



CONSD News

The Newsletter of Contemplative
Outreach of North San Diego,
Volume 18, Number 4, November 2023

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A Precious Gift

As a participant of the October 20-22 retreat at Prince of Peace Abbey, I received a precious gift of a community of persons committed to God's presence in their lives, several "sits" of centering prayer, beautiful chants, body sensing exercises, prayers, *Lectio Divina*, a Contemplative Love Feast, the opportunities to attend services in the sanctuary, and a touching closing ceremony. All of this from God using the spirit of Mary Williams, our chapter coordinator.

In this peaceful place on a cool clear Friday, we arrived, registered, and settled into our rooms. After an evening meal and a brief welcoming and instruction meeting, our silence began. We were asked to write out any distractions that would keep us from silence and meditation and enclose that in an envelope to be handed in.

On Saturday, after a hearty breakfast prepared by the monks, we had two periods of Centering Prayer with a meditative walk in-between, then time for reflection the rest of the morning. With two more Centering Prayer sits in the afternoon, we were treated to a "contemplative Love Feast" in the evening as we gathered in our meeting room, now lit with candles.

The "Love Feast" or Agape Meal is a fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples. After scripture reading and chants, we passed around the basket of bread to one another, each person saying, "The Feast of God's Love," and the reply, "Amen."

On Sunday, we met for our last sit, beginning with body sensing exercises (Lord Have Mercy), which made me “go deeper” into meditation.

Our beautiful, deep closing ritual included anointing each person, preceded by the return of our envelopes of distractions with the hope that this lifting of our worries during the retreat restored our strength to handle them as we returned to “reality.”

A beautiful experience that I carried home and into the future. **~Diane Oldfield**

A Brief Immersion in Silence and Community

“We do not know God by thinking, but
by encountering.”

--St. John of the Cross

I arrived early, anxious to prepare and milk every minute of time available for practice and deepening of my experience of Centering Prayer. As I prepared myself for this brief interlude, I

read and drew inspiration from the words of Father Thomas Keating in his recent article in the *Contemplative Outreach Newsletter*. Speaking of a “Second Consent of Centering Prayer” he mentioned “a movement beyond the ordinary realms of thinking and judging, and commenting and reflecting, and if all other thoughts dissolve, there still is the thought that I have no thoughts.” Upon reflection later in the retreat, I was amazed at how we seemed to experience this “movement beyond ordinary realms” for ourselves.

During the early hours of the weekend, I remembered the joy of being on ten-day retreats earlier in my life with Centering Prayer. I anxiously wondered to myself (in my ordinary ego-driven mind), “How will I ever be able to take in and use this precious time? It seems so short.”



In the Retreat Center Lobby at the Abbey

“Will the excessive cycling of my endless ruminations ever break open and lead me to the deep silences I had experienced in previous retreats?” In the words of St John of the Cross, “how will I *encounter* rather than just think about God?” “How will my wooden character be able to dissolve enough so that I can truly hear the promptings of spirit that I know, from experience, can emerge when immersed in deep silence?” Luckily, something was guiding me so that even as I indulged these thoughts about past retreats, I was able to take in welcoming exchanges at dinner and began to soak in the tranquil setting I was entering into with my fellow travelers.

Our first introductory meeting of the community came after dinner and jarred me out of my inner chatter. As the group went around introducing themselves, something unusual and powerful happened to me. When it came to my turn to speak to the group, I began by dutifully describing my history and group connections with Centering Prayer. Then suddenly, I went blank. I was somehow out beyond my rehearsed material! In the words that came out of my mouth, I heard someone talking that was not “me”. I’m not sure what all came through me, but I do remember hearing and feeling heartfelt words which were accompanied by a deep longing—a wish—that said: *“May my life become a prayer.”* I vaguely recognized that somehow my intention for the retreat and my life had just been stated. I remember that I didn’t have any further thoughts about what had just come out of me. I just realized that I felt safe enough in this community to allow an expression of my deepest longing through a brief “encounter” with God.



Retreatants at CONSD's 2023 Fall Retreat, Prince of Peace Abbey

Needless to say, following that encounter, everyone’s presence and every instruction that Mary Williams (our retreat facilitator) went on to suggest had my full attention. I really entered

the retreat. I began to fully appreciate the journeys that others described in coming here and heard the deep compassion that animated their stories as they described the obstacles and challenges they had encountered to come together to be in this community at this point in time.

As the retreat went on, I felt a growing affinity not only to the silence and quiet that was growing in me in small ways, but also to my fellow travelers whose in-person presence was a refreshing change from Zoom experiences. I also appreciated the balance of structured practice time (including opportunities to join with the monks at Mass and Divine Office) with open time for reflection and personal prayer. While these unstructured moments were sometimes challenging when my monkey mind interfered, long walks and Stations of the Cross in the natural beauty of the monastery grounds provided space for solitude and brief encounters with God.

During our time together, Mary's introduction of the "Lord Have Mercy" body sensing practice (described in Cynthia Bourgeault's book *Mystical Courage*) took us beyond our thoughts and into our bodies. In fact, it took us beyond not only our thinking minds, but also beyond relaxation as we usually experience it. It was a gift that we could all take home to deepen our practice.



Perhaps the high point of the communal experience for me was the Saturday evening "Love Feast" which brought us together to celebrate scriptural readings, Taizé chanting, and the breaking of bread together. I left this fellowship meal with warm memories of the sweet taste of the communal bread and deep sharing we offered each other from depths of our own silence. These encounters are just a few of the treasures that I have taken home with me as I have rejoined my daily life again. I have been reminded and inspired to find and express God through encounters in my everyday activities. Each day I recall the "still small voice" who spoke to me and filled my heart as I left the sacred space of Prince of Peace Abbey on Sunday: *"May my life become a prayer."*

~Alan Javurek, Ph.D

Lectio Divina: “Shall We Dance?”

I recently attended a two-session Zoom workshop on Lectio Divina. This was offered by Contemplative Outreach Ltd. and presented by its Lectio Divina Team. I would like to share a little bit about what was said. This article is just an introduction and if you want to learn more, I have provided resources at the end of the article.



Lectio Divina is a way of relating to passages from scripture: from a book, the Bible, that we think is divinely inspired. Through prayerful reading of the scripture, we are forming a relationship to God; this relationship we call prayer.

There are two forms of Lectio Divina, the Monastic and the Scholastic. Since the workshop was about the Monastic method, I will only describe that. The Monastic method can be done in groups or by yourself.

The basic content for the Monastic method is the same for both individuals and groups. I will describe how it is practiced in groups.

Father Keating has called Lectio Divina, as practiced in groups, a kind of shared "Liturgy of the Word" because when we practice Lectio in groups we are following a prescribed method. Father Keating suggests a period of Centering Prayer before initiating a period of Lectio Divina. By offering a prayer, quieting oneself, or practicing Centering Prayer before moving into Lectio Divina, we are preparing ourselves to become vulnerable and open to hearing the word of the scripture.

In Lectio Divina, a scriptural passage is read, not as we ordinarily read aloud, but slowly and with repetitions. After each time it is read, there are two or three minutes of silence. Before a passage is read, group members are asked questions which they apply to themselves inwardly. After a reading, group members might be asked to offer a response to share with the group-- not responding to what others say but only how they are interacting with the scripture.



Each reading and silence is called a “moment,” each one moving us deeper into the relationship, taking us from acquaintance with God to intimacy with God. We hope that through this slow and repetitive reading, silence, reflection and response, our being can become increasingly open and expansive, allowing the words to penetrate our heart. We are

allowing the biblical passage to “find root in ourselves and allow the spirit to work below the level of our consciousness.” Our mind is not in charge, and we are not analyzing what we hear.

The passage is read four times, so there are four moments. Successive moments correspond to a deepening level of how we can read scripture: Literal, Allegorical, Moral, and Contemplatio:

1. The first moment is **Lectio** (literal). We become aware of or are asked to become aware of a phrase or sentence in the passage that resonates with us or which we feel drawn to. The leader may say “While sitting with the passage, you may become aware of a word or phrase that stands out to you.” In this phase you are becoming acquainted with the passage. After this we reflect in silence.
2. The second moment is **Meditatio** (allegorical). Before it is read, the leader may ask, “What word or phrase catches your attention?”. This is where we begin to open ourselves through “symbol, metaphor, or story” to the words we are hearing. This is comparable to the “friendliness” level of relationship. At the end of the reading, we may verbally offer the phrase that stands out to us or we may remain silent.

It is in this second moment that we may begin to bring the phrase or sentence more and more into our being and may begin to realize that the gospel is about me, “that your life is mirrored on its pages,” and that what you have chosen in the passage as standing out is somehow related to your life. We continue to sit with the part of the passage as our intuitive level of understanding is being touched.

3. **Oratio** (Moral) is the third moment as our understanding is moved to the behavioral sense of Scripture. The leader may ask: “How does this word or phrase touch your life?” “How is God inviting you to grow?” With this third reading, we continue to allow the scripture to penetrate us. We continue to



listen to hear how God invites us to live. We can sit in silent reflection or may verbally offer our reflection. A prayer may arise here that we may say aloud or choose not to.

4. **Contemplatio** or fourth reading: (unitive). It is here that conversation moves to communion. We rest in God's presence beyond thoughts and reflections. After this reading we rest in silent reflection.

During the workshop, participants brought up ways that Lectio Divina is practiced in their groups that differed from the form that was presented in the workshop. The team's response was that minor differences were fine. For example, the question "How is God asking you to grow?" may be asked in the fourth moment.

It was stressed that in moving through the four moments we want to be moving deeper and deeper into an understanding of the text. "We are not trying to master or control the material," but rather "we are allowing the text *to master ourselves*."



Some other points:

This is not Bible study nor an analysis between different versions of the Bible.

Each person's relationship with God is unique; there is no right form of relationship, no correct meaning that is found during a Lectio Divina. We reflect on what the passage means and how it is connected to our life and to us as individuals. A certain level of information about the biblical passage is helpful for formation.

The leaders stated that through practice, we realize that Lectio Divina in a way is comparable to a dance. We first learn the steps in sequence but once the steps are learned we can more fluidly move between the steps and intuitively listen to promptings of the Holy Spirit. For example, we can leave a Centering Prayer group where we had just practiced Lectio Divina and we can continue to contemplate a scriptural passage, sometimes on a conscious level, and sometimes it sits below our consciousness. It is here, on our own, that we need not follow the prescribed sequence done in the group setting.

We may not even be aware that we are continuing to contemplate the passage we had listened to in our group. For example, a facilitator told me that one time after leading a Lectio Divina in her group, she did not consciously continue to think about the scriptural passage, but later woke up in the middle of the night and experienced a deeper understanding of the passage and how this passage related to her life.

For over three years, I have been a member of a Centering Prayer group that only practices Lectio Divina. There is no other formation material. Through this practice, I have come to know Christ's message and wisdom on a non-intellectual level. I feel that through this practice I am more and more following the wisdom of Jesus on an ordinary, everyday basis. In an interview about *Encountering the Wisdom Jesus*, Cynthia Bourgeault talks about what she means by "Jesus as a recognition event":

"What I mean by this term is that perhaps the biggest misunderstanding Christianity makes is to approach Jesus with 20/20 hindsight, that since about the fourth century we've approached him by what we believe about him, by creeds that are polished, that are crammed into our heads, and so it gives us the sense that we know the story. But when early people who were attracted by his message first heard him, they didn't have canons, creeds, and proper things, and they had to decide for themselves, by either recognizing something in themselves that corresponded to him, something that they could see as true, or not."

Cynthia's statement resonates with me because through reading Scripture in the manner of Lectio Divina, something from within the presence of Jesus engages my presence.

Thinking of dance and relationship, at the end of the workshop I thought of the movie *The King and I*. I thought of the dance scene where Yul Brenner and Deborah Kerr began to dance together to the song and music of "Shall We Dance." I started humming the song to myself and understood that while they were dancing, they realized they were in love. I was reminded of this movie because it was not unlike my experience of my relationship to Scripture that I have been having through my weekly practice of Lectio Divina.



If you want to learn more:

1. [HERE](#) is the link to a Lectio Divina video playlist available on Contemplative Outreach's YouTube channel. Included are recordings from Thomas Keating, Mary Margaret Funk, Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler, Bruno Barnhart, and Carl Arico.
2. Every week on CONSD's [Be Still and Know](#) resource blog, our coordinator Mary Williams posts a complete Lectio Divina that can be easily used in Centering Prayer groups. The biblical passage used for the Lectio is taken from the Epistle that is read at the upcoming Sunday services in Roman Catholic and Episcopalian churches. These Lectios can be found [HERE](#) at CONSD's volunteer resource blog. (Click on the words in red print to access the particular Lectio). They are also linked to the CONSD website [HERE](#).

~Kathleen Agnew



In Memoriam: Audrey A. Spindler



One of Contemplative Outreach's wonderfully wise servant-leaders, Audrey Spindler, passed away on August 24, 2023. Audrey served both of San Diego's CO chapters (COSD and CONSD) as a retreat leader and as a commissioned presenter of Centering Prayer. She was also a Centering Prayer group facilitator at San Rafael Parish in San Diego and a Benedictine Oblate at St. Andrew's Abbey in Valyermo, CA. She was a delightfully joyful presence, full of love and mirth, and we will dearly miss her!

Audrey (Anderson) Spindler was born November 29, 1940, in Billings, Montana to Presley and Roberta Anderson. Her father was a businessman, and her mother was an English professor. Audrey received a B.S. degree in Home Economics at George Washington University, followed by her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at Colorado State University in Food Science and Nutrition. Later she became a Registered Dietitian and Certified Nutrition Support Dietitian.

In 1976, Audrey worked as an aging services specialist for the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services in Cheyenne, Wyoming. In 1977 Dr. Spindler was appointed as Assistant Professor of food and nutritional sciences in the School of Family Studies & Consumer Sciences at San Diego State University. Over the next 30 years Audrey had a distinguished and productive career at SDSU...

Audrey served in other leadership roles. She was Acting Director of the School of Family Studies & Consumer Sciences in 1985-86. In later years, after the merger with Physical Education and Exercise and Nutritional Sciences (ENS), Audrey took on another important role as Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics. She was an effective advocate for students who were seeking to become registered dietitians. She was an active member of the San Diego District Dietetic Association (SDDA), California Dietetic Association (CDA), and American Dietetic Association (ADA). She was nominated to serve on the ADA panel to develop guidelines for Alzheimer's Disease Screening. In honor of her contributions, she was awarded the Excellence in Education Practice Award by the CDA in 1995...

Audrey was married to Dr. John Spindler, a neurophysiologist, who passed away in 2000. In retirement, Audrey was an active member of San Rafael Church, acted as a Benedictine Oblate, and supported many charities. Her interests included Centering Prayer, leading retreats, studying God, gardening, and reading. Audrey passed away on August 24, 2023, at age 82, surrounded by her loved ones. She is survived by her three living children and six grandchildren.

—Excerpted from the San Diego State University obituary of Audrey

Here are some additional local reflections on Audrey's life and generous service:

"I met Audrey in the early 2000's through COSD. We would connect at events at the Mission de Alcala and in Point Loma -- and at our yearly basket silent auction (a fundraising event). I loved her presence and sense of humor! The first time I saw her she had purple highlights in her hair. Way before it was a trend -- I thought it looked so cool. She talked about her service trips to Africa with students from San Diego State University. She helped Contemplative Outreach in many capacities. She was part of the group who formed CONSD. I know she touched so many people's lives. She lit up a room when she was present! Audrey continues to make me smile as I remember her."

—Colleen Clementson, prayer group facilitator, Community Church of Poway

"Audrey was a loved and valued member of our COSD Intensive Retreat Team each April. She was a fun, warm, loving, genuine, wise, and knowledgeable woman with a wide range of things she knew about—spiritual and otherwise. She contributed widely to various parts of our retreat in a way that no one else could. At our team meeting at the end of a day when Audrey had contributed in her usual deep and yet relatable way, I told her that I could have listened to her all day. Whether with the entire group of retreatants, or our smaller retreat team gatherings (full of wisdom and laughter), she was always able to touch our hearts in such a unique way. She will be sorely missed, especially this coming April when we work to create the 2024 retreat without her." (Continued on next page...)



Audrey Spindler with Mary Williams and Merrilee Melvin

"Our dear Audrey was a very kind soul with a very compassionate listening heart. I will always remember Audrey at our annual COSD retreat and her gentle 'Soul Friending moments.' Audrey will be very much missed. God is good...all the time."

"It is indeed very sad news about Audrey's passing. I always enjoyed talking with her and sharing her wisdom."

"So Sorry to hear of Audrey's passing. At times she was a ball of fire, a deep spirit, and a fun person to be with. We will all miss her. Sending much love and prayers to her."

—Several members of COSD's Intensive Retreat Team

"This blessing excerpt from John O'Donohue reminds me of the joyful and soulful presence of beautiful Audrey that I will so miss..."

*Your love was like the dawn
Brightening over our lives,
Awakening beneath the dark
A further adventure of color.*

*The sound of your voice
Found for us
A new music
That brightened everything.*

*Whatever you enfolded in your gaze
Quickened in the joy of its being.
You placed smiles like flowers
On the altar of the heart.
Your mind always sparkled
With wonder at things.*

"God bless you now and always, dear Audrey <3
Love, light, and more love always."

—Parth Domke, CONSD servant-leader and prayer group facilitator at St. Bart's Episcopal Church

Q and A with Lindsay Boyer

Q: I would like clarification of what appears to be a contradiction in Thomas Keating's teaching. On the one hand, he says that perceptions are thoughts and should be let go of in our Centering Prayer practice. On the other hand, he says, "It's a sense of God's presence, or peace, or there's any number of ways in which this spiritual experience impresses itself upon us." This sounds like we want to experience this as a part of resting in God. Yet, it sounds to me like perceptions. How do I distinguish between these? Or how should I respond in my prayer practice?

In my Centering Prayer, I sometimes "feel" myself being drawn deeper. When I let go of that "feeling", I feel like I go even deeper. On occasion, I can get so still that I feel like my skin becomes hardened and perhaps like my body is full of cement. Am I letting myself go in the right direction? Should I let myself stay in this place or should I keep letting go?

A: Thank you for your question, which gets to the heart of how we work with thoughts in Centering Prayer. You have essentially answered your own question. We are seeking a kind of transparency of our thoughts, or a sense of distance between our thoughts and our self, which is hard to talk about, but that we learn to feel as we go deeper with the prayer. During the prayer we let go of thoughts, perceptions, impressions, experiences, but all those things are still there as we pray. We

experience them and process them even while we let go of them, without paying undue attention to them. We notice the sense of God's presence and are impressed by it and yet at the same time let go of it during our practice.

The body sensations you are experiencing when you are centered in the practice and letting go of thoughts may guide you as you rest in God. The feeling of being immobilized during prayer may help you to rest in God. However, be ready for these body sensations to change and dissipate. They may be a temporary grace, useful guides for right now but not for very long. You can notice how you are feeling without focusing on the feelings, having experiences while continuing to let go of them. Be grateful for any guidance your body offers you about the practice while remaining detached from this bodily guidance.



Lindsay Boyer

Blessings on your deepening practice! It sounds like you are listening intently as your body and the Spirit guide you.

Warm regards,

Lindsay Boyer

Thank You to Our Local Newsletter Contributors . . .



Diane Oldfield has been practicing Centering Prayer for more than 15 years with her prayer group in Escondido. She serves as CONSD's Media Librarian. For many years, as part of the Servant-Leadership Team, she also organized materials and registered people for Introductory Workshops.



Alan Javurek, Ph.D, LMFT is a psychotherapist in "virtual" private practice in Carlsbad, CA. He has been involved with CONSD through workshops, local prayer groups, and retreats since 2018.



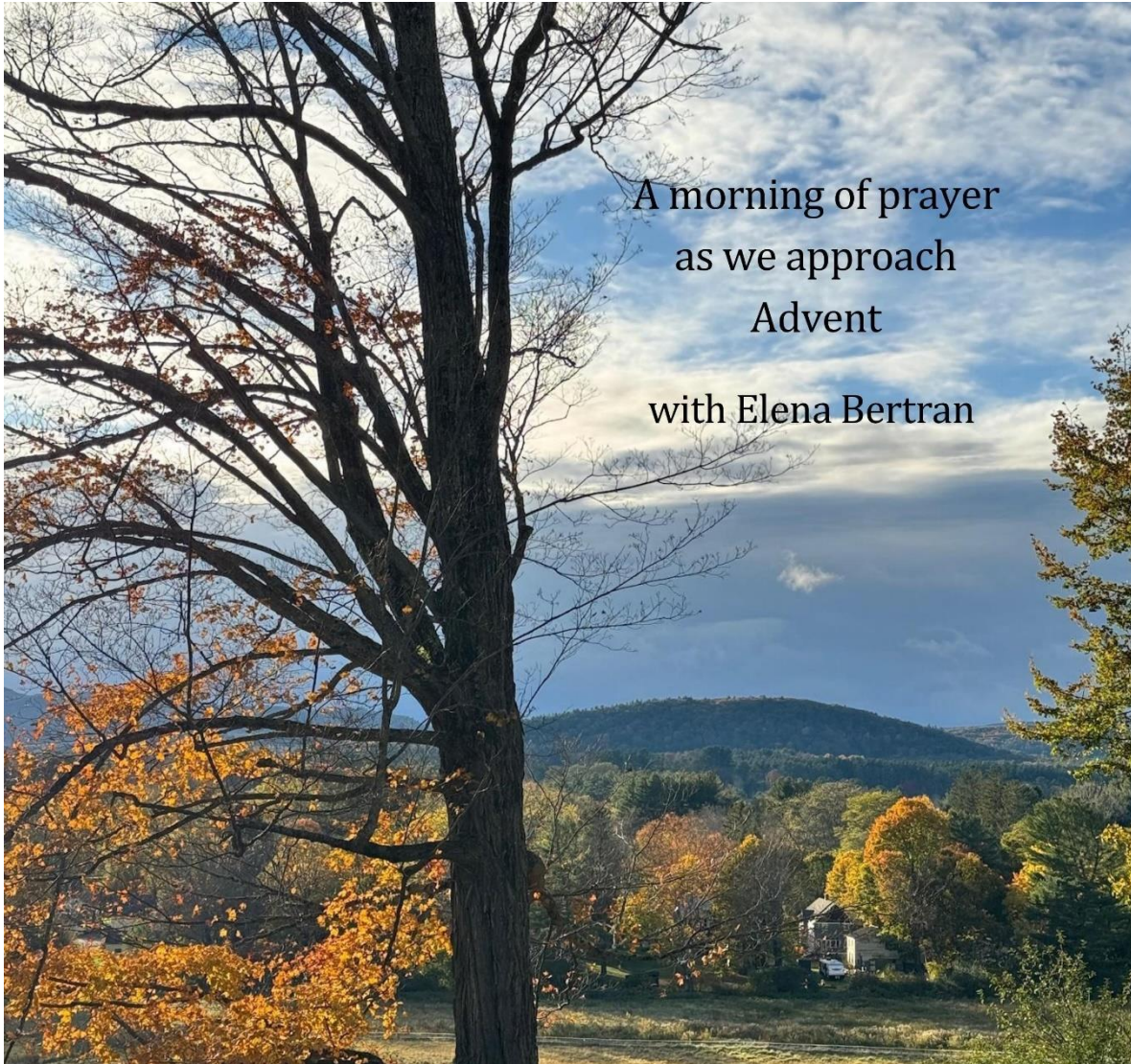
Kathleen Agnew has served as leader of CONSD's Prayer Group Facilitator Support Team and as Centering Prayer group facilitator at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Del Mar. She lives with her husband in Del Mar.

"The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays."

—Soren Kierkegaard

Do you keep a prayer journal? Are you a poet? An artist? Have you recently attended a retreat, conference, or workshop that inspired you to write a reflection? We invite you to share your contemplative creativity in our Newsletter! For more information, please contact Mary Williams at consdinfo@gmail.com.

Contemplative Outreach of North San Diego Offers



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18th

9:30-12:00 on Zoom

We hope you will join us.

To register, please send an email to:
consd.cal@gmail.com

A Zoom link will be sent to you prior to the event.

EVENTS

Each summary below indicates whether the event is online, on-site, or a combo with on-site and online options. Scholarships for these events and retreats are available from CONSD and from Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. To inquire, please email us at consdinfo@gmail.com. **NOTE:** Events are always being added to the Events Calendar at the Contemplative Outreach, Ltd., website. Please click [HERE](#) for up-to-date information.

Meister Eckhart's Insights in the Context of Centering Prayer, with Fr. Justin Lanier. Fr. Lanier will look at Meister Eckhart's teachings on the Divine Nature and Detachment/Releasement, as well as his teaching *In Principio* as helpful guides to Centering Prayer in subtle awareness and intention. Special attention will be paid to unstuckness experienced through the experiences of "Letting Be" and "Be Surrender" encountered in Fr. Justin's practice of Centering Prayer. **This program will be offered both in-person and online via Zoom. Information on how to access the program on Zoom will be sent to participants in advance. Nov. 18, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Eastern Time.** For more info and to register click [HERE](#).

The Web of Life: Retreat for Contemplative Solidarity, with Cynthia Bourgeault, Heather Ruce, and more. How do contemplatives engage the world when forest fires, floods, and political uproar are happening in our own backyards? How do we stand in contemplative wisdom and be present in depth to the beauty and suffering inherent to the web of life on this blue-green planet? We invite you to join The Contemplative Society board for three days as we learn from, and practice with Cynthia Bourgeault (joining online for one session), Heather Ruce (in person), and each other (in person and online). With an intention of stabilizing ourselves in compassion, discernment, forbearance, creativity, and spiritual strength and courage, we'll take a deep dive into contemplative solidarity and imaginal practices, as well as centering prayer, lectio divina, chant, movement, and silence. **On Zoom or in person at Lake Loon Retreat Center, Maple Ridge, BC, Nov 20-23.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).

Universe Story Shapes Spirituality, with Ann Koerner. Today the on-going development of scientific understandings of the origins of the universe are deeply shaping spirituality. The Universe, or New Story, moves us, among other things,

from a fall-redemption spirituality to a creation-centered, evolutionary one; from an adolescent spirituality to an adult one. In this session we will explore the implications of this evolution, and its lessons for our spiritual lives in the 21st century. This workshop includes one session of Centering Prayer. **On Zoom, Nov 30, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM Central Time.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).

Nine-Day Intensive and Post-Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat, sponsored by Contemplative Outreach. This retreat will be facilitated by Susan Turpin, Peter Morgan, and Fr. Bill Sheehan. The retreat begins Wednesday, Nov 29, with registration from 3:00 to 5:00 PM, an opening session at 5:00, and dinner at 6:00. We end on Thursday, Dec. 7, at 11:00 AM (lunch optional). For more info, contact Susan Turpin at 541-324-1207 or slturpin@me.com. **In person at the Mercy Center in Auburn, CA, Nov. 29 to Dec. 7, 2023.** Additional info is available [HERE](#).

****LOCAL EVENT** 30 Minutes of Daily Morning Centering Prayer for Advent, sponsored by Contemplative Outreach of San Diego.** *“The Spirit of the Lord will be poured upon us; then shall the desert soon become such fertile land. Justice shall take root in the thriving wasteland and integrity will flourish in the valleys.” --Isaiah.* Join us as we celebrate the coming of Christ. Advent is the season of light - of waiting, peace, and hope. Our daily format will be 20 minutes of Centering Prayer, a brief reading, and community prayer offerings. COSD dedicates this time of prayer to the Prince of Peace for our suffering world--for peace in the Middle East and Ukraine, and for all countries that find themselves steeped in violence. We pray for calm hearts that we might listen with hope even through the discord and darkness of these present times. **On Zoom, 9:00 to 9:30 AM Pacific Time, Dec. 2 thru Dec. 23.** To receive the Zoom link, please contact Ardy Woodmansee at aew92123@aol.com.

Advent Silent Saturday. As we enter the season of Advent, join us for a quiet morning of Centering Prayer and silence. The day is open to beginners as well as those experienced in contemplative prayer or silent meditation. The day provides time for communal Centering Prayer, a contemplative walk, private journaling and reflection, and ends with a period of Lectio Divina. All are welcome. A brief introduction of Centering Prayer will be offered for those new to the practice. **In person at Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino, CA, Dec. 9, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Pacific Time.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).

Silent Saturday with Sr. Carol Ann Spencer: The End of All That Is not Christ.

Contemplative Outreach of Columbus, OH, is offering a Silent Saturday. A Silent Saturday provides a few hours that are set aside for Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, spiritual teaching and reflection. “Come rest awhile with the Lord” during Advent. Advent begins a new year in the liturgical cycle and we are invited once again to renew our journey by pondering Thomas Merton’s statement: “The Advent Mystery is the beginning of the end of all in us that is not Christ.” Sr. Carol Ann invites us to consider the wonders of the Incarnation. In Jesus, we are told that God and humanity are meant for each other. We are called to become more fully human as Jesus was fully human. **On Zoom, Dec. 9, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM Eastern Time.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).

Finding Fullness Through Simplicity, with Mark Kutolowski. This day is an opportunity to rediscover simplicity of life as a path to finding fullness and contentment in God. Drawing from his long experience living in an off-grid intentional community, Mark will invite us into an audit of three fundamental areas of human life: our relationships with time and activity, possessions and space, and word and technology. In each, we will seek practical ways to empty out, to grow in simplicity, and to make room for God to be born anew in our midst. The program will include a morning and afternoon session of Centering Prayer. **In person and on Zoom, December 9, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Eastern Time.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).

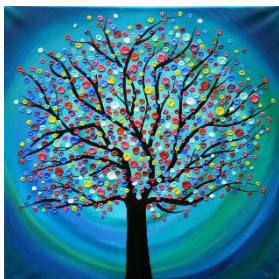
Half-Day Advent Centering Prayer Retreat. This half-day Centering Prayer retreat is offered by the Church of Conscious Harmony. All are welcome and encouraged to join in a half-day retreat immersed in the Advent season. The retreat will be held in the Sanctuary and available online. **On Zoom and in person, Dec. 16, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Central Time, with the Church of Conscious Harmony.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).

Hope for Our World, with Joy Andrews Hayter. Everything in our universe is connected: the mystics throughout the ages have reflected this, and now physicists are beginning to clearly see this beautiful connection among all of us. Our world needs us to remember this at this time, when our planet with all its ecosystems and the very structure of our social systems are in a state of profound flux. Come join us for a weekend of shared contemplative practices, including Centering Prayer, chanting, and sacred movement. When we come from a

grounded place, when we remember the beauty of what we are and the divine indwelling at the heart of us all, we have so much more to offer. This brings us hope: that what we can offer to the world makes a difference. For example when we offer the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, kindness, forgiveness, self-control, and patience, the world is nourished by it. When we offer these fruits together, it's even more powerful. **In person, January 12-14, 2024, at Mercy Center in Burlingame, CA.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).

New Year Silent Saturday. Begin the new year by deepening your relationship with God. Join us for a quiet morning of Centering Prayer and silence. The day provides time for private journaling and reflection, communal Centering Prayer, a contemplative walk, and ends with a period of Lectio Divina. All are welcome. A brief introduction to Centering Prayer will be offered to those new to the practice. **In person at Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino, CA, January 13, 2024, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Pacific Time.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).

An Introduction to a Wisdom Way of Knowing: A Wisdom Practice Series via Zoom. This is a series introducing some key elements of the Christian Wisdom tradition, particularly as synthesized by Cynthia Bourgeault. Wisdom has ancient roots and tends to re-emerge in our awareness in times of great individual and collective transition and turmoil. Wisdom is about seeing through the eyes of wholeness and is anchored beyond the changing circumstances of life. During this Wisdom Practice Series we will introduce teachings and practices that support us in the Wisdom Way of Knowing. These practices will include three-centered awareness, self-observation, Centering Prayer, sacred chanting, body movement, lectio divina, sharing and discussion. These are all in service of consenting to the presence and action of God in our hearts, the organ of spiritual seeing, and in our lives. The more we are able to put these into practice, the better our ability to respond to what is needed in the world. **On Zoom for three Saturdays: Jan 20, Jan. 27, & Feb. 3, 2024, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM Pacific Time.** For more info and to register, click [HERE](#).



*Seasons' Graces and Blessings to you
from CONSD!*

PRAYER GROUPS				
AREA	FACILITATOR(S)	PHONE	LOCATION	DAY & TIME
1. Carlsbad	Rev. Madison Shockley	760-729-6311, ext. 207	Pilgrim United Church of Christ, 2020 Chestnut Ave., Carlsbad CA	Wednesdays 6:30 to 7:30 PM
2. Del Mar (1)	Barbara Hamilton	480-236-7319	St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 334 14th St., Del Mar, CA	Thursdays, 4;30 to 5:45 PM
3. Del Mar (2)	Nichola Riggle	760-448-5224	St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 334 14th St., Del Mar, CA	Tuesdays, 8:55 to 10:00 AM
4. Encinitas (1)	Virginia Erickson	760-846-5749	Bethlehem Lutheran, 925 Balour Dr., Encinitas, in the Sanctuary.	Mondays, 4:30 to 6:00 PM
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, Escondido. Zoom Only	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	Zoom Only	Wednesdays 3:30 PM
9. Oceanside (1)	Ed Clifford	760-681-8198	Call for Location	Wednesdays 7:00 PM
10. Oceanside (2)	Mary Williams	760-822-3916	St. Thomas More Catholic Church, currently on Zoom	Tuesdays, 1:00 Pm

11. Oceanside (3)	Pat Julian & Laura Pasquale	760-757-3659 x123	Mission San Luis Rey via Zoom only	Fridays, 1:00 PM
12. Poway (1)	Colleen Clementson	858-663-6584	Community Church of Poway, 13501 Community Rd.	Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:30 PM
13. Poway (2)	Parth Domke	858-829-2664	St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 16375 Pomerado Rd	Tuesdays 5:00 to 6:30 PM
14. Ramona	Deborah Lewallen & Cindy Dodson	760-519- 1811; 602- 549-9839	St. Mary's in the Valley Episcopal Church, 1010 12th St., Ramona, CA	Mondays, 4:30 to 5:45 PM
15. Rancho Bernardo	Barbara Bank & Pat Kilzer	858-395-2654	San Rafael Parish Center, Rooms A & B	Wednesdays, 3:30 to 5:00 PM
16. Riverside	Amanda Tromblay, MFT	909-260-5634	St. George's Episcopal Church, 950 Spruce St., Riverside, CA 92507 (In Coleman House behind church)	Wednesdays 5:30 to 6:30 PM
17. Serra Mesa	Diane Langworthy	619-403-6822	Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community / Gethsemane Lutheran, 2696 Melbourne Drive, San Diego	Tuesdays 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM
18. Solana Beach	Ann Deakers	858-775-1738	St. James Catholic Church, 625 Nardo Ave., Solana Beach	Tuesdays 9:00 to 10:30 AM
19. Temecula	Pam Bowen	909-938-9932	Zoom Only. Contact facilitator for more information	Thursdays 6:30 PM
20. Vista	Martha Treutle	760-809-2520	United Methodist Church of Vista. Currently meeting via conference call	Saturdays 9:30 to 10:45 AM



Contemplative Outreach of North San Diego is a not-for-profit ecumenical spiritual organization and a regional chapter of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. 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.

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

Layout and Design: M. Williams