



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 from my hermitage, now day 283. I felt honored when Aquinas Center at Emory University asked me to contribute my story how I began contemplation. You can read it on their blog [here](#).

We Revolutionary Contemplatives Lerita Coleman Brown, Stuart Higginbotham, Carl McColman, Rebecca Parker, and I presented “2020—Perfecting Vision: Seeing More Clearly Now” November 22nd. Survey results inspired planning our next event: “This was wonderful...would love more events like these.” “Oneness, not only with kindred spirits, but with those I don’t agree with.” “Wonderful format to share wisdom of contemplative practices.” You can view it on our YouTube channel [here](#).

We were thrilled when 67 participants attended our first Zoom Centering Prayer Introductory workshop on December 5th. We are thankful for Rev. Ed Bacon of St. Luke’s Atlanta’s vision to create support for contemplatives in his parish, now grown to many from the Atlanta area and across the country. Our Paul Reeves touched many deeply in his presentation posted on our YouTube channel [here](#). Participants remarked “I appreciate Paul’s simplicity and his many metaphors.” “I learned so much in a short period of time. It was a great introduction and I am now on fire to learn more! Great job!” “You have created a compelling program that will enrich and even save lives.”

Continuing the great momentum from the Intro, on December 12th our First Follow Up Session Team answered questions, guided a Centering Prayer session, and showed Fr. Thomas’ video [“Prayer in Secret.”](#) When our breakout sessions launched too early, we learned technology tips! Our rock-star facilitators handled the tech hiccup well, reporting that members appreciated the opportunity to share their experiences. Due to holiday conflicts, we cancelled the December 19th session and rescheduled it so that our 2nd, 3rd, and 4th sessions will be on January 9th, 16th, and 23rd. We are elated that our new community is growing in Centering Prayer. We hope to keep in touch and support each other by email over the holidays until our next session. You can find our First Follow Up posted on our YouTube channel [here](#).

On December 6th our coordinating team met by Zoom. We made plans to lead some new Centering Prayer groups first thing in the morning and at other times in the new year. We reviewed the extremely positive survey results from the Nov. 22nd and Dec. 5th events.

Check out last month’s website picture survey results on page 4, some already on our website [here](#). To find the different pages of our site, click on the menu names at the top. Our newly-edited Zoom Centering Prayer groups page shows our groups by meeting days with links to the facilitators to contact them for a Zoom link. We decided not to employ a website builder just yet because we can update with our Wix software. A friend will soon help us set up a “donate” button.

As the celebration of Jesus' coming draws near, let's take Ilia Delio's wisdom to heart and remember

"This Christmas, may our faith in the power of God's love be renewed, for love alone can turn our sorrow into joy, our despair into hope, our fear into hope.

Yes, Christ is born but the amazing wonder of Christmas is that Christ is born in you."

I am deeply grateful for you. May you and your dear ones know the blessings of Christmas,

Maggie

Christmas Meditations

"In his Christmas sermon, [Thomas] Merton appropriates the Good News of the Incarnation as enabling every one of us to become manifestations of Christ's salvific presence to others. Christ is born in us and grows in us (mostly through our experiences of suffering and limitation) to extend God's compassionate regard to the world. [Merton says:]

The mystery of Christmas therefore lays upon us all a debt and obligation to the rest of humanity and to the whole created universe. We who have seen the light of Christ are obliged, by the greatness of the grace that has been given us, to make known the presence of the Savior to the ends of the earth. This we will do not only by preaching the glad tidings of his coming, but above all by revealing him in our lives. Christ is born to us today, in order that he may appear to the whole world through us. This one day is the day of his birth, but every day of our mortal lives must be his manifestation, his divine epiphany, in the world which he has created and redeemed." Thomas Merton, *Seasons of Celebration*, p. 112, Jonathan Montaldo, Robert G. Toth, Thomas Merton, *Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton-Advent and Christmas*, Ave Maria Press, 2010.



"The joy of Christmas is the intuition that all limitations to growth into higher states of consciousness have been overcome. The divine light cuts across all darkness, prejudice, preconceived ideas, prepackaged values, false expectations, phoniness and hypocrisy. To act out of the truth is to make Christ grow not only in ourselves, but in others." Thomas Keating, *Mystery of Christ*, page 27



On-Line Opportunities

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



Monastery of the Holy Spirit Retreats

- January 9 & 10- **Wisdom of the Christian Mystics** by Br. Elias Marechal and Carl McColman 9 am ET Saturday and 10:30 am ET Sunday
- January 16 – **Contemplative Prayer** by Br. Michael – 9:30 am & 1:30 pm ET
Suggested donation \$45, **To register, call** 770-760-0959 Mon-Fri 8 am – 1 pm ET



January 21, February 8, March 18, April 15

7:30-9 pm ET **Wise Women and Spirituality Series** with **Pittsburg Theological Seminary**.
Presenters Barbara Brown Taylor, Lerita Coleman Brown, Mihee Kim-Kort, Carrie Newcomer, Joan Prentice, Chanequa Walker-Barnes. [Website here](#). Q? 412-924-1345 or [email](#)



May 21-23, 2021 - Merton and Women - Bonnie Thurston, Merton Scholar, will explore women and the feminine in the life and teaching of Thomas Merton.
Benedictine Sisters Retreat Center, 916 Convent Rd NE, Cullman, AL 35055 [Register here](#).

Virtual Resources

Center for Action and Contemplation presents **Learning How to See: A Special Limited Podcast Series** with **Brian McLaren, Jacqui Lewis and Richard Rohr**- this special six-episode podcast series [Learning How to See](#). 3 three theologians discuss seeing is social, political and contemplative. Also free [20-video series](#) five faculty Brian McLaren, Barbara Holmes, Richard Rohr, Cynthia Bourgeault, James Finley speaking on the pandemic [here](#).



Fr. Carl Arico's talk on the “**Fruits of the Holy Spirit**”: [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)



Hear our own **Claudia Campbell**, Centering Prayer group leader in Jasper, GA, guest speaking on podcast for **Cloud Walk Ministry** on “ThinSpace,” episode 10. [Listen here](#)



Contemplative Outreach Ltd April 30th - May 2nd **Cynthia Bourgeault: “Oneness: The Secret Embrace, Fr. Thomas Keating’s Final Gift to the World”**
public video recordings [Session 1:](#) [Session 2:](#) [Session 3:](#)



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



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



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



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



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

Group Meetings and Coordinating Team Gatherings

We will continue to suspend physical gatherings indefinitely. Details will be developed as we receive more information.

Centering Prayer groups will be only meeting virtually. Find a group [here](#).

Monthly Coordinating Team Gatherings for 2020 will be on Zoom.

We hope to meet monthly. An email is coming soon to find out your best available time to meet. Everyone is a member of our Coordinating Team. Your gifts of service spread and support transformation of our community through Centering Prayer.

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

Silence Solitude Solidarity Service



Contemplative
Outreach

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Contemplative
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Results of Picture Poll

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Some of these are on our website already.