

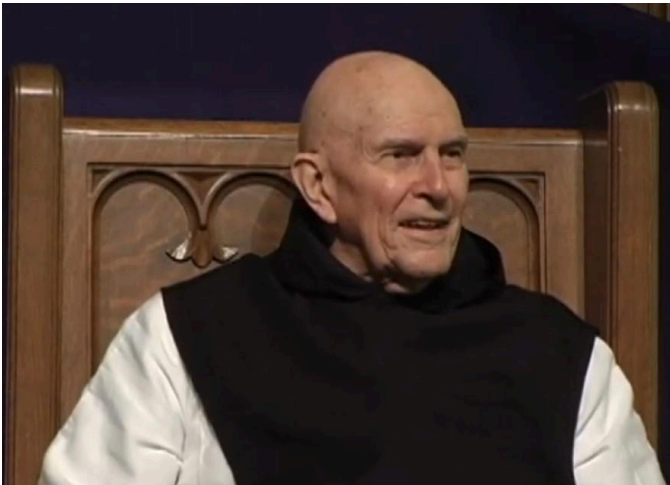


Contemplative Outreach Birmingham

Monthly Newsletter

July 2006

Not So Ordinary Time



As the Church moves into Summer, we are invited into a quieter rhythm of grace. The great celebrations of Easter and Pentecost have passed, yet the work of the Spirit continues in the ordinary moments of daily life.

Father Thomas taught that Ordinary Time is an invitation to experience “time from the perspective of Pentecost”. He viewed it as a period to bring extraordinary, contemplative love into the simplest of daily tasks.

The longer days and fullness of summer remind us that spiritual growth often happens slowly, like seeds pushing silently through warm soil. Prayer during this season becomes less about striving and more about abiding.

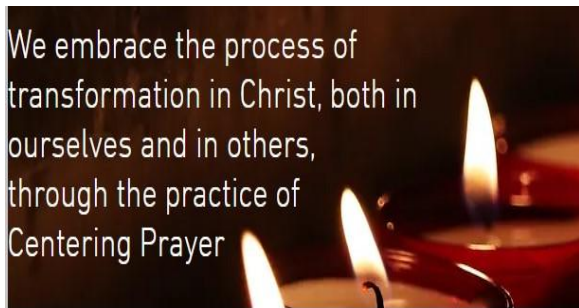
Jesus frequently withdrew to quiet places to pray. In the Gospels, we see Him stepping away from crowds and demands, to rest in communion with the Father. Contemplative prayer follows this same movement inward. We come before God not to perform, explain, or achieve, but simply to be present. In silence, we allow the noise of the world to settle so that the deeper voice of Christ may be heard.

In our hurried culture, contemplative prayer becomes a quiet act of resistance. It teaches us to slow down enough to notice God already present among us: in Scripture, in nature, in Eucharist, in neighbor, and in silence itself. We learn again that God is not far away waiting to be found, but near — closer than our breathing.

This month, consider setting aside a few additional moments each day for silent prayer. Sit comfortably. Breathe slowly. Repeat a simple sacred word such as “Jesus,” “Peace,” or “Abba.” When distractions arise, gently return to stillness without judgment. The goal is not perfect concentration but loving attentiveness.

As summer comes into full swing, may Ordinary Time become extraordinary through the experience of God’s abiding presence. May we grow in patience, simplicity, and quiet joy. And may the Spirit continue forming us into people who carry Christ’s peace into a restless world.

Upcoming Events Local, Regional-South, National



Introductory Workshops for Centering Prayer

Come Join Us for some upcoming Centering Prayer Workshops In Huntsville and Sheffield!!

This is always a time of great discovery for new folks and a welcomed refreshment for old timers.

September 12th, 9am to noon, at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Huntsville, Alabama

September 19th, 9am to noon, at Grace Episcopal Church in Sheffield, Alabama

There is no cost for these workshops. Call the church offices for more information.

Walking Together - Exploring Our Spiritual Journeys with Craig Cecil

Our current meetings are focused around a 12-week course of the book titled ***Perennial Tradition for the Spiritually Independent*** by Rami Shapiro. Discussions from the first three meetings have been very rich and challenging as individuals have discussed their spiritual journeys on the big questions such as: Who Am I? Where am I going? How shall I live? For more information contact Craig Cecil at craig@se-interspiritual.com.

We meet twice a month at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Vestavia (Cahaba Heights), Alabama. Everyone is welcomed! The next meeting will be July 11, 3 pm, at St. Stephens Church.



Hey! It's hot out there!! So let's get up early and get some exercise and quiet time walking the Labyrinth at St. Stephens.

If you would like more information about our labyrinth, call the office at St. Stephens Episcopal Church - (205) 967-8786.





IN VIA LUMEN (In the way of Light)

Is an informational hub and web portal founded by **Mike Smoolca** to support contemplative life and events. Browse this website to find a wealth of information on contemplative experience, centering prayer, welcoming prayer, lectio divina, and much more. Best of all it lists many events available for online participation.

[More Information](#)

Younger Contemplatives Read This!



You are invited to participate in an hour of practice, teaching, fellowship and faith-sharing. The teaching series is the legacy of Fr. Thomas Keating called the Spiritual Journey.

These sessions are open, drop-in session, Zoom meetings, no pre-registration is required. For more information go [here](#).



Closer Than Breath - Online Community **Keith Kristich - Founder** **Contemplative Community, Practice, and** **Education for the Spiritual Seeker**

An Online Contemplative Hub offering programs to deepen your spiritual journey.

Signup for Keith's weekly newsletter.

Details [Here](#)

[About COB/Important Links](#) [Donate Here](#)

*Since the early 1990s, **Contemplative Outreach Birmingham** has been an active chapter of Contemplative Outreach, LTD. We embrace the process of transformation in Christ, both in ourselves and in others through the practice of Centering Prayer. Our mission supports 25 prayer groups in the Central and North Alabama areas. All our work is provided by volunteers who generously donate their time and talents. Your donations in any amount help us to continue this work. Thank you!*

New to Centering Prayer?

[Begin Here.](#)

Need a Centering Prayer Group?

[Find One Here.](#)

Looking for Inspiration?

*The Contemplative Outreach national website is a great source of inspiration including the **Opening Minds, Opening Hearts Podcast** and the **Spiritual Journey Series**. Go to “Programs” at the link below.*

[Find Inspiration Here.](#)