

Spirit Journal - July 2022

Preview

This edition of *Spirit Journal* highlights a range of workshops, retreats and events to add inspiration to your summer!

- A dream workshop at Healing Gardens this Saturday
- An online panel discussion on Thomas Merton and Thomas Keating from Contemplative Outreach Atlanta, also this Saturday
- Three opportunities to experience in-person Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreats later this month and in August
- Free links to watch two *Notes of Rest* videos
- Information about available Centering Prayer groups, in-person and online
- *Insights* from Thomas Merton, Sophronia Scott, Audrey Cleary, and Shunryu Suzuki

Please help us make *Spirit Journal* a two-way conversation. Your ideas are very welcome! If you would like to send us something you've written or just explore an idea, please contact the newsletter editor at news@centeringprayerchicago.org.

Summer Retreats and Workshops

This Saturday July 16 at Healing Gardens in St. Charles

Dream Workshop: "Dreaming as a Spiritual Experience"

This workshop will explore the many different kinds of night time dreams, how they speak to us, and how they guide us into deeper truths about our lives. Participants will also explore methods used to interpret them, and share some of our night time dreams with each



other. Bring a dream, a journal if you keep one and your questions.

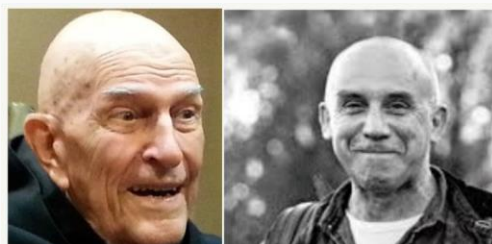
Presenter: Pamela Verner LCSW. Pamela has made a life time practice of working with her dreams. After becoming a therapist, she has participated in many dream workshops and retreats and has helped many of her clients work with their dreams. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a Masters Degree in Social Work. Pamela is the author of a recently published memoir, *Breathing into the Light: One Woman's Journey of Embracing the Sacredness of All Life*.

[More information and registration.](#)

This Saturday July 16 from Contemplative Outreach Atlanta

Panel Discussion: With Merton and Keating's Roadmap, Where Do We Go From Here?

This inspiring event begins with a 20-minute Centering Prayer period. Then the four expert panelists will share their thoughts on the timeless wisdom of Thomas Merton and Thomas Keating, drawing from their research



and experiences. The panel's dialogue will answer our questions and unveil where Merton and Keating direct our spiritual path forward. The panel will be moderated by Maggie Winfrey with musical inspiration by Paul Reeves.

[More information and registration.](#)

From Contemplative Outreach of Southeast Wisconsin

Six-Day Advanced Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreat - July 24-30, Benet Lake, Wisconsin

Centering Prayer retreats immerse participants in the practice of Centering Prayer as taught by Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. This two track retreat will allow the participants to come together for Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, and meal times. The retreat will provide an atmosphere of silence, solitude and community. The Advanced Intensive and Post Intensive prerequisite is an experience of an Intensive Retreat or the equivalent. The retreat will take place at St. Benedict's Abbey and Retreat Center and will be led by Ann Koerner, CSA and Kathryn Ann Kobelinski, SSND.



[More information and registration.](#)

From Benet House Retreat Center at St. Mary Monastery

Eight-Day Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreat - August 19-27, Rock Island, Illinois

This retreat's theme, *God is Love: The Heart of All Creation*, builds on the works of Fr. Thomas Keating and is possibly his last major published series. As Fr. Thomas notes in the series: *"Everything in the universe - everything our senses observe, and technology uncovers at the highest level of infinitude is prophetic witness of the Divine. The Divine Presence is happening in, through, and amidst every detail of life... penetrates all that exists ... is in relationship to every part of creation ... is trying to move humanity to the next stage of consciousness."*



GOD is LOVE
*A Journey into the
Heart of All Creation*

During the retreat, viewing of the God Is Love video series will be in silence. The

retreat experience offers several periods of Centering Prayer in community each day with time for rest, reflection and enjoying the exquisite nature which envelopes the campus of St. Mary's Monastery grounds. Meals are silent, with the exception of conversation at the evening meal on opening night and at the last meal on the final day of the retreat.

Retreat Leader: Susan Komis. Susan Komis has served Contemplative Outreach since 1990, first as a volunteer for the St. Louis, MO Chapter and then as Coordinator. She was a member of the Faculty of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. and served as Director of Chapter Programs & Services (CPS) to support Coordinators and Contact Persons throughout the Contemplative Outreach spiritual community. She is retired from Contemplative Outreach and continues to offer presentations and serve retreats. Susan is a certified Pastoral Minister and has worked in Adult Faith Development and various other ministries including spiritual direction and interspiritual dialogue.

[More information and registration.](#)

From Contemplative Outreach of St. Louis

Six-Day Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreat - August 21-26, Belleville Illinois

Join Contemplative Outreach of St. Louis for this retreat on Sunday, August 21st to Friday, August 26th at King's House Retreat Center in Belleville, Illinois.

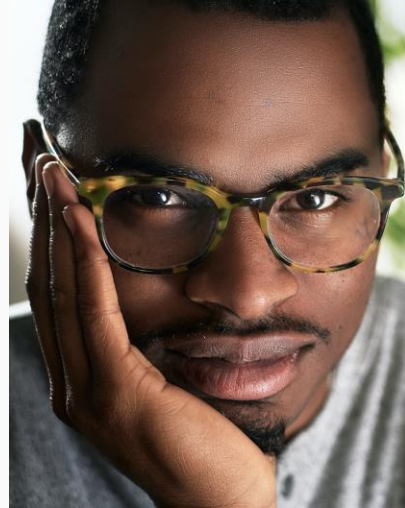
An Intensive/Post-Intensive Retreat is an opportunity for practitioners of Centering Prayer to deepen their contemplative journey in the contemporary world. It is a six-day experience of integrating contemplation and action through silence, solitude and community. The retreat director will be Rev. Matthew Flatley.



[More formation and registration.](#)

From Contemplative Outreach Chicago/Atlanta/Colorado
Experience Notes of Rest on Video

Here's an opportunity to get a look at the *Notes of Rest* workshop on video. In May, this workshop, led by Julian Davis Reid, delighted those who attended. In fact, many said they found the event very meaningful and felt that it opened their eyes to new contemplative possibilities. The workshop was sponsored by Contemplative Outreach of Chicago in collaboration with CO chapters in Atlanta and Colorado.



We now have permission from all the participants to invite non-registrants to view the *Notes of Rest* videos on YouTube. Please click on these links:

[Notes of Rest Workshop](#)

[Post-workshop Lecture](#)

Enjoy!

Centering Prayer Groups In-Person and Online

Participants who attend a Centering Prayer introductory workshop often decide to join an existing prayer group or form one of their own. The groups generally meet weekly or every other week to share their experience of Centering Prayer and growing relationship with God.

Many groups decide to view videos or read and discuss books by Fr. Thomas and others to deepen their individual understanding of their spiritual practices. Formats usually include a session of Centering Prayer and discussion and sharing. These small faith communities build trust and unity while encouraging and supporting members on their spiritual journey.

More than 40 Chicago-area prayer groups are listed on our [website](#). If you would like help finding a prayer group, please contact the facilitators' team leader at: groups@centeringprayerchicago.org.

While more and more prayer groups are returning to meeting in-person, here are five invitations to gather with Chicago-area Centering Prayer groups via Zoom. Listed below are the groups, times, and contact information:

- North Park Covenant Church, Monday 7:15pm. Contact Sarah Hillabrant, (773) 509-1095, yoopergirl37@gmail.com
- Centering Prayer Group every Saturday 9:30-10:30am. Contact Bill Epperly at bill@integralawakenings.com
- St. Katharine Drexel Church every Tuesday 8:30-9:30am. Contact Lori Dressel at lorijdressel@gmail.com
- The Healing Gardens - Centering Prayer with Lectio Divina, last Friday of each month, 10:30am-11:30pm. Contact Deb Marqui at deb@dmarqui.com or text/call 630-740-259.
- Permanent Zoom group (not associated with an in-person group) Tuesday 6:00 - 7:00pm. Contact Rose Magiera for link and phone number – rmmagiera@gmail.com

Offerings in the Contemplative Outreach Meditation Chapel

The national website of our parent organization features an Online Meditation Chapel that is very easy to use and provides the opportunity to see, hear and join in silent prayer with others from all over the world. You must first register to attend the meetings in the Chapel. You can do that by using the [calendar](#) link. Once you know what chapel your desired meeting is in, use the [chapel](#) link.

Meditation Groups – Groups meet via Zoom at all hours of the day and night and are open to anyone. *There is no cost/fee to attend, charging is prohibited.* A friend writes: “I have been attending meditation in the virtual Keating Chapel and had a lovely experience. The facilitator was very good!” For further information, visit the [calendar](#) or [chapel listing](#).

Healing Together: A Gathering of Consciousness – In silence we focus on an intention for peace and healing in 2022. The format is an opening prayer, a short reading, two 25-minute sessions of silent prayer with a short break in-between and closing prayer. These sessions are scheduled every Thursday from 11:00am to 12:00pm Central Time (US & Canada) in the Thomas Keating Chapel with Mary Lapham. You can contact Mary at marylapham2@gmail.com.

Please let us know about any additional events and resources you're aware of. Write to: news@centeringprayerchicago.org

Insights

I only have time for eternity.

– Thomas Merton

Prayer is a mystery, with so many paths to walk, so many branches of communication, so many pools of wonder. We just have to begin.

– Sophronia Scott

Centering Prayer is simply sitting with God, with no agenda other than to be with God.

– Audrey Cleary

Each of you is perfect the way you are . . . and, you can use a little improvement!

– Shunryu Suzuki

Your Turn

Please write in to contribute your ideas or to comment on any aspect of *Spirit Journal*. For example, you are invited to submit something you've written on a spiritual topic, or to let us know about an upcoming event, or send an inspirational quote you'd like to share, or information about a book, website, podcast, or video you recommend. You can contribute by emailing the newsletter editor at news@centeringprayerchicago.org.

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