

## *Spirit Journal - July 2023*

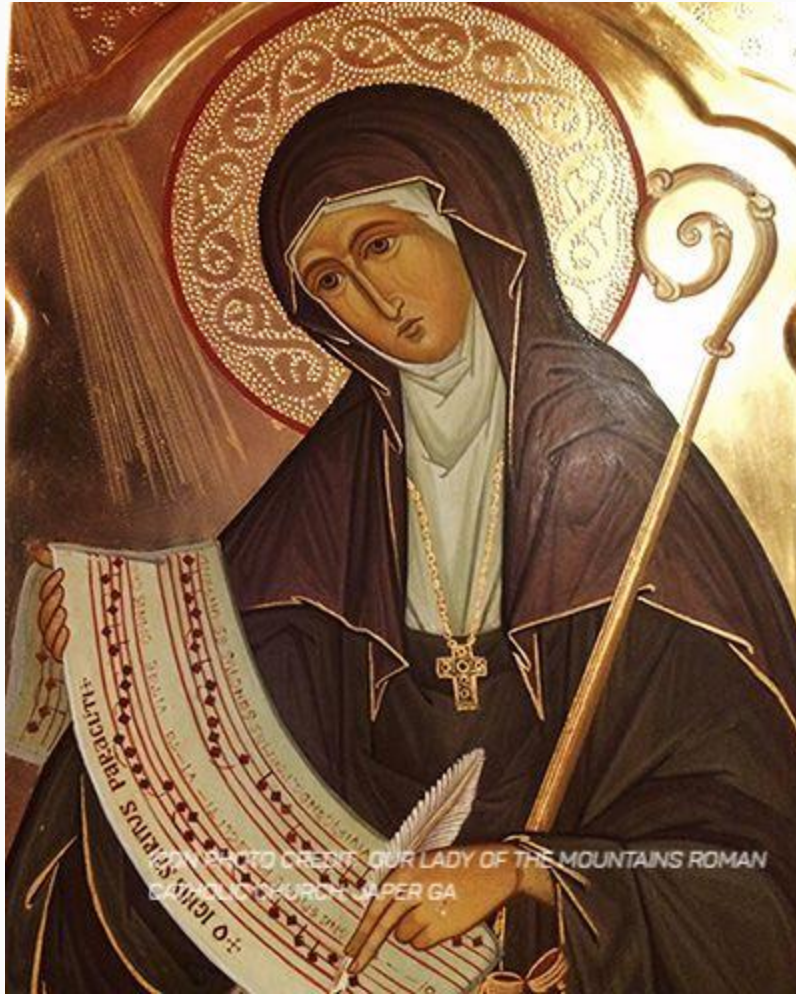
### **Preview**

This issue includes:

- Information about our *2023 One-Day Fall Workshop* coming up in September, featuring Susan Lincoln and Craig Toungate - *early bird pricing ends soon*
- An invitation to participate in an online version of the *Living Flame* - a one-time only event to celebrate the 30-year anniversary of this transformational program
- A listing of workshops and events of potential interest to you, from multiple Contemplative Outreach chapters and other groups
- Information about available Centering Prayer groups, in-person and online
- *Insights* from Hildegard of Bingen, Thomas Keating, Jack Kornfield and Mel Brooks

Please help us create the August edition of *Spirit Journal*. Your suggestions 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](mailto:news@centeringprayerchicago.org).

***The Annual Fall One-Day Workshop: In-Person, Saturday September 16 at St. John of the Cross, Western Springs***



## **Embodying The Mystic: St. Hildegard of Bingen**

**A one-day contemplative retreat  
with music, breath, sound and movement**

**Presented by**

**Susan Lincoln and Craig Toungate**

**Sponsored by Contemplative Outreach Chicago and WCCM**

After a three-year hiatus, Contemplative Outreach Chicago is delighted to return to our tradition of offering a one-day, in-person contemplative workshop

each fall - this year in collaboration with our friends at WCCM (World Community for Christian Meditation) at St. John of the Cross.

Come awaken your inner mystic in a restorative one-day retreat using breath, sound, movement, and music. Join Susan Lincoln and Craig Toungate as they guide us on a magical experiential journey, inspired by St. Hildegard of Bingen, the Aramaic Lord's Prayer, and the wisdom of nature.

**Susan and Craig** have written and recorded inspirational heart-connected music together for 30 years. They were on the staff of The Journey School in New Orleans for 10 years, based on Jean Houston's Mystery Schools where they created music and dance to explore spiritual and mystical cultures. They were inspired by the Aramaic Lord's Prayer to create an original song with movements, which they have offered in classes for over 30 years. Susan and Craig have opened shows for many well known spiritual speakers and authors including Julia Cameron, Carolina Myss, Bradford Keeney, Greg Braden, Jack Kornfield, and many others.



**Early bird pricing ends July 31!**

[More information and registration.](#)

From Contemplative Outreach Ltd.

***Online Living Flame Program Starts on  
September 9***

The national Living Flame Service Team (LFST) is offering a one-time only event to celebrate the 30-year anniversary of the Living Flame program!

This foundational program has been implemented in chapters across the United States and abroad (Iceland). As host of Living Flame I this fall, the LFST is offering the program on Zoom to individuals and to small chapters or groups of five or less, globally.

The Living Flame Program is a seven-day offering of in-depth spiritual study and enrichment presented over seven months by commissioned presenters of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. It is designed to heighten the awareness of the dynamics of Centering Prayer in the context of the spiritual journey. Participation in this program is for the entire series that will include presentations on seven topics supporting the practice of Centering Prayer. The online program begins this September and will end in April 2024.



A brochure describing the Living Flame program is available [here](#). The number of participants will be limited to 40 "screens," so please act now if you're interested participating. [To register, click here.](#)

## ***More Contemplative Events That May Interest You***

***NEW! [Click here](#) to download a nationwide calendar of events now through March 2024***



# CENTERING PRAYER FACILITATOR TRAINING

40'S &  
UNDER

7.29.23 | 11AM - 2PM/EDT

- Young Contemplatives
  - Deepen your Practice
    - Share the Prayer
    - Build Community



**Keith Kristich,  
Facilitator**



**Colleen Thomas,  
Host**



Contemplative Outreach

This is a special three-hour online Facilitator Training for younger contemplatives (10am-1PM Central). *If you are under 50* and feel called to become a Centering Prayer facilitator, [please register here](#).

From Contemplative Outreach of Colorado  
***Creating Space for Change - Practical Exercises  
for Activating Your Nervous System's Ability to  
Calm and Heal Itself - via Zoom, August 3-31***

In hour-long zoom sessions Monday through Thursday for four weeks, this ongoing program will provide practical exercises for activating your nervous system's ability to calm and heal itself. Daily instruction will vary, but will cover:

- Yoga exercises that help calm your nervous system
- Exercises for promoting neutral observation
- TRE - Tension, stress or trauma exercises
- Centering Prayer

**Presenter:** Eric Peter is a practitioner and certified Level 11 instructor of the Trauma Release Exercises. Eric studied directly under Dr. David Berceli Ph.D., and has been teaching TRE to individuals, groups and organizations for several years. As a former active duty infantry Marine, he was initially inspired to serve fellow soldiers, friends and family members suffering from the effects of trauma from combat. Eric offers a unique and practical perspective in the recovery of trauma and the management of everyday stress from his rich practice of yoga and contemplative prayer.

[More information and registration](#)

From Contemplative Outreach of St. Louis

***Eight Day Centering Prayer Retreat, August 4-11 in Eureka Missouri***

This retreat offers an in-depth experience of silent prayer for those who already have an established practice of Centering Prayer of six months or more. It is an opportunity for deeper union with God through communal sharing of silence and stillness. For those making their first week-long silent retreat, the “Intensive” track will offer periods of silent prayer as well as presentation and discussion of videos by Fr. Thomas Keating. The simultaneous “Post-Intensive” track, for those who have already completed an Intensive retreat, includes more periods of silent prayer instead of the videos.

The retreat leader is Fr. Bill Sheehan, who has been an integral voice for Centering Prayer even since the earliest days of the movement. Over the past four decades, he has continually provided his wisdom and presence to the Centering Prayer community.

[More information and registration](#)

From Contemplative Outreach Ltd., 12-Step Outreach

***12-Step Centering Prayer Introductory Workshop - via Zoom, August 12***

A free on-line Centering Prayer Introductory Workshop, with two experienced practitioners teaching and demonstrating the use of Centering Prayer as part of the 12-step process.

[More information and registration](#)

From Contemplative Outreach of Atlanta

## ***We Gather Together: Divine Feminine Big Sit - via Zoom, August 12***

This Big Sit will explore the theme of divine femininity. As with all of our Big Sits it will incorporate two 20-minute silent Centering Prayer sessions using Lectio Divina (sacred reading four times), Taizé chant, and stories about the Divine Feminine for our reflection.

[More information and registration](#)

From Closer Than Breath

## ***The Welcoming Prayer: Adding a Second Engine to Your Centering Prayer Practice - via Zoom, August 12***

Explore the Welcoming Prayer as a practice and method of consenting to the Divine Indwelling's presence and action in our physical and emotional reactions to events and situations in daily life.

If Centering Prayer (or another prayer or meditative practice) is practiced for 40 to sixty minutes daily, this is for the other 23 hours!

In this mini-retreat we'll explore the ways the Welcoming Prayer can be used in daily life with a special emphasis on how it helps us let go of and dismantle the false self and its over-identification with the culture and social values that we grew up in. This prayer practice helps us let go of our egocentric desires for ever more symbols of

[More information and registration](#)

From Healing Gardens

## ***Enneagram Workshop: The Ongoing Journey of Self-Discovery - September 9 in St. Charles***

Whether you are new to the Enneagram or have been a student for many years, this expanded workshop invites you to explore the gifts of the Enneagram and dive deeper into the insights of each type through self-reflection, curiosity and compassion.



The Enneagram is a powerful tool for self awareness, acceptance and transformation that is an ongoing learning experience. Learn your type, discover your strengths and self-limiting habits and explore the ways they impact your life. Take an honest look at yourself. This workshop will cover topics beyond typing through invitations to find all types within you, your relationship to others and ways to delve deeper into the journey.

[More information and registration for this event, along with information about other activities coming up at Healing Gardens](#)

From the International Thomas Merton Society (ITMS)  
***Tuesdays with Merton Webinar Series: The Seven Story Mountain at 75 - Online, September 12***

ITMS's ongoing *Tuesdays with Merton* webinar series continues with this workshop on the relevance of Merton's work to our spiritual lives in 2023. The presenter, Mark C. Meade, is the Assistant Director of the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University in Louisville. For information on this and other upcoming Tuesday evening presentations, [click here](#).

## ***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

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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](mailto:groups@centeringprayerchicago.org).

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

- Centering Prayer Group every Saturday 9:30-10:30am. Contact Bill Epperly at [bill@integralawakenings.com](mailto:bill@integralawakenings.com)
  - St. Katharine Drexel Church every Tuesday 8:30-9:30am. Contact Lori Dressel at [lorijdressel@gmail.com](mailto:lorijdressel@gmail.com)
  - The Healing Gardens, Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina, last Friday of each month, 10:30am-11:30pm. Contact Deb Marqui at 630-740-2597 or [deb@dmarqui.com](mailto:deb@dmarqui.com)
  - St. Mary of Emig Centering Prayer Group Tuesday 6:30 – 7:30pm. Contact Rose Magiera for link and phone number – [rmmagiera@gmail.com](mailto:rmmagiera@gmail.com)
  - North Park Covenant Church, Monday 7:15pm. Contact Sarah Hillabrant, (773) 509-1095, [yoopergirl37@gmail.com](mailto:yoopergirl37@gmail.com)
  - Contemplative Worship, every Wednesday, 5:00pm. Contact Jenny Russel at – [jir8546@yahoo.com](mailto:jir8546@yahoo.com)
  - St. Michael's Catholic Church, Schererville, Indiana, Monday, 6:00 PM. Contact Peggy Kolarik, [peggy.kolarik@att.net](mailto:peggy.kolarik@att.net), 219-322-1886
  - Northern Illinois Zoom Centering Prayer Group, every Saturday 9:30 – 10:15am. Contact Anne Smith 815-245-4088 or Kathy Putnam 815-568-7641, [Katiarel@aol.com](mailto:Katiarel@aol.com)
  - Contemplative Outreach of NYC & Beyond - Brief prayers, 20 minutes of silent meditation, followed by lectio divina. The full program lasts about 45 minutes. Contact: Jane Coakley at [coakley53@gmail.com](mailto:coakley53@gmail.com)
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- Metanoia Journey (Austin, Texas) - Sunday morning "Centering Prayer/Lectio Divina" online service. Sundays, 8:30-9:30am Central. [Register here](#).

### ***Offerings in the Meditation Chapel***

Meditation Chapel is an independent, nonprofit global platform with which Contemplative Outreach Ltd. partners to encourage groups and individuals in a life of contemplative practice. Therefore, the global website of our parent organization features this Online Meditation Chapel, which is very easy to use and provides the opportunity to see, hear and join in silent prayer with others from all over the world.

**Registering for Meditation Chapel** – You must first register to attend the meetings in the Chapel. You can do so at this link: <https://meditationchapel.org/getting-started/>. Once registered, you will receive the chapel links and can then check the [calendar](#) to pick one or more groups convenient for your schedule..

**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.* A friend writes: "I have been attending meditation in the virtual Keating Chapel and had a lovely experience. The facilitator was very good!"

**Centering Down: Meditations with Howard Thurman for the BIPOC Community** – Join Colleen Thomas and Leslie Geer in the virtual Meditation Chapel for a contemplative meeting place for those identifying as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). We will reflect on the various writings and teachings of Howard Thurman. Our time together will include a 20-minute Centering Prayer sit, Lectio Divina, and faith-sharing. Every Monday, 9:30am Central: <https://meditationchapel.org/mary-of-magdala-chapel/>

**Healing Together: A Gathering of Consciousness** – In silence we focus on an intention for peace and healing. The format is an opening prayer, a short reading, two 25-minute sessions of silent prayer with a short break in-between

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and closing prayer. These sessions are in the Thomas Keating Chapel with Mary Lapham. You can contact Mary at [marylapham2@gmail.com](mailto:marylapham2@gmail.com).

**(Please let us know about any additional events and resources you're aware of. Write to: [news@centeringprayerchicago.org](mailto:news@centeringprayerchicago.org))**

## ***Insights -***

*Every creature is a glittering, glistening mirror of Divinity.*

- Hildegard of Bingen

*We all have the innate capacity to manifest God because we already are that image by virtue of being created.*

- Thomas Keating

*Who you are is consciousness itself, loving awareness. You're not limited to your personality, to your body, to the beliefs of the society around you. You have a birthright of dignity and of freedom of heart, and this is what's true.*

- Jack Kornfield

*We should enjoy life; we should not future ourselves so much. We should now ourselves more.*

- Mel Brooks

## ***Your Turn***

Please write in to contribute your ideas or to comment on any aspect of *Spirit Journal*. For example, you are most welcome to submit something you've

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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](mailto:news@centeringprayerchicago.org).



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