

Consd News



THE NEWSLETTER OF CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH OF NORTH SAN DIEGO

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Regional Event with Fr. Keating Last Chance to Pre Register!!!

We are delighted that Fr. Thomas Keating will be with us on Saturday, May 16th from 2:00 to approximately 4:00 to speak on "Contemplation: The Heart of the World." The Event will be held at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church 1003 Encinitas Blvd. in Encinitas. Please park in the Community Center parking lot on Balour which intersects Encinitas Blvd. The suggested donation is \$35.00. We will have walk-ins only if space is available. Please call Sue Hagen at (760) 745-8860 for further informa-

United In Prayer Day

On March 21st our contemplative group gathered at the Lutheran Church of the Incarnation for our annual United In Prayer Day. We joined more than 800 Prayer Groups with over 5,000 members worldwide as we did two periods of Centering Prayer and watched a DVD entitled "Oneness: Unity in Contemplation" with Fr. Laurence Freeman and Fr. Keating. The basis of the talk was 1 Corinthians 12, which talks about spiritual gifts. Both men spoke eloquently. We also viewed a homily by Fr. Keating during, which he talked about the three parts of the spiritual journey. He said: "The first part of the spiritual journey is to realize there is an Other. The second part is to become the Other. The third and greatest part is to realize that there is no Other." He also said that "by surrendering in Centering Prayer there is no Other." He encourages us to just be and relax into the mystery of God loving us. He ended by saying that "We are invited to resurrection and into the mystery of ascension." We left feeling a oneness and unity with all.

~ Sue Hagen

A Moment for Reflection

"In the midst of a busy life on the freeway of humanity, it seems that the faster we go, the emptier we become. When we're always in a hurry trying to get ahead, never taking time to pause and reflect, we sacrifice a lot to stay on top. Sometimes it takes hard decisions to bring our life under control and realign our priorities, focusing on the Father and letting everything else take a backseat."

~Max Lucado, Walking with the Savior

Centering Prayer and the Mary Effect

Some years ago a talented lady in our church wrote a play about the women in Jesus' life. I played Martha, a role just meant for me. Working full time and trying to manage a house and family, I could understand Martha's irritation with Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus. So when Jesus told Martha that Mary had chosen the better part, I honestly wanted to argue the point with him.

The world is full of doing. "What do you do?" is a common question that we ask someone new to us, and what we do can identify us. I'm a _____; you fill in the blank. I had always enjoyed telling others that I was a teacher — I loved teaching and all the word implied. So when I was retiring, I found myself anxious. Finally, the last day of school arrived and many of my coworkers asked me what I was going to "do" with all of my free time. In exasperation, I said to one of my closer friends, "Everyone is asking me what I'm going to do, and I don't really know." She replied, "Linda, you don't have to *do* anything anymore, you can just be."

But how can you "be"? I wasn't sure what she really meant then, but through centering prayer, I've come to know. What I knew I wanted was to be closer to God, to know God's presence in my life, hopefully every moment of every day. When I was busy teaching, I kept God at an arm's distance promising myself and God that I'd pray later. My mind whirled with the activity of the moment, and if I wasn't that active, I was planning what I would do. Life was exciting and seemingly productive.

So when a friend introduced me to centering prayer and said that basically the method was to sit in silence for 20 minutes and release any thoughts that I became engaged in, that form of praying sounded weird. Praying according to my understanding was telling God what I wanted, telling God that I loved Him, and telling God that I trusted in his infinite wisdom and grace. I did all the talking and God did all the listening. The problem with that kind of praying was that I never gave God much of a chance to reveal himself to me.

The first few times I tried centering, I was actually a little afraid, afraid that God might really speak to me. I was even afraid that another presence might speak to me. But nothing like that ever happened. In fact, nothing seemed to happen. I just sat. And then slowly, ever so slowly, I began to understand. By giving myself to God, by sitting and doing nothing much like Jesus wanted Martha to do, I had chosen the better part. I was allowing God to work in me even if I didn't understand how that was happening.

I don't understand how or why we heal from the common cold, how we age, why hugging my grandchildren makes my heart soar, why the Bible resonates with truth, and I don't understand how God works in me. I just know that God is and the time that I spend in silence--whether I'm feeling bored, whether I'm distracted by my thoughts, or whether I sink into a kind of peaceful nothingness--has changed me. Through this time of Christian meditation, I know that I am no longer doing but finally being.

~ Linda Dollins

Hospice Outreach

Hello to all,

I would like to inform you of a decision that our Hospice Outreach Team decided upon at our last gathering. Because we believe so much in taking a Contemplative Presence ***OUT*** to wherever it could be needed, we have decided to now be known as: Contemplative Outreach to Hospice and Others. We believe that anyone in a house-bound situation, whether temporary or permanent, could welcome a contemplative presence in their day. These "Others" could be the elderly or the sick, not just someone who is dying and in a Hospice situation. We are on the ground floor of exploring new ways of expanding this contemplative outreach, so if you are interested in joining us, or have any information or ideas to inspire us, or have any questions, please contact me. I would love to hear from you. I will continue to let you know just how this outreach is evolving.

Thanks so much,
~Evie McGreevy
ptyoftwo@pacbell.net
858 748-6805

Divine Therapy

On Saturday, February 28, Susan Komis presented a masterful in-depth examination of “Divine Therapy”, the 6th session of the Living Flame I program. Addiction to the False Self, Emergence of the True Self, and Transformation through Divine Therapy were the major themes of the day. While two previous Living Flame sessions had addressed aspects of the formation and action of the False Self, this session revealed how we might deal with this inescapable aspect of the Human Condition. In the morning session, Susan reviewed the nature and evolution of the Human Condition (our False Self). She delved deeply into the fear-based characteristics, attitudes, dynamics, and manifestations of the False Self on both the conscious and unconscious levels and showed us that the only way to change and let go of the False Self is to become aware of it, accept it as a gift and a teacher, acknowledge that we are powerless to change it, and trust in Divine Therapy to enact the change.

The afternoon session focused on the emergence and gradual transformation of the True Self through Divine Therapy. Paralleling the structure of the morning session, Susan reviewed the characteristics, attitudes, dynamics, and manifestations of the True Self (who and what we really are.) She demonstrated how, as we

move along our spiritual journey from a place of fear to one of trust, Divine Therapy uses the contemplative gifts of the Spirit: knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, to gradually heal us from the stranglehold of the False Self. With each healing step more space opens up to allow the True Self to emerge. As the True Self manifests, Divine Therapy awakens it to who and what it is in God and gradually transforms it into union with God.

At the end of the day, each of us emerged with a more profound understanding of our own unique spiritual journey toward a deeper relationship with God. We were reminded how Centering Prayer fosters the gradual interior unfolding of our intuitive faculties which help us to move from a state of believing to one of deep knowing and thus to accepting God’s invitation to put on the mind of Christ and live a life of love.

We are so blessed that a major goal of the Living Flame program is to help us awaken to who and what we really are by recognizing our False Self in action, fearlessly claiming it as our own, and trusting in Divine Therapy to facilitate the emergence and transformation of our True Self!

~Alicia Annas

An Afternoon of Centering Prayer

On Saturday March 14th Amanda Rines, Prayer Group Facilitator of St. Thomas of Canterbury Church in Temecula hosted a Mini Introductory Program. She invited Chris and Sue Hagen to speak to the group who gathered about the origin, development and method of Centering Prayer. The afternoon began with a videotape made by Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. entitled “Reaching out to the World.” Chris then described Centering Prayer as a Christian form of meditation and quoted the scriptural basis from Matthew 6:6 “...When you pray go into your inner room and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” He discussed four main points about Centering Prayer: it fosters a deepening of our relationship with God, it requires discipline to foster this relationship, it is a

movement beyond conversation with God to communion with Him and it is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer. Sue then instructed the group in how to practice the Prayer and then led a ten minute Prayer. After a cookie, coffee and tea break there was another period of Centering Prayer and then questions and answers. At the end it was felt that the purpose of the afternoon had been fulfilled: It was the opening of our mind--our whole being--to God, the Ultimate Mystery. We all followed the Biblical instruction “Be still and know that I am God.”

~Sue Hagen

Night of Sense

There are many bumps on the road of our spiritual journey but none more challenging than the Night of Sense. Several years ago, I experienced all three signs of the Night of Sense and clearly did not recognize or understand that this was one more phase or path of my spiritual journey. It was only through soul-friending with other like minded friends and a timely retreat that I was reassured that God did not abandon me. As dry as my spiritual life had become, I needed to honor and respect the increased longing and desire to be alone with God that motivates me to Centering Prayer.

Fortunately for those of us who attended Bonnie Shimizu's Living Flame presentation on March 28th, she presented an outline that gave us a full understanding of what Night of Sense entails, why and when it oc-

curs, special trials that one may experience and a few of the fruits of Night of Sense. Bonnie highlighted that our spiritual journey is geared uniquely to each one and reiterated that it is not the same for everyone; that God builds on nature working through people, places and things that are in our personal lives.

One of the most positive explanations of Night of Sense is that it is a movement from one phase of our spiritual journey to another leading us to a deeper, richer experience of God. So one can think of the Night of Sense as a transformation period or time of unknowing where God has moved ahead of us and is calling you forward to a closer encounter of Him.

~ Rosemary Benya

St. Thomas More Centering Prayer Group

At a little more than a year old, the weekly Centering Prayer group that meets at St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Oceanside is alive and kicking. Several congregations are represented among the ten of us who gather to pray on Thursday afternoons - Methodist, Lutheran, Catholic, and non-denominational-a hearty Christian family reunion. Since we have seasoned meditators as well as those who are fairly new to Centering Prayer, the group is graced with a kind of contemplative "fresh wisdom" - that is, compassionate support rooted in experience along with the unassuming nature of beginner's mind. In silence we rest together in the presence of God. After twenty minutes of Centering Prayer, we take a few moments to share any insights, challenges, struggles, breakthroughs, and anecdotes related to our contemplative practice or to the spiritual journey. The final part of our gathering is set aside for a specific focus - we may engage in lectio divina, have a discussion about a book we are reading together, or watch a video by or about a contemplative teacher. We laugh. We cry. We lift people and concerns in prayer. We share soul-stirring poems, prayers, jokes, and quotes with each other. We reveal questions and vulnerabilities. We thank the Holy Spirit -- and each other -- for showing up. I hold in my heart a little story about the humble physical space where our group occasion-

ally meets. St Thomas More has only been partially built - currently Mass is held in the large general purpose building, as there is no sanctuary yet. It is a busy, growing church - with few meeting rooms at the moment. When the STM Centering Prayer group started up last year, we usually met in the "stage" space - a dark, curtained-off portion of the general purpose building, somewhat dank and closet-like - really very much like the back stage of a theater - where supplies are stored. This is often the quietest area of the church during the week, and thus a good place for silent prayer. But it is not the most aesthetically appealing spot, so more recently (and when the church schedule allows) we've been meeting in the larger, brighter library space downstairs. I'm quite fond of that darker, dustier space, though. It brings to mind the "inner room" of Matthew 6:6, where we are to close the door and pray to our Abba in secret, and where our Abba will "cause us to blossom." It's reminiscent of the edge-of-town cave or stable where Jesus was born, there being "no room in the inn." It also bears a similarity to the tomb where Christ lay in darkness - beyond words, thoughts, sensations, and emotions -- before his resurrection. Could it be that in such places fresh wisdom breaks ground?

~Mary Williams

A Moment In Time

So close in physical proximity, yet worlds apart and so alone.

The silence is deafening

An ever constant reminder of how broken we are.

So much to say, yet no words or wisdom to bring a voice to bear.

Silence only silence.

This reminds me of the pain in childhood when I lived in a house full of people yet always felt like I was all alone and that no one cared for my existence. I want to scream but there is no sound.

Silence only silence.

Dear Lord how I long to hear his heart, yet it has no beat, no life to share.

The walls are thick, impenetrable-constantly locking me out.

Fear is all about. No words to speak

No love can grow where we sow...

Silence only silence.

No caress-I detest

No affection-that has been my lesson

All that remains is the wall...

Anger, Fear, and Shame bear it all.

They fuel the fire, which consumes us all.

More the same, I cannot win this game.

Lord I need help

My heart screams, "Get me out."

I long for a love I cannot find.

I want to offer mine but it is rebuked every time.

My heart is too broken, too limp, too lame.

One heart cannot fight a two heart game.

I choose to lose instead of remaining bruised.

I've played my cards, I cling to faith.

I pray for grace to remain in place.

No communication, no sound waiting translation.

Lost in the void, Dear Lord lift this silence -make me sane. Please wrap your love around me, hold me tight

Oh God, I fear I'm losing sight.

I confess-oh what a mess.

I find my solace in your divine presence.

I've given my all why, won't someone answer my call?

How much more can one heart fall?

Breathe a breath of your divine

Lift me from this void I find.

With all my might I call to you.

Dear Lord, Dear Lord help save this soul of mine.

I surrender all that is defective in me.

On humbled knees I surrender myself to thee, knowing that you'll

Always be there watching over me.

Unconditional love is the gift for me.

Unconditional love is what I strive to be.

~Rosie Akiaten

Prayer Group Facilitator Support and Affirmation Gathering

On March 14th fifteen prayer group facilitators gathered for another opportunity to form a community of mutual support and affirmation. After a period of Centering Prayer, Chris Hagen made a brief presentation on the concept and process of "Wisdom Circles" that was modeled at the recent Contemplative Outreach National Conference in Pittsburgh.

Following the presentation each prayer group facilitator shared about the current status of their prayer group. Many wonderful and innovative ideas, activities, and approaches to providing formation opportunities were enjoyed by all of the participants. We also explored ways in which we can recruit volunteers to

serve on the Servant Leadership Team. As the meeting was coming to a close, we gave recognition to the fact that when this group comes together it is truly a "Wisdom Circle."

The next Prayer Group Facilitator and Affirmation gathering will be held on June 6th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. The location will be announced. We encourage all prayer group facilitators to come to this well of wisdom and drink. As always, if a prayer group facilitator can not attend we encourage a member of that group to join us.

~Chris Hagen

CONSD EVENTS

2009

Date: May 16, 2009

Event: Regional Event: Contemplation: The Heart of the World with Fr. Thomas Keating

Time: 2:00-4:00pm

Location: St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, Encinitas

Suggested Donation: \$35.00

Date: December 5, 2009

Event: Advent with Fr. Carl Arico

Time: TBA

Location: TBA

Suggested Donation: TBA

UNITY CHURCH RETREAT

Date: Sept. 25-27, 2009

Event: "Little Things That fill The Whole World"

Facilitator: Retreat With Jim Finley

Time: Friday from 7:00-9:00pm., Saturday from 9:00am-4:00pm and Sunday 11:00am-1:00pm.

Location: Christ Church Unity
311 Highland (at Lexington), El Cajon

Telephone: (619) 579-9586

Cost: The cost for the full retreat is \$135. Friday only or Sunday only is \$25 and Saturday only is \$110 including lunch and snacks.

Description: Many of us today are looking for ways to deepen our experience of God's presence in our lives. In this retreat we will accept Jesus' invitation to find God's presence in the little things of everyday life. Time will be given for group meditation, personal reflection and discussion of the topics presented. The topics include: Childlike acceptance, listening, a pure heart, compassion, Veronica's Veil and grounded in love. James Finley, Ph.D. lived as a monk at the cloistered Trappist monastery of the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky where Thomas Merton was his spiritual director. James leads retreats and workshops throughout the U.S. and Canada. He is also a clinical psychologist in private practice with his wife in Santa Monica.

2010

Date: October 29-31, 2010

Event: CONSD Retreat at Prince of Peace Abbey.

For information on CONSD Events call Sue Hagen at (760) 745-8860

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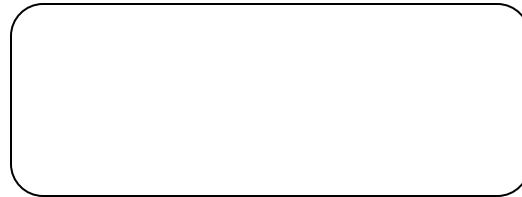
	Area	Leader's)	Telephone	Location	Day & Time
1	Del Mar (1)	John & Mary Wavrik	858-755-8437	St. Peter's Episcopal Church 334 14 th Street, Del Mar	Tuesdays: 4:30 p.m.
2	Del Mar (2)	Kathy Agnew Susan Siciliano	858-481-8754 858-792-6988	Home of Carol Walsh (Call for directions)	Mondays: 6:30 p.m.
3	Encinitas (1)	Margo King Shirley Shetula	760-436-4460 760-436-6721	Home of Bernice Taaff (Call 760-942-2165)	Mondays: 10:30 a.m.
4	Encinitas (2)	Mike and Ann King	760-753-1575	Home of Mike and Ann King Call for directions)	Thursdays: 7:00 p.m.
5	Encinitas (3)	Sharon Hoffman Beth Ward	760-635-9463 760-436-6589	San Dieguito United Methodist Church (Call for meeting location)	Mondays: 6:30 p.m.
6	Encinitas (4)	Fr. :Larry Hart	760-753-3017	St. Andrews Episcopal Church Parish Hall 890 Balour, Encinitas	Thursday: 6:30 p.m.
7	Escondido	Linda Dollins	760-745-5100	First United Methodist Church 341 S. Kalmia Escondido	Mondays: 4:30 p.m.
8	Fallbrook	Marcy Burge	760-723-2773	Fallbrook Presbyterian Church 463 S. Stagecoach Lane, Fallbrook	Saturdays: 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
9	Fallbrook (2)	Barbara Hudson	760-728-5791	St. Peter's Catholic Church 450 S. Stagecoach Lane,	Wednesday : 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
10	Murrietta	Debbie Lindsay	951-698-8368	Home of Debbie Lindsay 23511 Silverwood, Murrietta	Thursdays: 12:30 p.m.
11	Oceanside (1)	Ed Clifford	760-630-1897	Mission San Luis Rey McKeon Center Room 19	Wednesdays: 7:00 p.m.
12	Oceanside (2)	Mary Williams	760-510-9337	St. Thomas More Catholic Church 1450 S. Melrose Drive	Thursdays: 1:00 p.m.
13	Poway (1)	Elena Andrews	858-451-2098	Saint Gabriel Catholic Church 13734 Twin Peaks Road, Poway	Fridays: 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
14	Poway (2)	Colleen Clementson Rebecca Crowley	858-748-8548 858-748-3801	Community Church of Poway 13501 Community Road, Poway	Tuesdays: 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
15	Poway (3)	Sue & Chris Hagen	760-745-8842	St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church 16275 Pomerado Road, Poway	Tuesdays: 5:00 p.m.
16	Poway (4)	Sue & Chris Hagen	760-745-8842	St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church 16275 Pomerado Road, Poway	Tuesdays: 6:30 p.m.
17	Ramona	Joan Gansert	760-518-2081	Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church 537 E Street, Ramona	Fridays: 8:30 a.m. Daily Mass Chapel
18	Rancho Bernardo	Maureen Anderson	858-673-8886	San Rafael Chapel	Wednesdays: 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.
19	Rancho Santa Fe	Marlynn McCullogh	760-436-1924	Church of the Nativity 6309 El Apajo, Rancho Santa Fe	Saturdays: 9:00 a.m.
20	Serra Mesa	Diane Langworthy	619-697-3558	Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community/ Gethsemane Lutheran 2696 Melbourne Dr , San Diego	Tuesday: 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
21	Temecula	Amanda Rines	951-245-9962	St. Thomas Episcopal Church Sanctuary 27655 Jefferson Avenue, Temecula	Wednesdays: 4:30 p.m.

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