



# CONSD News

**The Newsletter of Contemplative Outreach of  
North San Diego, Volume 17, Number 1,  
February 2022**

## *In This Issue*

CONSD Vision, Mission,  
& Values  
.... page 1

Grief as a Portal into the  
Soul  
.... page 2-4

Kathy Mendoza's January  
Morning with CONSD  
.... pages 5-7

Remembering Nestor de  
Armas  
.... pages 8-11

Save the Date: Becoming  
the Whole Self with Chris  
Hagen .... page 12

Q & A with Lindsay Boyer  
.... page 13-14

Thank you, Contributors  
.... page 14

Events  
.... pages 15-17

Prayer Groups  
.... pages 18-19

The **VISION** of Contemplative Outreach of North San Diego is to foster the process of transformation in Christ in one another through the practice of Centering Prayer.

The **MISSION** of Contemplative Outreach of North San Diego is to: present the method of Centering Prayer, build a Christ-centered community, and support the contemplative life.

## **CORE VALUES**

### **Value -- Christ Centered**

We will know we are living by this value when we: Commit ourselves to be faithful to the practice of Centering Prayer twice a day. Embrace the inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit in accomplishing our Vision and Mission. Share the method of Centering Prayer with utmost charity and humility.

### **Value -- Humility**

We will know we are living by this value when we: Acknowledge that any good accomplished by CONSD is the work of the Holy Spirit. Are transparent in our actions. Treat everyone we meet, within and outside of CONSD, in a non-judgmental manner. Respond to every issue that comes to us in a non-judgmental manner.

### **Value -- Utmost Charity**

We will know we are living by this value when we: Reach out with compassion, understanding, and joy in the pursuit of our Vision and Mission Statements. Accept and value each person wherever she/he may be on their spiritual journey. Treat every person and issue with utmost patience.

### **Value -- Community**

We will know we are living by this value when we: Cultivate and foster a spirit of unity and utmost charity throughout the spiritual network. Honor and respect people within and outside of our Christian tradition regardless of differences in outlook, theology, or practice. Hear, share, learn, and grow in union with one another with God as our center. Reach out with utmost hospitality in all that we say and do.

### **Value -- Encourage and Support**

We will know we are living by this value when we: Offer the Centering Prayer Introductory Program regularly. Present programs/events that encourage spiritual illumination, growth, and transformation regularly. Hear and respond to the needs of the CONSD membership. Affirm each member's desire to develop a closer relationship with God.

# ***Grief as a Portal Into the Soul:***

## ***Reflecting on Elena Bertan's November 2021 Retreat***

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." ~Matthew 5:4.  
And so began the November 13, 2021, morning reflection and prayer period on grief led by Elena Bertran. Elena invited us to approach our grief with curiosity and openness to the work of the Holy Spirit. She quoted Richard Rohr:

*"The great wisdom traditions are trying to teach us that grief isn't something from which to run. It's a liminal space, a time of transformation. In fact, we can't risk getting rid of the pain until we've learned what it has to teach us and it – grief, suffering, loss, pain – always has something to teach us! We must go through the stages of feeling, not only the last death but all of the earlier little (and not-so-little) deaths. If we bypass these emotional stages by easy answers, all they do is take a deeper form of disguise and come out in another way – by all kinds of internal diseases, depression, addictions, irritability, and misdirected anger."*

Elena directed us towards a deeper understanding of grief by drawing upon Francis Weller's book *The Wild Edge of*

*Sorrow*. She summarized the author's five gates of grief and then invited us to reflect upon how these could be portals into our own soul:

1. Everything we love, we will lose
2. Grief can be found in the places that have not known love
3. The sorrows of the world
4. Grief resulting from what we expected and did not receive
5. Ancestral grief: Undigested grief in our family and world history

Pondering these five gates of grief, I journaled during the quiet period that followed:

1. How devastated I feel when I think about losing everything I love. I feel unmoored. And yet this is inevitable. This is the surrender to God leading the dance, as Fr. Carl Arico says. This is the letting go that allows for letting God. I need to accept this simple truth of constant loss occurring throughout my life. I am comforted by a twelfth-century poem quoted in Weller's book that reminds me to not constrict when facing the grief of losing loved ones:

(Continued on next page)

“For Those Who Have Died Eleh  
Ezkerah—These We Remember”

*‘Tis a fearful thing  
to love  
what death can touch.  
To love, to hope, to dream,  
and oh, to lose.  
A thing for fools, this,  
Love.  
But a holy thing,  
to love what death can touch.*

*For your life has lived in me;  
your laugh once lifted me;  
your word was gift to me.  
To remember this brings painful joy.  
Tis a human thing, love,  
a holy thing,  
To love  
what death can touch.*

~Judah Halevi or Emanuel of Rome

2. It was revelatory to think about the second gate of grief being places that have not known love. Elena spoke of parts of ourselves that we are ashamed of, beginnings of ourselves based on emotional programs for happiness, and recurring damage occurring due to running programs for happiness. “Perfectionism” and “rush, rush, rush” states pop up for me.

3. Grief arising from carrying the sorrows of the world. Elena told us that these can be held in solidarity. I know that weekly Centering Prayer circles help me with this collective caring and carrying.

4. Grief arising from what we expected and did not receive often occurred when we were vulnerable and young. It also fed the growth of emotional programs for happiness. The answer: Rest in God.

5. Addressing the loss of connection with the lived experiences of ancestors helps me find grief that I had not been able to name before but felt the effect of in my life. In the weeks since this retreat, I contacted people and read up on how a lynching in Monroe, GA changed the lives of my grandmother’s family. I am now learning more about an ongoing Truth and Reconciliation process in this town. Grief work is helping me look where I did not want to look before and share my findings with others.



*Retreat leader Elena Bertran*

*Blessed are  
they that mourn,  
for they shall be  
comforted.*  
~Matthew 5:4

Elena  
addressed “for  
they shall be  
comforted” in  
the second half  
of our morning.  
We watched a

short clip of James Finley on the  
“trustworthiness of death,” filmed soon  
after the death of his wife, Maureen.

Elena spoke of the importance of  
community as a comfort resource in  
grief. In the book *It’s OK that You’re Not*

Ok, Megan Devine reminds us that some things cannot be fixed, they can only be carried. “Grief can be incredibly lonely. Even when people show up and love you as best they can, they aren’t really with you in this. They can’t be. It so very much sucks that in a large part you are alone in this [your grief] and yet you can’t do this alone.” We need someone to see and hear our grief. Buddhist teacher Chuang Lu encourages us to connect with others:

*“The world needs your suffering, your courage and your strength. Don’t try to kill your pain. Share it with another. Communicate it. If the first person you talk to isn’t the right one, find someone else. Somebody wants to listen to your pain, to connect with you and to understand you. When you find them, lighten your burden and discover the jewels, the joy that lay beneath the pain. Later you will be present for others who will be suffering.”*

Elena expanded her list of other comforts in grief. She explained how

tears can be gifts by communicating your grief to others, flushing out toxins and promoting self-soothing by releasing endorphins. Additionally, nature can be a balm: sunrises vast enough to hold our grief. She listed Gregorian chants that slow the heart rate and lift up the soul...movement, art, healthy food, sleep, pets, simple breathing in which we exhale longer than we inhale...all of these to give spaciousness to our grief. In this way, the heart can create the emptiness, the space, for a seed to grow within us.

Our concluding question and answer period gave me the following pearls: When you have tears, you swim in a holy river.” (Garth Brooks, “The Dance”) “I could have missed the pain. But I’d have had to miss the dance.” When we feel the pain, know it’s a place of rebirth. Finally, I add a quote from Jonathan Montaldo that speaks to the generative power of grief: “Once I am in a dark night, I have to ask, ‘How am I saved by it?’”

**~Carrie Govan Skelly**



## *Kathy Mendoza's January Morning with CONSD*



*Retreat leader Kathy Mendoza*

On an early frosty morning walk in November along the edge of Lake Hodges, I asked Kathy Mendoza if she had any ideas for another CONSD morning

retreat or gathering. She did. She had found a humorous YouTube video with Fr. Carl Arico, which lightened her spirit, and she wanted to share it with the chapter in a morning of love and laughter. The title would be “What next?#!?%? Smiling Thru Our Milestones.” Virginia Erickson created the whimsical flier for Kathy using a very early watercolor painting by Virginia’s daughter. In the flier mailing, Kathy gave us the following instructions for the morning: ***“Please come with experiences that amused you or others as you have been navigating the milestones God arranges for us.”***

Fast forward to January 29. Over fifty of us gathered in our own Zoom rooms at 9:30. Kathy opened the gathering and,

with a twinkle in her eye, began setting the tone with the following poem, “I Worried,” by Mary Oliver:

*I worried a lot. Will the garden grow,  
will the rivers  
flow in the right direction, will the earth  
turn  
as it was taught, and if not how shall  
I correct it?  
Was I right, was I wrong, will I be  
forgiven,  
can I do better?  
Will I ever be able to sing, even the  
sparrows  
can do it and I am, well,  
hopeless.  
Is my eyesight fading or am I just  
imagining it,  
am I going to get rheumatism,  
lockjaw, dementia?  
Finally, I saw that worrying had come to  
nothing.  
And gave it up. And took my old body  
and went out into the morning,  
and sang.*

Kathy explained the format for the morning and then reminded us how we are grounded in the prayer, this remarkable gift from Fr. Thomas Keating. We grew still and silent, and Kathy led us into our period of Centering Prayer.



Afterward, she explained the theme of the morning—seeing our foibles with humor and acceptance. When a child has a funny misstep, for example, we are not laughing at the child but with the child. This is how God sees us. We're doing the best we can, and as we age, we become more childlike because prayer dismantles the old rule about how we're "supposed to be." We're doing the best we can, and we're *adorable*. God sees us as *adorable*.

To underscore how adorable we are, she showed Fr. Carl Arico's video, "Is It Really Yes? Or Is It a Maybe?". Fr. Carl emphasized that when it comes to aging, we need to embrace this period of our lives. We may be diminishing or not able to do as much, but in that diminishment, we understand more and more how much we need God in our lives. Paraphrasing John the Baptist's understanding about his role compared to that of Jesus (John 3: 30), Fr. Carl said, "I must decrease so that You can increase."

Fr. Carl also recalled a famous story about Itzhak Perlman, the famous violinist who broke a string during a dramatic performance where Perlman was accompanied by a full orchestra. He finished the solo with three strings. When asked how he was able to finish, he said "The secret of life is to make music with what you have left."

Fr. Carl also reminded us to trust the process of aging because we are

constantly being rewired—seeing the world with new eyes. And finally, he said that we are not the "fourth person of the Trinity." God doesn't expect us to be saint-like. We are created with desires for power and control, for security and survival, and for affection and esteem—the human condition. We are to experience the joy of living that these qualities promote as long as they don't become an obsession or keep us from loving God.

Keeping in mind Fr. Carl's points from the video—diminishment, making music with what is left, trusting the process of rewiring, and needing to be the 4<sup>th</sup> person of the trinity--Kathy asked us to take 10 minutes to reflect and asked: How does the Prayer help with these? How are they applicable to "What's Next?" And what are our stories?

So what did we share when we returned? Here are some samples:

*"My music has improved as I got older. Before I prayed that I was worthy because I never thought I was as good as I could be. Now life is better, and I feel like I'm growing."*

*"I loved the idea that we're just 'adorable' and that God delights in us. I never thought of celebrating all of the programs for happiness."*

*"If you laugh at yourself, you'll never be out of material."*

*"I used to talk out loud to myself as an admonishment. I would also say 'Jesus,' invoking His presence. The Prayer is always with me and now I'm filled with joy invoking Jesus."*

*"I'm feeling diminishment at 86. I had had great health and now the cycle has been broken with back surgery. I couldn't do anything. But I know Jesus is with me no matter what. It's been a year since the surgery, and I'm still getting better."*

*"Diminishment and perpetual change affected me. I am now living in the Carlsbad suburbs with my wife who has had stage 4 cancer. Her situation shut down our travel plans but returning to the suburbs is a totally unexpected joy."*

*"We used to bicycle all over the country and now I pedal up and down my neighborhood. I used to be anxious about 'what's next' and now I'm happy with what is."*

An hour quickly passed as the many personal stories uplifted us—we all had been bruised by life, but the testimonies of God's work, often enhanced by the gift of Centering Prayer, underscored God's transformational power. We are growing older, but we are also growing in God. And no matter what's next, we are Adorable!

Thank you, Kathy, for creating this morning of laughter and love, and trusting in God's supportive whisper that you were headed in exactly the right direction.

**~Linda Dollins**

### **How God Pushes Our Buttons**

Many of the people in our lives are a help to us. We truly appreciate their presence. But there are times when we feel we are living and working with the wrong people. They are not making life easy for us. We could live our lives much better if we were with different, more mature people. Alas, the truth is more likely that we need to be with the people we are with because these are the people who know how to "push the buttons" we need pushed. These buttons are pushed so we can become who we are supposed to be. We are, thank God, stuck with these people. It is with these people and these relationships that the Spirit speaks to us. I have no confirmed message that God has spoken directly to me on a personal level (yet!), but I know God has spoken to me through the people in my life.

**~Fr. Carl Arico, from *A Taste of Silence***

# *Remembering Nestor de Armas*

*“Are we having fun yet?”* This was Nestor’s way of greeting people in meetings and workshops. With these words, always accompanied with a broad smile and twinkle in his eyes, Nestor reminded us of the joy and goodwill found in sharing the gift of Centering Prayer, and in moving into the realm of contemplative prayer, the “greatest adventure ... the world in which God can do anything”

(Thomas Keating).

Sadly for us, Nestor left the earthly portion of this greatest adventure when he died on January 3, 2022, passing into God’s full embrace and eternal joy.

“Utmost charity” – the other words Nestor readily and often spoke. When I was new to the Centering Prayer Group Facilitator Support Service Team, which Nestor led, his

constant reminder of our call to serve and encounter others with utmost charity touched me deeply and revitalized my intention to “love one another as Jesus has loved us, that is with all our faults, limitations, and at times outrageous behavior”

forgiving “completely and from the heart everything and everyone including ourselves” as the path to unity (CO Theological Principle #13).

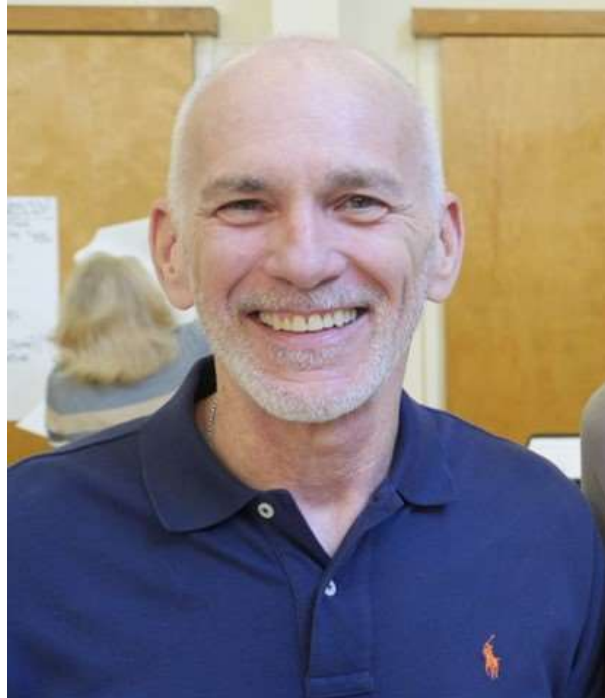
Nestor modeled living with utmost charity with his open heart of service. He approached everyone with genuine interest and concern. He practiced “talk less, listen more”, inviting and empowering participation

from all members of our team. Nestor went the extra mile to serve, to inspire and to be a friend. Eileen put it this way:

“Nestor was a man of irrepressible joy with a boundless welcoming spirit and boundless energy for life and for so many people and causes to which he was dedicated. Always listening to get to know people, always trying to bring people in. What a life force –

what a channel of God. So blessed to know him”.

Bob’s lasting memory from whenever he was with Nestor in Toronto, San Diego, Sewanee, Tennessee, and Bob’s home, Denver, both when they



*Nestor de Armas, RIP*



were on retreats and up in the mountains, “is how Nestor treasured each adventure, enjoyed each day and treated everyone with such kindness and reverence!”

### **My experience of Nestor**

At first meeting, Nestor had a captivating unflinching presence; yet, his eyes emitted softness, acceptance, his gestures gladness and happiness. As time passed, I created or found opportunities to speak with him about spiritual experiences. I often sensed that I must be attending to him as Mary of Bethany attended to Jesus. His words and expressions entered my “spiritual level of being,” and my body relaxed into a subtle comfort of joy.

With these memories, I, like others, have grieved deeply the accident that left him unable to speak or write. Periodically, we exchanged text messages. In these, I often expressed my unresolvable grief over his limitations and my missing his words. I enjoyed telling him, “I know God in your silence is gifting you with insights, revelations, inspirations and other untold gems.” I would end saying, “One day you will reveal these to us.” It saddens me that will never happen.

On a joyful note, I am delighted Nestor is with God, Father, Son and

Holy Spirit. I am sure he is dancing, laughing and asking, “are we having fun, yet?” Of course, all giggle and loudly shout, Alleluias!!!

~ Pattye Spezia

Nestor’s Centering Prayer journey began in 2005 when he was invited to an Introduction to Centering Prayer workshop. He admitted he went primarily to hang out with the friends who had invited him. The presenter was a monk he had never heard of – Thomas Keating. He said that Keating’s description of Centering Prayer promised to be the answer to the longing for resting in God he had been experiencing for some time. For the next seven years he practiced Centering Prayer alone in his room; *Open Mind, Open Heart* and other Contemplative Outreach materials his only companions.

In the years that followed, Nestor began attending retreats and considered his first retreat transformative. He answered a call to help start a Centering Prayer group at his church. To prepare himself he attended a Contemplative Outreach facilitator workshop in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. He became a vital part of the Contemplative Outreach of Central Florida community, including serving as chapter coordinator.

Attending to the needs of Centering Prayer groups and their facilitators became Nestor's top service priority. He assisted Susan Komis form Contemplative Outreach's Facilitator Support Service Team. He developed training materials for facilitator workshops and facilitated beginning and advanced Facilitator Formation Workshops throughout the United States, Canada, and the Dominican Republic. Furthermore, Nestor recorded video presentations to make resources widely available to help people support each other in staying with the prayer. These videos for facilitator training are now available at no charge through the Contemplative Outreach website (See [Volunteer Resources](#) under "Centering Prayer Group Facilitators"). Nestor will live on through his teachings, captured in these videos, and in the hearts and memories of those whom he served and who served with him.

## Reflection

Nestor treasured his regular Centering Prayer retreats. He wrote this reflection on one of his trips to the mountain, inspired by Mark 6:31:

*He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while".*

*I wake up to stars hanging like diamonds on black velvet. I have*

*come to this sacred valley to cultivate stillness: an unreflective awareness of Presence. For decades, pilgrims have come to this retreat in the Colorado mountains to listen to the music of silence reverberating off majestic mountains. I shiver as I slip on my clothes and step into the darkness. My headlamp's bright yellow light dances down the trail. I relax into the soft rhythm of my boots crunching on the gravel. I reach the chapel and slip into my chair. I set my timer. My breathing becomes smooth ... intentional. I softly and ever-so-gently consent to God's presence and action within. Thoughts come. Again, ever-so-gently, I consent to God's presence and action within. Eventually, thoughts become irrelevant. Stillness abounds. My timer's gentle gong invites me back to ordinary consciousness. I sit for a few minutes savoring the transition. I experience all that is, is in God; and, all that is in God is One.*

~ Nestor de Armas

Nestor faced unspeakable challenges in these last couple of years. In July of 2019, shortly after our team had been together in Denver, Nestor and his wife Donna were in a horrible car accident with a semi-truck near Brunswick, Georgia, as they were driving to their mountain house in Little Switzerland

in North Carolina. Nestor said the house was “a lifelong dream come true”. When tropical storm Florence had been threatening, he wrote “I feel burdened...uneasy...trapped. Then, I am startled by the sustaining love of God, and I am whole.”

As a result of the accident, Nestor underwent emergency brain surgery. He lost most of his ability to communicate in words. But for this man of extraordinary faith, his family reported that rather than feeling frustrated or down in his recovery, he seemed more cheerful and full of life. He approached his recovery with steely determination and patience and with his sense of humor and lots of laughing. He continued to communicate with us in short words of love and prayer.

We will remember Nestor’s smile and query to us, “Are we having fun yet”? We will continue to be grateful for God blessing us with his presence. And, we will continue to treasure this beloved friend who showed us how to live and serve with “utmost charity”.

*“I have called you by name, you are mine”.*

– *Isaiah 43:1*

~ Submitted by Michele Jankanish and Bob Mischke, Pattye Spezia, Eileen McCaffrey Schuman, Jim Bailey, Linda Smith (former member), the Centering Prayer Group Facilitator Support Service Team. Originally printed in *The Voice*.

## **The Great Privilege**

The great privilege of contemplatives is that we are invited to share first in our own redemption by accepting our personal alienation from God and its consequences throughout our lives, and then to identify with the divine compassion in healing the world through the groanings of the Spirit. "The unspeakable groanings of the Spirit," as Paul calls them, are our desires to bring the peace and knowledge of God's love into the world. The love that is the source of those desires is in fact being projected into the world and is secretly healing its wounds. We will not know the results of our participation in Christ's redemptive work in this life. One thing is certain: by bonding with the crucified One we bond with everyone else, past, present, and to come.

**~Fr. Thomas Keating, from *Intimacy with God***

Contemplative Outreach of North San Diego offers

# Becoming the Whole Self

## Beyond the False Self/True Self Dichotomy

with Chris Hagen



Save the Date:

**Saturday, April 23, 2022 from 9:30 - 11:30 on Zoom**

**We are made of the biological image of our parents and the spiritual image of God. The whole self is the integration of these two aspects of our self into oneness, where our actions arise simultaneously from both our humanness and our spiritualness.**

**Join Chris Hagen as he explores this gradual integrative process within the context of Fr. Thomas Keating's wisdom statement:**

***"We are not human beings on a spiritual journey, we are spiritual beings on a human journey."***

**Q & A with Lindsay Boyer:  
“Where Should the Attention Be in Centering Prayer?”**

**Q:** First, let me send you my sincerest gratitude for all that Contemplative Outreach does. After several years of Buddhist meditation, I have found my home in the teachings of Fr. Thomas and other great mystics and feel very blessed to be a part of this community.

My question is regarding Centering Prayer. I have been practicing it for a few months and am not sure that I am on the right track. Other methods of “meditation/prayer” use some sort of anchor to give the monkey mind something to grasp on to, whether it is the breath, sound, a mantra, or the Jesus Prayer. In Centering Prayer, as I understand it, the goal is simultaneously to let go of all thoughts and also to watch thoughts go by without getting involved with them. In open awareness meditation one lets go of the anchor and “watches” thoughts, sensations, emotions, sounds, etc go by. Is this similar to what we should be doing in Centering Prayer? Or should one be leaving those thoughts, sensations, emotions, sounds, etc as soon as one becomes aware of them? If so, where does one’s mind go to? I can have the intention of resting in God, but I struggle to know where my attention should be. If I should not focus on the sacred word itself and not contemplate God Himself, what should my attention/awareness be doing?

Again, thank you so very much for your efforts in bringing the wisdom tradition and contemplative prayer to laypersons. I

cannot express how fulfilling it is to finally sense that I am growing in God and God is growing in me as I learn more who my True Self is. God bless.

**A:** Thank you for this excellent question and for your clear articulation of the challenges that many face when they transition from other methods of meditation into Centering Prayer. As you describe, many forms of meditation are concentrative, providing an anchor for the attention. Centering Prayer is instead a form of surrender. Like you and many others I spent some years in Buddhist meditation before I found my home in Centering Prayer. At the beginning I often had the feeling that I was not doing it right and even now after many years of practice still sometimes find myself bewildered and disoriented. In Centering Prayer, we are no longer doing, neither focusing on an anchor nor watching the thoughts go by. Instead, we let go of doing, and of “doing it right” and instead rest effortlessly in God’s presence. This is of course unfamiliar territory, but gradually we can develop a deep trust of the practice. Something is happening, but God is doing it, not us. David Frenette in his book *The Path of Centering Prayer* describes it this way:

*Not realizing that you are praying means that God is praying, awakening, in you. Not knowing that you are praying means that the workings of your intellectual mind are unknown or secret*



*from your awareness and from the self  
who lives behind reflective thinking.*

You're being invited into a trusting,  
receptive state in which God is doing the  
praying within you. Your own doing or not  
doing hardly matter during the time of the  
prayer. Simply continue to practice the  
prayer, renewing your intention to allow

God to transform you, and disengaging  
yourself from your thoughts whenever you  
find yourself entangled in them. Gradually  
your new home of trust and surrender will  
begin to feel more familiar.

Warm regards,

Lindsay Boyer

### *Thank You to Our Local Contributors . . .*

**Carrie Govan Skelly** participates in Centering Prayer at St. Gabriel's (led by Elena Bertram on Fridays) when she is in San Diego and at Mary Magdalene Apostle (via Zoom on Tuesdays) when she is back up in San Mateo in Northern California

**Linda Dollins** serves as Events Organizer with the CONSD Servant-Leadership Team and as Facilitator for the First United Methodist Church Centering Prayer Group in Escondido.

**The Beloved has no body on earth but yours.  
The Beloved has no hands on earth but yours.  
Yours are the eyes through which the Beloved  
Streams compassion to the world.  
Yours are the hands with which the Beloved  
Is to bless all beings.  
May you have the grace to know this mystery,  
The courage to give yourself to it entirely,  
And the strength to enact its truth in the world.**

**~Andrew Harvey, inspired by St. Teresa of Avila**

## **EVENTS**

**Although most of these events are online, a few retreat centers plan to offer on-site events and “hybrid” events, with status to be updated as Covid protocols change. Each summary below indicates whether the event is online, on-site, or a combo that offers on-site and online options.**

**Events are always being added to the Events Calendar at the Contemplative Outreach, Ltd., website. Please click the following link for the most up-to-date information:**

**<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/events/>**

**Mystic Series: Praying with Icons, with Jim Gill.** Religious Icons have been a part of Christianity from its earliest days, creating environments for worship and as objects of personal devotion and prayer. Through a prayer process known as Icon Gazing, we will learn more about them and how they can be meaningful for our personal faith journeys. 6 participants minimum.

The instructor, Jim Gill, holds a master’s degree from the Institute in Creation Centered Spirituality (Mundelein College-Chicago) and trained as a spiritual guide through Siena Retreat Center’s Spiritual Guidance Training Program. He ministered in Milwaukee area parishes for over three decades in Adult, Family and Child formation. Most recently he was a staff member at Siena Retreat Center and began a freelance ministry during his retirement from full-time work in July of 2020. Jim is an Associate of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. **By Zoom or in person at The Center for Contemplative Living, Elm Grove, WI, February 17, 6:30 – 8:30 PM Central Time.** For more info and registration:

**<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/event/mystic-series-praying-with-icons/>**

**Silence Speaking: Stillness Acting: Centering Prayer, Contemplative Petition, and Unity, with David Frenette.** In this workshop we will continue exploring Centering Prayer and unity – both unity consciousness, and also action in the world that express the underlying unity of life. Special focus will be given on how to open to the God of Unity in Centering Prayer and offer contemplative prayers of petition (intercession) for self and others. Learning how to pray contemplatively for self and others, flowing out of Centering Prayer, is the key to acting in unity, unlocking new presence, life, and hope in our world of separation, uncertainty, and change.

Building on the 2021 November session, *The Dynamic Center of Being*, this Zoom workshop will include teaching, guided meditations, a period of Centering Prayer, small group discussion, and time for questions. Whether or not you attended that session, join us, bringing your experience, wisdom and curiosity.

This event will be recorded for those who cannot attend the live version.

**On Zoom, February 20, 2022, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM Pacific Time. For more info and registration: <https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/event/david-frenette-workshop-via-zoom/>**

**Lenten Silent Saturday, with the Contemplative Outreach Team.** Organizers: Pippa Currey and Amanda Berg. The season of Lent invites us to deeper prayer and reflection. Join us for a quiet morning of Centering Prayer and silence.

The morning provides time for communal prayer, a contemplative walk, private journaling and reflection, and ends with a period of Lectio Divina. Walk-ins are not accepted at this time. Please be prepared to show proof of Covid vaccination or proof of a negative Covid test. **In person at the Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino, CA, March 5, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM Pacific Time. For more info, email [pbcurraysd@gmail.com](mailto:pbcurraysd@gmail.com). To register online, go to [www.hscenter.com](http://www.hscenter.com) and click on Featured Events – One-Day Retreats.**

**Forgiveness: A Growth in Love, an e-course with Mary Dwyer.** Forgiving is one of the most difficult and complex gestures and, like love, it is one of the things which defines the essence of our humanity. . . Yet, the very fact that we do not forgive, or find forgiveness so difficult, reveals other essential qualities of our humanness -- the acquired programming of the human condition and our free will. We've inherited ways of being and ways of perceiving. And we've been gifted with the ability to choose. In seeking to live a contemplative life in the modern world, we are invited to make intentional, compassionate choices.

During this e-course, formatted to be used during Lent, we will explore a contemplative prayer practice of forgiveness. Twelve emails, delivered on Mondays and Thursdays, will contain and direct you to further retreat content. **March 3 – March 11 through the Spirituality and Practice website. For more info and to register:**

<https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/ecourses/course/custom/62/forgiveness-a-growth-in-love-2022>

**United in Prayer Day, with Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.** This free, globally-hosted 24-hour day of prayer will be accessible via Zoom. In the global unity of silence as God's first language, we will honor Fr. Thomas Keating's birthday (March 7) and the growing presence of Christ among us. Join in silence and community at any time, as many times as you are able. Each hour will begin with at least 20 minutes of Centering Prayer, followed by an offering from the hosting group, which may include a video segment, the practice of Lectio Divina, selected readings, community sharing, chanting, etc. A schedule of each group's offering will be posted soon along with the Zoom link to participate. Visit this page on the Contemplative Outreach website (<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/event/2022-united-in-prayer-day/>) or more information. **On Zoom, Saturday, March 5, all day.**

**A Lenten Journey from Uncertainty to Joy, with Fr. Bill Sheehan.** Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church is delighted to invite you to a half-day Lenten Silent Saturday. The day will include Centering Prayer, times of reflection, and Q & A with Fr. Bill Sheehan. Questions? Contact Jill Yamada at 949-257-6002 or [jyamada@sothumc.org](mailto:jyamada@sothumc.org). **On Zoom, March 12, 9:00—12:30 PM Pacific Time.** A zoom link will be mailed by March 11. To register: <https://sothumc.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/202/responses/new>.

**“Thomas Keating: The Last Thirty Years,” with Cynthia Bourgeault.** For their annual fundraising event, the Center for Contemplative Living in Denver, CO, will host a hybrid presentation to be conducted both in person at the Center and online via Zoom. Cynthia will explore Fr. Thomas’s life as he passed through two significant stages of the journey: The Dark Night of the Spirit and the gradual awakening of the Unitive. **In person and on Zoom, March 26, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM Mountain Time.** For more info and to register: <https://www.centeringprayer.net/CynthiaBourgeault>

**Save the Date for this LOCAL EVENT: Becoming the Whole Self: Beyond the True Self/False Self Dichotomy, with Chris Hagen.** We are made of the biological image of our parents and the spiritual image of God. The whole self is the integration of these two aspects of our self into oneness, where our actions arise simultaneously from both our humanness and our spiritualness. This presentation will explore this gradual integrative process within the context of Fr. Thomas Keating’s wisdom statement: “We are not human beings on a spiritual journey, we are spiritual beings on a human journey.” **On Zoom, April 23, 9:30—11:30 AM.**



*St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, CO*

# Prayer Groups

	Area	Facilitators	Telephone	Location	Day & Time
1	Carlsbad (1)	Rev. Madison Shockley	760-729-6311ext.207	Pilgrim United Church of Christ, 2020 Chestnut Ave. Carlsbad	Wednesdays 6:30-7:30pm
2	Del Mar (1)	Barbara Hamilton	480-236-7319	St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 334 14 <sup>th</sup> St.	Thursdays 4:30-5:45pm
3	Del Mar (2)	Nichola Riggle	858 481-8754 760-448-5224	St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 334 14 <sup>th</sup> St.	Tuesdays 8:55-10:00am
4	Encinitas (1)	Virginia Erickson	760-846-5749	Bethlehem Lutheran, 925 Balour Dr., Encinitas, in the Sanctuary	Mondays 4:30-6:00pm
5	Encinitas (2)	Lynne McKiernan	619-665-6344	San Dieguito United Methodist Church, Encinitas	Mondays 1:30 pm
6	Escondido	Linda Dollins	760-745-5100	First United Methodist Church, 341 S. Kalmia	Mondays 4:30 pm
7	Fallbrook	Barbara Hudson	818-357-4167	(Call for location)	Saturdays 8:30 am
8	Murietta	DeeDee Warden	951-265-8557	42753 Settlers Ridge, Murietta	Wednesday 4:00pm
9	Oceanside (1)	Ed Clifford	760-630-1897	Mission San Luis Rey, McKeon Center, Room 12	Wednesdays 7:00 pm
10	Oceanside (2)	Mary Williams	760-510-9337	St. Thomas More Catholic Church, 1450 S. Melrose Dr.	Tuesdays 1:00 pm
11	Oceanside (3)	Pat Julian and Laura Pasquale	760 757-3659 x123	Mission San Luis Rey, 4050 Mission Ave.	Fridays 1:00 pm
12	Poway (1)	Elena Andrews	619-246-3356	St. Gabriel Catholic Church, 3734 Twin Peaks Rd.	Fridays 9:00-10:30 am
13	Poway (2)	Colleen Clementson & Rebecca Crowley	858-663-6584 858-748-3801 858 748-3542	Community Church of Poway, 13501 Community Rd.	Tuesdays 6:30-8:00pm
14	Poway (3)	Parth Domke	858-829-2664	St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 16375 Pomerado Dr.	Tuesdays 5:00-6:30pm



15	Ramona	Deborah Lewallen & Cindy Dodson	760-519-1811 602-549-9839	St. Mary's in the Valley Episcopal Church, 1010 12th St., Ramona	Mondays 4:30-5:45pm
16	Rancho Bernardo	Barbara Bank & Pat Kilzer	858 395-2654	San Rafael Parish, Center. Rooms A & B	Wednesdays 3:30-5:00pm
17	Solana Beach	Ann Deakers	858-775-1738	St. James Catholic Church, 625 S Nardo Ave, Solana Beach	Tuesdays 9:00-10:30am
18	San Marcos (1)	Karla Halvorson & Sharon Phelps	760 727-1509 760-533-2437	San Marcos Lutheran Church, 3419 Grand Ave., Sanctuary	Not currently meeting
19	San Marcos (2)	Jim Ullman & Marjo Gray	760-598-8943	St. Mark's Catholic Church	Not currently meeting
20	Serra Mesa	Diane Langworthy	619-403-6822	Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community/Gethsemane Lutheran, 2696 Melbourne Dr.	Tuesdays 11:00-12:30pm
21	Temecula (1)	Pam Bowen, Joan Neidig, & Marigold Velasco	909-938-9932 951-676-2928	Home of Joan Neidig, 42149b Camino Romo, Temecula	Thursdays 6:30 pm
22	Temecula (2)	Robin Orner	951-669-3998	Hope Lutheran, 29043 Vallejo Ave. Classroom 6, Temecula	Tuesdays 6:30 pm
23	Vista	Martha Treutle	760-809-2529	United Methodist Church of Vista, 490 S. Melrose Dr. Vista	Mondays 9:30-10:45am

Contemplative Outreach of North San Diego is a non-profit ecumenical spiritual organization. The Newsletter is published online quarterly. The views expressed in the articles by our local contributors are theirs alone and are not intended to indicate endorsement by Contemplative Outreach.

**Website:** [www.consd.org](http://www.consd.org)

**Editor:** Mary Williams ([kirkmary@cox.net](mailto:kirkmary@cox.net)).

**Telephone:** 760-822-3916 (cell and text) for Mary Williams

**Post:** CONSD, c/o Mary Williams, 1241 Granite Rd., San Marcos, CA 92069.

**The Newsletter of CONSD:** The North San Diego Chapter of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.

**Layout and Design:** M. Williams