomfortable, racial dialogue and discussions about police brutality are difficult and uncomfortable. The awareness God gives us in contemplation is His nudging us to correct.

6. Where can we learn more? Four great books: Ibram X. Kendi's *Stamped from the Beginning* and *How to be an Antiracist*, DiAngelo and Dyson's *White Fragility*, and Isabel Wilkerson's *Caste*. PBS is airing some great programs now. Join a group or participate in the [21 day Ignatian Racial Equity challenge](#) or the [Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing](#).

Meditation: Excerpt of Leslye Colvin's Reflection: **To Unbind**

Given at our Justice We Gather Together Big Sit, June 12, 2021

Contemplation has the capacity to lead us to epiphanies on our journey. Several years ago, I began to contemplate John's account of Jesus restoring Lazarus' life. Few would argue that most of the attention is given to Jesus weeping and the unexpected call for his dead friend to "come forth." Seemingly in an instant, I recognized what was hidden in plain sight.



As with most epiphanies, I was stunned. Had I really never heard a homily or talk on this command Jesus gave to bystanders two millennia ago? It is an enduring command that continues speaking to us today. It is clear and concise, simple and direct.

[Jesus] cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Unbind him and let him go."

"Unbind him and let him go."

The words are alarming in their explicitness. They are an invitation, no, a command, to participate in the liberation of our brothers and sisters as well as ourselves. *"Unbind him and let him go."*

Is this not the message Jesus proclaimed in the synagogue?

Is it not the way of Christ?

[Jesus] unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free..."

Is this our way?

Are we compelled to react to the command to unbind him and let him go? Do we question normative practices? Do we restore this man to his place in our family and community? Dare we risk breaking tradition by touching burial bands?

To some degree, each of us is bound by the systems of death in which we live. We are bound by practices and ways of being that privilege some at the expense of the dignity of others. We are all bound. Misogyny, white body supremacy, racism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, nativism, xenophobia, colonization, American exceptionalism, anti-immigrant, poverty, classism, Christian nationalism, clericalism, mass incarceration. This list is not complete, but these are some of the burial bindings we are called to undo so that we may liberate others and ourselves – for to unbind is the way of Christ Jesus.

Find more of Leslye's writing at her blog [Leslye's Labrynth](#).



Calendar of Events

Sign up for COA events on our website [here](#).

- ❖ July 17th Zoom One-Day “That We May Be One” Retreat
- ❖ August 14th We Gather Together Big Sit - Divine Feminine with Julian of Norwich
- ❖ October 30, Saturday Zoom Celtic Saints One-Day Retreat with Carl McColman

Future Events

- ❖ August 28th -Revolutionary Contemplatives – Heart theme Details TBA
- ❖ Save the date October 9, Sat 10 am We Gather Together Big Sit IN THE PARK & hybrid Zoom - Details TBA
- ❖ Registration online soon on the [website](#) for Sept 16-19th International Contemplative Outreach Ltd. Biannual Conference Denver & Zoom
- ❖ [Registration here](#) for Sept 24-26 Conspire Center for Action and Contemplation Zoom conference

On-Line Opportunities

Monastery of the Holy Spirit Zoom Retreats

The Monastery is open to in-person retreats beginning this September. All weekends in September are already booked, but personal retreats during the week are open. To register, please call the retreat house office at 770-760-0959 Mon-Fri 8:00 – 1:00. Donation \$45. Visit us at www.trappist.net.

June 19 Contemplative Outreach of New Mexico offers a virtual day-long retreat on discovering the Enneagram as a way to uncover unconscious personality patterns to lead us to unity with God that we yearn for. Saturday, June 19th, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm Mountain Time. Register by emailing con2016@gmail.com with your name, phone number, city and state where you live. Donations welcome.

June 26 Monastery of the Holy Spirit presents Br. Mark Doyle’s Zoom retreat “Anxiety & Depression.” To register, please call the office at 770-760-0959 Mon-Fri 8a-1p . To see rest of the retreats visit www.trappist.net

June 28 – Monday 8 pm All Saints Episcopal Atlanta invites you to Invitation: Virtual Taize Prayer <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4730267964>

June 29 – Carl McColman’s new book *Eternal Heart* book launch celebration. Event is free, registration required [here](#). See the flyer at the end of the newsletter.

June 30 - Center for Christogenesis is offering a free webinar “The Entangled Planet: Why Our Systems Are Failing Us” on Wednesday, June 30th 4-5:30 pm ET [Register here](#).

On-Line Opportunities Continued

July 5-9 Christine M. Bochen returns to Vancouver School of Theology via Zoom to teach a summer school course called, “Created for Joy: TM’S Spirituality of Awareness and Witness” from July 5 to July 9, 9 am – noon Pacific time

**The International Thomas Merton Society and
The Bernardin Center at Catholic Theological Union present:**

- Lynn R. Szabo - Poetry as Spiritual Direction with Thomas Merton and Denise Levertov
July 13, 2021, 8 pm EST. [REGISTER HERE](#)
- Judith Valente - Why We Still Read and Need Thomas Merton: A Personal Journey
August 10, 2021, 8 pm EST. [REGISTER HERE](#)

Virtual Resources

Center for Action and Contemplation presents [Wisdom in Times of Crisis](#), a free series of videos featuring all five of our core faculty and **Learning How to See: Podcast Series**-Brian McLaren, Jacqui Lewis and Richard Rohr- six-episode podcast series [Learning How to See](#). Brian McLaren, Barbara Holmes, Richard Rohr, Cynthia Bourgeault, James Finley speaking [here](#).



Center for Christogenesis Ilia Delio offers a free Zoom talk “The Entangled Planet: Why Our Systems Are Failing Us” June 30 Sign up [here](#).

interviews millennials to find out how they redefine religion in terms of an evolutionary world [here](#).

Ilia’s video “Why have hope for the future” [here](#)



[Encountering Silence](#) Podcast by Carl McColman, Cassidy Hall, and Kevin Johnson



Ignatius House is open for socially-distanced retreats – [info here](#).



Br. Elias Marechal OCSO is on YouTube. [Find him here](#).



Find Fr. William Meninger on YouTube! [click here](#) to find his many videos.



Monastery of the Holy Spirit Zoom Retreats can be found at www.trappist.net.

To register, please call their office at 770-760-0959 Mon-Fri 8 am – 1 pm. Retreat donation is \$45.





Group Meetings and Coordinating Team Gatherings

We are beginning to have socially distanced in-person Centering Prayer meetings with the option of joining by Zoom. We recommend that participants receive the Covid-19 vaccination. Check with Centering Prayer group facilitators to find out their meeting access [here](#).



“Rosa Parks is tired of being abused, subjected to a violence that threatens to take away her soul and to hammer her humanity into subhuman form. Rosa Parks is exhausted from having to defend herself against attempts to force her to relinquish her inner truth. She is tired of having to fight attempts to compel her to believe that she is what certain White folks have decided she must be, and not be. Because of

her fierce—and sacred—courage, at no point does Rosa Parks release a defeated scream.

Lester Young and Rosa Parks claim as their own the power of the slaves who refused to be disempowered, as they stood tall and sang spirituals in cotton fields: the sacred music that gave birth to the blues and to jazz.” Br. Elias Marechal, OCSO, *Tears of an Innocent God*



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

Silence Solitude Solidarity Service

Join the online Meditation Chapel at Contemplative Outreach Ltd. [here](#).



Contemplative Outreach

Contemplative Outreach Atlanta

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Contemplative Outreach Ltd.'s monthly e-bulletin is available [subscribe here](#).



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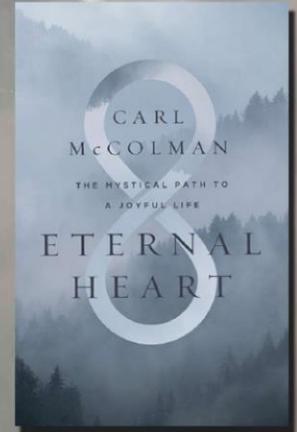
Your Invitation to a Special Virtual Event



Book Launch Celebration
Tuesday, June 29 at 7:30 PM EST

Eternal Heart: **The Mystical Path to a Joyful Life** *written by Carl McColman*

*Featuring author Carl McColman, along with special
guests Lerita Coleman Brown & Colette Lafia,
& music by Caroline Herring*



This virtual event is **free**, but *registration is required* in order to receive the URL you'll need to attend.

Register here: www.anamchara.com/eternalheart

In this online celebration of the wisdom of the heart, author Carl McColman is joined by friends and fellow “heart authors” Lerita Coleman Brown (When the Heart Speaks, Listen) and Colette Lafia (The Divine Heart). The program will also feature readings from the book & time for questions & answers.



PREORDER YOUR SIGNED COPY TODAY!

Preorder a signed copy of *Eternal Heart* from the Cathedral Bookstore today.

For more info or to place your order, please visit www.cathedralbookstore.org/eternalheart

ABOUT 'ETERNAL HEART'

In every heart there is a place of infinite longing and every heart is full of numerous gifts of grace. Carl McColman invites us to discover, celebrate and activate the gifts that are already in our hearts: blessings that lead us to a life filled with meaning, purpose and joy.

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