

CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH OF CHICAGO

Quarterly Newsletter

June 1, 2010



Conferences 2010

November 18-21 MIDWEST GATHERING

Marianist Retreat Center
South Suburb of St. Louis, MO
(not far from an Interstate Highway)
125 acres of hiking and walking trails
Private Rooms with bath
Cost \$300 per person (\$75 to hold registration)

Content of Gathering under discernment
To give input contact the Chapter Resource and Communication Services
representative, Susan Komis, at susankomis@charter.net

September 23-26 ANNUAL CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH CONFERENCE

Sheraton Gateway Hotel
near the Atlanta, GA Airport
Begins with supper on Thursday and ends at noon on Sunday
Conference fee \$425 if register by August 10.
Hotel Accommodations not included

For more information visit www.contemplativeoutreach.org

If not attending the conference follow the process by login to
<http://co2010.posterous.com>
This is the conference Blog. There is space for you to contribute



From the Coordinator – Bob Gordon

Spiritual Health – Many of us have the experience of receiving a prescription from a doctor. We take it and have it filled because we know our doctor has our wellness in mind and is offering us a means to reclaim our health. For a chronic condition some prescriptions need to be refilled again and again and again.

Jesus is referred to by many as the divine physician because he has our spiritual health in mind. It is also because he is known to treat and cure spiritual illness. This illness might be referred to as the 'human condition,' a descriptive Father Thomas Keating uses to illustrate our imperfect nature and the afflictive emotions that arise from it. What prescription would the divine physician order for someone with these symptoms: **afflictive emotions?**

Healing is known to occur when one encounters the divine. A common way to develop a relationship with God is through prayer. We have good advice regarding prayer. In Matthew 6:6 Jesus says, "But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you." A spiritual illness has a spiritual remedy. Jesus' treatment and cure is 'one on one' time with the Creator of all. Prayer in secret is such an encounter. Centering Prayer is a means of facilitating this secret prayer. If you want to get well take Father Thomas' advice: pray twice daily. If Jesus were writing this prescription what would it look like?

PRESCRIPTION: Centering Prayer. Twice Daily. Unlimited refills.

Directions: Every medicine comes with directions and it is no different with Centering Prayer. I encourage everyone to read *Open Mind, Open Heart* (OMOH) by Father Thomas at least once per year. It is always good to refresh one's memory on how best to apply a remedy. Sometimes a direction reveals more with subsequent reading. The reason for this is experience. Directions are clearer when accompanied by the experience of following them for some time. One gains an understanding of their appropriateness that only experience can supply.

DIET: Medicine is often only a part of the remedy. It may focus on the immediate symptoms but what about the underlying cause? Someone said, "We are what we eat." In other words, nourishment is very important. What one eats becomes physically part of them. Jesus says, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matt. 4:4) Sacred reading or *lectio divina* is one means for receiving the word of God through its process of attentive listening to the word, pondering the word and responding to the word. Through the practice of sacred reading one receives the choicest of foods and learns through its experience to chew it well and receive all of its benefits.

So it appears simple enough.

PRESCRIPTION (read the directions) + DIET = PHYSICAL HEALTH

CENTERING PRAYER (OMOH) + SACRED READING = SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Enjoy your summer wellness program!



This and That around the Chapter

Lectio Divina Intensive Retreat

Sr. Maria Tasto who was to lead the Lectio Divina retreat had open heart surgery on April 24. During the surgery her heart stopped but was shocked back and a valve was repaired. She went home with an external pace maker and was told to cancel her commitments for the next five months. It is unclear if she will need to have a pacemaker implanted. The chair of the Lectio Divina service team of the national faculty sent out a request for a substitute retreat guide and no one was available to staff the retreat in Chicago. This retreat is now waiting until such time as it is clear that it can be staffed.

Because some persons had already sent in registrations, they were all contacted to attend a combo intensive/post intensive at the same time this summer. Most did not wish to do that and after a request to facilitators of centering prayer groups with the fact that we needed more people if it was to be held, the minimum of 10 retreatants did not occur. The retreat was cancelled.

New Volunteer to provide Facilitator Support

Cathie Jarrett has joined the leadership team of Contemplative Outreach Chicago and has agreed to discern through visiting centering prayer groups and talking with the centering prayer group facilitator(s) and the group what they need in order to optimize their group's support for the individuals who are committed to a twice daily practice of centering prayer. Please welcome Cathie to your meeting and tell her where you experience your journey with centering prayer is and what you need to go deeper on the spiritual journey.

Is God Calling You to Get More Involved in Contemplative Outreach Chicago?

Talk to any of us about what you envision for the future beyond the local centering prayer groups.

Bob Gordon, coordinator, robert@centeringprayerchicago.org

Margie Tomlinson, newsletter / treasurer, margie@centeringprayerchicago.org

Allen Harper, Centering Prayer / Lectio presenters coordination, and books
allen@centeringprayerchicago.org

Cathie Jarrett, prayer group and facilitator support, RAJCSJ@sbcglobal.net

Penny Jaworski, formation events liaison, [847.395.9291](tel:847.395.9291)

Nancy Kremer, hospitality, nancy@centeringprayerchicago.org

Leadership Team Meeting

The next leadership team meeting is Aug 8 from 2-5 pm. If you have questions or concerns for our agenda, please email Bob Gordon

Peace from the Newsletter Publisher,

Opportunities for 2010

HEARTFULNESS Transformation in Christ

This new DVD and CD series is the basis for

Heartfulness Intensive Retreats under the guidance of David Frenette. Check

www.contemplativeoutreach.org for details. Cathie Jarrett attended this retreat. Contact her with your questions.

Heartfulness Advanced Course under the guidance of the St. Benedict's Retreat Center in Snowmass, CO was held May 22-June 2, 2010.

Those invited had been centering prayer practitioners for a minimum of 12 years and had attended one of the first two advanced courses in 2007 or 2008. In the advanced study the focus was on segments 4-9 of the DVDs and learning from each other. From Chicago, Margie Tomlinson and Phil Jackson attended. We were fortunate that Fr. Thomas Keating could give three one-hour plus talks during this time. Topics in the DVD segments have been written about by Fr. Keating before. However, these are very focused DVD segments.

The Future

The Chicago Chapter has purchased one copy of the DVD/CD set. It is available for use in centering prayer groups. Centering Prayer groups can purchase their own copies from the bookstore at

www.contemplativeoutreach.org

The set is available as a CD set or a DVD set. Each DVD/CD segment is from 23 minutes to 15 minutes in length. It is recommended that groups practice centering prayer together, view the DVD, divide into triads for 15 minutes with a couple of questions to learn from each other, practice centering prayer, and view the DVD a second time and close.

Recommended formats to use this new material

- 1, A centering prayer group could look at one DVD per week with triad reflection. If you are interested in this option, please contact Margie Tomlinson for handouts and designs to use with these segments as a jumping off point for recommended *lectio divina* passages and further study suggestions.
2. A chapter could have a nine-month program of ½ days with viewing and interiorization in triads or this could be done in 4 ½ days over five months.
3. A chapter could hold a five-day retreat with 2 hours of centering prayer and two DVD segments with triad sharing daily.

The leadership team would like to hear from you about which of these options might be of interest to you.

Quote from Divine Indwelling segment: "To see God in everything and everything in God is to see nothing but God."

St. Clement Centering Prayer **20 Year Anniversary**

Since June, 1990 St. Clement Centering Prayer Group in Chicago has been meeting continuously once per week to pray. Fr. Joe Ruiz, who was an Associate at St. Clement at that time, was the inspiration that brought us together. We will be celebrating the 20th anniversary on **Saturday, June 26, 2010 in the Fahey Parish Center, 9:00am - 3:00pm** and have invited Fr. Ruiz to join us. This gathering will include a presentation from Fr. Joe, Centering Prayer and a pot-luck lunch. We invite everyone who has been with us throughout the years. RSVP Helpful: annkraus@sbcglobal.net or Pat Grott: 847-866-6240

Weekend Retreats

Centering Prayer Silent Retreat

January 28-30, 2011
Cabrini Retreat Center
Des Plaines, IL Details follow..

To Schedule

An Introduction to Centering Prayer or **An Introduction to Lectio Divina** contact Allen Harper at allen@centeringprayerchicago.org

Or to Schedule enrichment for your centering prayer group

Lectio Divina for Youth presented by Bob Gordon. Contact Bob at robert@centeringprayerchicago.org

Forgiveness Prayer presented by Margie Tomlinson Contact Margie at margie@centeringprayerchicago.org

Attention/Intention presented by Ed Tummillo. Contact Ed at ed@centeringprayerchicago.org

Welcoming Prayer presented by Allen Harper. Contact Allen at allen@centeringprayerchicago.org

Women in the Contemplative Heritage presented by Penny Jaworski. Contact Penny at 847.375.9291 or penny@centeringprayerchicago.org

From *Heartfulness* DVD segment Divine Transformation: (to use for Lectio Divina)

"The Divine Therapy invites us to accept the purification of the unconscious...which requires the special action of divine love that casts a penetrating light on whatever is hidden in our unconscious and keeps searching as long as we live."

"The Gift of Knowledge addresses the whole area of attachment to our emotional programs for happiness and communicates to us intuitively the conviction that only God can satisfy our desires for happiness."

"It is not enough to do the practice [of Centering Prayer] itself, even if this is done twice a day, unless at the same time, one carries into daily life the effects of the humility and trust in God that the prayer is initiating."



RETREATS

Intensive Retreats

8-day Intensive Retreat June 18-25, **2011**. Retreat guides and registrar will be decided at the August, 8th Chapter Leadership Meeting.

What is an Intensive Retreat?

An intensive retreat cultivates a more profound level of spiritual practice in an atmosphere of silence, solitude and community. Persons with an established daily practice of Centering Prayer for at least six months are encouraged to attend. Key elements of an intensive retreat are periods of centering prayer 3 times a day with a contemplative walk, twice daily Spiritual Journey video tapes, mealtime reading of Open Mind, Open Heart, times for questions and answers that clarify the centering prayer practice, private interviews, and one day of complete silent retreat.

Post-Intensive Retreats (Pre-requisite: Intensive retreat)

8-day Post Intensive Retreat June 18-25, **2011**, Retreat guides and registrar will be decided at the August 8th Chapter Leadership Meeting.

What is a Post-Intensive Retreat?

A post-intensive retreat provides an opportunity to deepen the practice of Centering Prayer in an atmosphere of profound silence and community support. Persons with at least one year of an established daily practice of Centering Prayer and who have attended an 8-10 day Intensive Centering Prayer retreat are encouraged to attend. The retreat includes 3 to 4 hours of Centering Prayer each day, several days of sacred silence with no eye contact, silent meals and spiritual guide.

From *Heartfulness* DVD segment Divine Indwelling: (to use for Lectio Divina)

"The three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity are part of the endowment of grace which flows from the Divine Indwelling...You have all these as sheer gifts."

"Faith normally means trust in the Gospels...It is not so much an acceptance of propositions as a commitment, a consent, a surrender to what is, beginning with God."

"Charity is the growth of selfless love which is the life blood of the Trinity...an ocean of love into which we are invited to participate and are gradually lured into that stream or circular motion...Charity then involves acquiring the same dispositions towards all creation as are present in the Trinity...mainly unconditional love."

REPORTS

An Introduction to Centering Prayer

The Introduction to Centering Prayer at Rockford was postponed. Watch for an announcement for the future date.

Days of Prayer

The Leadership Team is not aware of any Days of Prayer held in the Chicago Chapter during the last three months.

CENTERING PRAYER GROUPS

We suggest you confirm the place/time with the contact persons before attending.

To find a prayer group near you, please go to www.centeringprayerchicago.org

CONTACT PERSONS: Please check to make sure your group is listed correctly on the website – www.centeringprayerchicago.org. Send additions, deletions and changes to: robert@centeringprayerchicago.org