

Consd News



THE NEWSLETTER OF CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH OF NORTH SAN DIEGO

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SPECIAL INTEREST

Earthrise page 1

Helps on the
Journey
page 2

United in Prayer
Day page 3

Spreading the
Word page 3

Plan Ahead!!
Page 4

Thinking Out of
the Box
page 4

Solid Spiritual
Food page 5

CONSD & COSD
Events page 6

Centering
Prayer Groups
page 7

Earthrise

When the clouds are just right, I can almost feel the earth moving toward the east to reveal the rising sun. First the dark of the land lightens. The owls hoot back and forth in duet. On the backside of the clouds, light shines. Through gaps in the clouds, the ribbons of light stream through. The paleness of the first pink orange brushes the tops of the mountains and is reflected in the western sky. I keep my morning watch until the big, round sun appears. Then I must look away from its brightness. Sometimes I'm impatient with the slowness of the coming sun and begin doing other things. Then I notice the sun has risen without me.

Intimacy with God is like that rising sun. We pray and contemplate for a lifetime. Yet with each sunrise, God is more glorious and mysterious than any known equation. My yearning for God is never satisfied. Even as the sun surrounds the whole earth day by day, God's presence is ever available and yet ever elusive. God is the eternal listener and silent speaker as Nan Merrill paraphrases in "Psalms for Praying."

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus tells a trilogy of lost stories: sheep, coin, son. I like the middle story. A woman lights a candle and sweeps the house with a broom to find a lost coin even though she has nine other coins. I remember vividly how my mother would sweep the kitchen floor almost daily. As a small child, I was amazed how she could gather dust from the floor. I was fascinated with the way the dust and lint would move along with each stroke of her broom. If a poof of dust tried to stray into the air, the next flick of the broom would put it back in line for the dustpan. As young adults, my brother and I wore contact lenses. One time my brother dropped a lens in the kitchen while using the sink. We two got on our hands and knees on the floor to look for it. We failed to find it even using the flashlight technique. My mother said confidently that she would find the lens by sweeping the floor. She did just that. The intact lens soon lay in the dustpan in dusty splendor swept there by my mother's broom.

God like the good shepherd and the father of the prodigal son is also like the good homemaker, mother, housewife, caregiver. When the woman with the broom finds the lost coin, she calls her neighbors over to celebrate. Perhaps the essential lesson of the trilogy tells us to celebrate in community that we are always being found by God and always finding God.

In the evening, the earth pulls away from the sun. The big, round sun sets behind a cloud bank. Ribbons of pink, lavender, yellow, filter through the clouds like rays of blessings. The ritual repetition of morning and evening splendor remind us that God refuses to quit. No matter what is going on in my world or the world, God blesses all of creation with a gentle magnificence. God gifts every creature with a sky full of beauty that is out of this world.

~Fay Chang

Helps on the Journey

Each of our Living Flame workshops has been illuminating and potentially life-altering, and this was especially true with Marge Rafferty's January presentation, "Helps on the Journey." It was as if she arrived in the dead of winter, bearing brightly wrapped gifts that whisked away our seasonal doldrums. Her challenging topics were *grief* and *forgiveness*; and by the day's end, she managed to skillfully move us beyond the intellect into gentler realms of the heart.

She began by explaining that grief and forgiveness are similar in that they are each layered and complex. Since they don't spring from single isolated events, they usually require a process of healing that is very gradual. Focusing first on grief, Marge remarked that life involves change and loss, and how we handle each one generally indicates how well we cope with life. When we don't fully process feelings surrounding traumas or losses, it's likely we will become emotionally stuck. This was dramatically illustrated by a study she cited in which 90% of the mentally ill subjects had unresolved grief issues. Marge invited us to share personal examples of losses, which sparked discussion about lost friendships, family estrangement, declining health, etc.--all part of the fabric of life which she said could be managed by limiting our responsibility (i.e. relinquishing power and control). She also reminded us to use what God has given us, such as prayer, trusting that our ever-present God can handle everything. The four tasks of mourning she listed were: accept the reality of the loss; experience feelings associated with the loss; adjust to an environment without the lost object, emotionally relocate the lost object (e.g. memorialize it by creating a new family tradition or an advocacy group such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving), and then move on with life.

Refreshing clarity defined the second half of Marge's presentation, which focused on forgiveness. When asked "How do we know when we have truly for-

given?" She replied, "When you can think of the situation and there's no longer pain attached to it." She brought us a major *Aha!* moment by differentiating between reconciliation and forgiveness. Reconciliation, she explained, requires *two parties* who come together in mutual respect to create peace and forgiveness, while forgiveness can occur even if just *one person* decides to take that step. Because the moral response to forgive an injustice involves taking responsibility for one's *own* life and choosing to no longer blame others for resulting circumstances, reciprocity is not necessary.

Another question, "If you forgive, do you forget?" Received this edifying answer: "No, but you remember in a different way--without anger and resentment." The goal isn't to deny the hurt, but to acknowledge there is more to the offender than the offenses and to look beyond those offenses to the person that God loves. Ultimately, this shifts the one who forgives from victim hood to empowerment. In contrast, an unforgiving attitude exacts a severe price. Marge underscored this fact with a quote from Meg Funk's Tools Matter: "Anger disturbs the mind, divides the heart, confuses the intellect and poisons the body." Marge also quipped, "Revenge is like taking rat poison, expecting the other person to die!" However, she added, anger alone isn't the problem--it's what we *do* with it. Anger can, in fact, provide energy for change.

By sharing all of these practical insights with her characteristic warmth and candor and leading us through a powerful guided imagery experience, Marge created a safe environment for small group sharing that was intimate and for some, even cathartic. As the workshop drew to a close that afternoon, all of us were left with three invaluable gifts: heightened awareness, uplifted spirits and enlightened *hearts*.

~Jane Milligan

The Two Arms of God

God embraces us with both arms. With the left He humbles us and corrects us some. With the right He lifts us up and consoles us with the assurance of being loved by Him. If you want to be fully embraced by

the Lord you have to accept both arms: The one that allows suffering for the sake of purification and the one that brings the joy of union.

United In Prayer Day

On March 20, 2010 our two area Chapters COSD and CONSD, gathered at the Mission de Alcala for the annual Contemplative Outreach United in Prayer Day. Forty-three people gathered for hospitality which was followed by Centering Prayer and a DVD with Fr. Keating. His topic was "The Divine Economy" which he explained means giving everything away as the widow did with her mite. Following the DVD, Fr.

Keating led us into a second period of Centering Prayer. After a silent break, we gathered to share a word, phrase or sentence that spoke to us during the morning. The depth of the sharing was reflective of what we received during the presentation. It was especially good to have members of both Chapters in attendance.

~Sue Hagen

Spreading the Word

In the last six months CONSD has presented NINE Mini Intros! Our first invitation in October was to go to Palomar College and present Centering Prayer to two of Professor Zach Seech's Religion classes with a total of fifty students. In November the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego held a Ministry Day and we presented twice to a total of nineteen people. In February we were asked to go to Camp Pendleton to speak to a World Religion attended by about twenty Marines. On March first and second Professor Seech asked us to present the Prayer to his second semester Religion

Classes again with about fifty students. Later in March we were invited to give a Lenten Presentation at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Del Mar. We were treated to a Soup Supper and then spoke to about thirty people. The following week we had another Soup Supper at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in Poway and thirty-seven people attended our presentation at their Lenten University meeting. We are so grateful for this gift which allows us to bring so many to the Prayer.

~Sue and Chris Hagen

Moment of Reflection

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is not law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, provoking and envying each other. *Galatians 5:22-26*

Changes

Have you recently changed your home address, email address, and/or phone number? If you have please send us the changes so we can keep our data base up to date. This will help us keep in touch with you and reduce our mailing expenses. It costs CONSD \$1.05 for every newsletter that is returned in order to find the new address. Please call Sue Hagen at 760-745-8860 or email her at consd@cox.net

Half-Day Retreat

The theme of the retreat is "Follow Me. Jesus' frequent invitation to enter into the process of personal transformation. Jesus gathered his first disciples by simply saying "follow me." When they heard this invitation they immediately, with neither question nor hesitation, dropped what they were doing and followed him both literally and spiritually. So, on May 22, 2010 there will be an opportunity to drop every thing you are doing and gather in the spirit of responding to Jesus' invitation to follow him. The community that gathers on this date will experience periods of Centering Prayer, Taize songs, readings and periods of silent personal reflection.

Date: May 22, 2010

Time: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Location: San Dieguito United Methodist Church
170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas 92024

Donation: Free will offering

Plan Ahead!!!

We are delighted to have Fr. William Meninger from St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass come to speak to our Chapter again. He will be here on Friday evening October 15th and Saturday October 16th to present information on the Enneagram. The Enneagram is a way to know yourself and others. You will learn to recognize your hidden, addictive motivations. You can set yourself free by knowing the truth about you.

What is Your Type?

- Are you the perfectionist? Must you compulsively do everything according to a personal standard of right and wrong in order to be loved?
- Are you the helper? Do you exist only to be real when you are being of service to a significant other?
- Are you the achiever who does not exist according to his own right but only to the extent that he is successfully engaged in some noteworthy task?
- Are you the dramatic romanticist? Must you al-

- ways seek recognition in being unique or special?
- Are you the thinker, living only in your head as you seek to discover how it all fits together?
- Are you the loyalist whose fear compels him to devote his energies to a strong support group?
- Are you the optimist? Is pain or boredom your nemesis?
- Are you the boss who must be in charge for anything to get done?
- Are you the laid back moderator resolving or running from conflict?

Which of these personality traits dominates your life? What combination of them? Fr. Meninger recommends reading one of two books prior to his presentation. He recommends "The Wisdom of the Enneagram" by Riso and Hudson or "Discovering the Enneagram" by Rohr. Mark your calendars now!!

~Sue and Chris Hagen

Thinking Out of the Box

When the Centering Prayer group at St Thomas of Canterbury in Temecula began struggling with membership (people dying, moving, etc., we decided to invite Chris and Sue Hagen to give us a workshop, "An introduction to Centering Prayer." This drew people from all over the Inland valley - Sun City, Lake Elsinore, Fallbrook. It was a good shot in the arm and yet something was missing. At the same time, the Bishop assigned my husband to the church in Sun City and seven months later, I retired from my position as Music Director at St Thomas in Temecula. What to do about Centering Prayer. Some people wanted a group at St Stephen's, Sun City, others needed to stay at Temecula and still others preferred Centering in Fallbrook where they lived.

One morning as I was at my prayers this idea came to me. Let the Fallbrook community meet weekly, have the Sun City group meet weekly and let all the groups come together each month at Temecula. Furthermore, we would all commit to the same study for cohesiveness. All were pleased with this design and we began our new adventure with this format on the

second Wednesday in February. We are studying Matthew Fox' book, "The Coming of the Cosmic Christ" and all loving it. It seems so very timely to the issues of our church and world today.

Our Centering Prayer groups are as follows:

Inland Valley Centering at St Thomas of Temecula on the Second Wednesday of the Month, 4:00 - 5:00 pm, 44651 Avenida de Misiones, Temecula, Amanda Rines 951 245 9962

St Stephen's Sun City. Thursdays from 3:00 - 4:00 pm, 26704 Murrieta Rd, Sun City, Amanda Rines 951 245 9962

Fallbrook Presbyterian Church on Stagecoach Rd, Saturdays at 8:30 am, Mary Bruge 760 728 5804

Fallbrook with Barbara Hudson on Tuesday - TBA, call Barbara 760 728 5791

~Amanda Rines

Solid Spiritual Food

Living Flame II on Saturday, March 13, saw the much awaited return of Contemplative Outreach's favorite chef and priest in the making, Matthew Flatley, to present the session on "The Psychology of Centering Prayer." Those who attended his session in the first Living Flame remember his sincerity, warmth, vulnerability and gentle sense of humor. He gifted us with these again as well as his "beginner's mind and heart," as he described himself in his opening remarks.

He explained the day as a mirroring of the traditional explanation and language of the spiritual journey - original sin and its consequences as defined by St. Augustine - with contemporary psychological language and models as interpreted by Fr. Keating. The spiritual journey has always been the same. But Matthew explained that Fr. Keating felt that in order to make it more understandable to today's world it needed to be interpreted in currently relevant terms, in other words, in the language of psychology.

In the beauty of all Living Flame presentations, this was not just an informational class. He acknowledged that as we conclude the Living Flame series we are probably not just experiencing the joys of Centering Prayer but the challenges of the spiritual road as well and we need to acknowledge the difficulty of the "journey into the unknown - into our own darkness." He confirmed that it takes courage to go there and probed us with the question, "Where are you in your commitment to transformation?" He also reinforced the good news that we are already there! Our journey is to "wake up" and see that we are joined with the trinity living within us. The message written on the board for us to ponder throughout the day was, "We are created in the image of God - transformation/conversion/metanoia is the journey to the likeness of God." The day was complemented by a number of rich handouts illustrating and explaining the various psychological paradigms of the spiritual journey. These models all looked at what is traditionally called the purification process from different yet interconnected perspectives. There was the radiating model of the Levels of Awareness and the dynamics of the Four Moments of Centering Prayer, familiar to us from the introductory workshop. Then we delved into the anal-

ogy of the Archeological Dig with the Holy Spirit is the Divine Archeologist. Finally, there was the paradigm of the Spiral Staircase where every step down into humility and our brokenness is also a step up into trust in the love of God the Divine Therapist.

All of these illustrations are meant as guidelines to help us understand our own unique transformational journey and to be encouragement as we travel through the inevitable rough and dark times. We were reminded that the Christian path is not about perfection but about love as God loves us, even the love of our own weakness and powerlessness. The small group questions at the end of the day focused on the heart of our part of the contemplative journey - motivation. "Where are you at?" "What do you need to do to get where you want to go?" "Are you willing to do that?" Once we commit, and continue to commit in patient trust, then the rest is up to God. In the words of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: "Above all trust in the slow work of God. Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming in you will be. Give our Lord the benefit of believing that his hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete." Thank you, Matthew, and the Living Flame program, for feeding us once again.

~Elena Andrews

Donations

CONSD is a volunteer organization. We have no grants or other forms of financial support other than from those who desire to support CONSD's Vision and Mission through their compassionate donations. While we have no paid staff we do incur expenses. For example there are expenses incurred in the daily operation of the CONSD office, the production and mailing of our newsletter and other forms of written communication with our members as well as the provision of Centering Prayer events. Since we are a non-profit organization all donations are tax deductible. Should you want to make a donation please write check to CONSD and mail it to CONSD, 908 Via Linda Escondido, CA 92029. We thank you for your support.

~Sue and Chris Hagen, CONSD Co-Coordinators

CONSD & COSD EVENTS

CONSD 2010

HALF-DAY RETREAT

Date: May 22

Time: 9:00am–12:30pm

Location: San Dieguito United Methodist Church,
170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas

Suggested Donation: Free Will Offering

HALF-DAY RETREAT

Date: August 14

Time: 9:00am–12:00pm

Event: The Sacred Name

Location: TBD

Suggested Donation: Free Will Offering

EVENT

Date: Sept. 26

Time: 5:00pm

Event: Roman Catholic Liturgy

Facilitators: Cynthia Bourgeault and Dr. Jane Via
Location: Mary Magdalene Apostolic Catholic Com-
munity at Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 2696 Mel-
bourne Dr., San Diego

Contact: Diane Langworthy (619) 697-3558

Info: After the liturgy, Cynthia will be signing her
newly published book on Mary Magdalene.

PRESENTATION

Date: October 15–16

Time: Fri. 7:00–9:00pm & Sat. 9:00am–3:00pm

Event: The Enneagram

Facilitator: Fr. William Meninger

Location: St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
16275 Pomerado Rd., Poway

Suggested Donation: TBD

RETREAT

Date: October 29–31

Event: Retreat

Location: The Prince of Peace Abbey, 650 Benet Hill
Rd., Oceanside

EVENT

Date: Dec. 4th

Time: 9:00am–12:30pm

Event: Advent Event

Location: TBA

Suggested Donation: TBA.

COSD 2010

WORKSHOP

Date: June 12

Time: 9:00am–3:00pm

Event: Introductory Workshop Program

Location: Church of St. Luke's Catholic Church, 1980
Hillsdale Road, El Cajon

Contact: Kathy (619) 749-4141

LIVING FLAME 1 PROGRAM

Date: 2nd Saturday of the month 9/10—4/11

Time: 8:30am–4:00pm

Location: St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, 2728 6th
Avenue (near Balboa Park)

Suggested Donation: TBD

Contact: Kathy (619) 749-4141 for information

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

For COSD Events call Kathy Di Fede at (619) 749-4141

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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 pm
2	Del Mar (2)	Sun Spriggs Lori Thomas	858-947-5131 760-753-3207	St. Peters Episcopal Church 334 14th St., Del Mar	Mondays: 3:30 to 5:00 pm
3	Encinitas (1)	Christina Linehan Shirley Shetula	760-525-6721 760-436-6721	Home of Christina Linehan 350 N. El Camino Real #70, Encinitas	Mondays: 10:30 am
4	Encinitas (2)	Mike and Ann King	760-753-1575	Home of Mike and Ann King (Call for directions)	Thursdays: 7:00 pm
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 pm
6	Encinitas (4)	Fr. :Larry Hart	760-753-3017	St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Parish Hall 890 Balour, Encinitas	Thursday: 6:30 pm
7	Escondido	Linda Dollins	760-745-5100	First United Methodist Church 341 S. Kalmia, Escondido	Mondays: 4:30 pm
8	Fallbrook	Marcy Burge	760-723-2773	Fallbrook Presbyterian Church 463 S. Stagecoach Lane, Fallbrook	Saturdays: 8:30 to 9:30 am
9	Fallbrook (2)	Barbara Hudson	760-728-5791	St. Peter's Catholic Church 450 S. Stagecoach Lane, Fallbrook	Tuesdays: 1:30 pm
10	Temecula	Amanda Rines	951-245-9962	St. Thomas of Temecula 44651 Avenida de Misiones, Temecula	2nd Wednesday of month: 4:00 pm
11	Murrieta	Debbie Lindsay	951-698-8368	Home of Debbie Lindsay 23511 Silverwood, Murrietta	Thursdays: 12:30 pm
12	Oceanside (1)	Ed Clifford	760-630-1897	Mission San Luis Rey McKeon Center Room 12	Wednesdays: 7:00 pm
13	Oceanside (2)	Mary Williams	760-510-9337	St. Thomas More Catholic Church 1450 S. Melrose Drive	Thursdays: 1:00 pm
14	Poway (1)	Elena Andrews	858-451-2098	Saint Gabriel Catholic Church 13734 Twin Peaks Road, Poway	Fridays: 9:30 to 11:00 am
15	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 pm
16	Poway (3)	Sue & Chris Hagen	760-745-8842	St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church 16275 Pomerado Road, Poway	Tuesdays: 5:00 pm
17	Poway (4)	Sue & Chris Hagen	760-745-8842	St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church 16275 Pomerado Road, Poway	Tuesdays: 6:30 pm
18	Poway (5)	Sherlene Mollerstuen	858-451-6825	Lutheran Church of the Incarnation 16889 Espola Road, Poway	Monday: 5:00 to 6:30 pm.
19	Ramona	Joan Gansert	760-518-2081	Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Chapel 537 E Street, Ramona	Fridays: 8:30 am
20	Rancho Bernardo	Maureen Anderson	858-673-8886	San Rafael Catholic Church, Chapel 17252 Bernardo Center Drive, San Diego	Wednesdays: 7:00 to 8:00 pm
21	Rancho Santa Fe	Marlyne McCullogh	760-436-1924	Church of the Nativity 6309 El Apajo, Rancho Santa Fe	Saturdays: 9:00 am
22	Serra Mesa	Diane Langworthy	619-697-3558	Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community/ Gethsemane Lutheran 2696 Melbourne Dr , San Diego	Tuesday: 7:00 to 8:30 pm
23	Sun City	Amanda Rines	951-245-9962	St. Stephen's Episcopal Church 26704 Murrieta Rd., Sun City	Thursdays: 3:00 to 4:00 pm

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