



Contemplative Outreach

2018 Highlights, 2019 Plans

We hold a vision of embodying Divine Love in the world ...

*There are different kinds of spiritual gifts
but the same Spirit;
there are different forms of service, but the same Lord;
there are different workings but the same God
who produces all of them in everyone.
1 Corinthians 12:4-6
Ж*

It is with continuing gratitude that Contemplative Outreach moves into its 35th year and goes forth deeply aware of the grace manifested daily in the thousands of minds and hearts of those touched by Centering Prayer, grateful for graces received and yet to come, for the work ahead, for the worldwide community of practitioners, and for the sustaining support of volunteers and donors whose gracious generosity with their many gifts allows this work to flourish.

Among the highlights are the following ...



Love Matters

Launched on January 9, 2017, *Love Matters* was a new weekly series of one-minute excerpts of spiritual enrichment from the footage of *God is Love: The Heart of All Creation*. A new offering was presented each week and posted to the homepage of the website, as well as to CO's Facebook page. English and Spanish transcripts are also posted. The series continued each week in 2018.

Website

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Contemplative Outreach website. The header features the organization's logo and name, along with links for 'Contact Us', 'Log In/Create Account', 'RSS', 'Cart', and 'My Account'. A navigation menu includes 'Home', 'About Us', 'Programs', 'Community', 'FAQ', 'Resources', 'Calendar', 'Donate', and 'Store'. A search bar is located on the right side of the menu.

On the left side, there is a 'Useful Links' section with a list of links: 'Centering Prayer', 'Lectio Divina', 'Welcoming Prayer', 'Getting Started', 'Resource Guide', 'Retreats', 'E-Bulletin Subscription', and 'User Login'. Below this is a 'User login' section with a message: 'No account? Follow the link in the header to create one.' It includes input fields for 'Username or e-mail' and 'Password', a 'Log in' button, and links for 'Create new account' and 'Request new password'. A quote is displayed: 'We embrace the process of transformation in Christ, both in ourselves and in others, through the practice of Centering Prayer.' Below the quote is a search bar with the text 'enter search text' and a 'Go' button, and a dropdown menu set to '-Any-'.

The main content area features a large banner for '2019 United in Prayer Day', which is the '27th Annual Worldwide Day of Prayer' on 'March 16, 2019'. It encourages participation in three ways: 'A group event; an in-home retreat; and a 24-hour prayer vigil'. A 'Read More' link is provided. Below the banner are three smaller images: 'Journey to Oneness: What is Transforming Union?', 'United in Prayer: Saturday March 16, 2019', and 'Getting Started: LEARN MORE'.

The footer contains the 'The Trust for the Meditation Process' logo and text: 'Made possible by a charitable foundation supporting meditation and contemplative prayer. www.trustformeditation.org'. It also lists the contact information for 'Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.' (1560 Union Valley Rd #909, West Milford, NJ 07480, Tel: 973-838-3384, Fax: 973-492-5795, office@coutreach.org, www.contemplativeoutreach.org). A list of links includes 'Programs', 'Calendar', 'Newsletters', 'Privacy Policy', 'Terms and Conditions', 'Fr. Thomas Keating', and 'About Contemplative Outreach'. A quote is at the bottom: '"Be still, and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10'.

Current Homepage

2018, as planned, was a year of stabilization and work on updating the image and look and feel of the website.

CO now has an integrated website and “constituent” database (D7 and CiviCRM) that work well, are integrated, and require no monthly licensing fees. Technology support is cost-effective and requires no in-house technical staff; only a program manager and database coordinator who manage these responsibilities as a sub-set of many other responsibilities.

Starting in July 2018, a design team worked in collaboration with a review team to update the CO logo, color palette and imagery along with the website template. The design work was completed in December 2018 and is now being implemented with expected completion in May/June 2019 (see below).

Website statistics ...


	2018	2017	Change
Sessions	303,597	266,156	+14.1%
Users	169,812	152,257	+11.5%
Mobile sessions	121,115 (39.9% of sessions)	99,663 (37.5% of sessions)	+21.5%
Online contributions	\$47,629	\$27,660	+72.2%

Top visiting countries in order of visits are: US, Canada, UK, Australia, India, Ireland, South Africa, Philippines, New Zealand, Brazil. Total visits represent 207 countries (75% from the US).

In 2019, priorities include:


- implementing new design of the website
- a website template for international chapters
- a new community forum to better enable CO to host its own online offerings
- a new podcast series with four interviews on various topics as to how Centering Prayer is being integrated into various environments, such as trauma, medical, etc. Exploring website and mobile delivery mechanisms.
- Hiring additional part-time communications coordinator to assist with podcasts, online store improvements and to investigate e-commerce automation features available through Mailchimp (the online technology used to send mass emails)

New Website Design



Contemplative
Outreach

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We embrace the process of transformation to Christ,
both in ourselves and in others,
through the practice of Centering Prayer.

[CENTERING PRAYER](#)

*Experience God's presence within. It's closer than breathing,
closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself.*

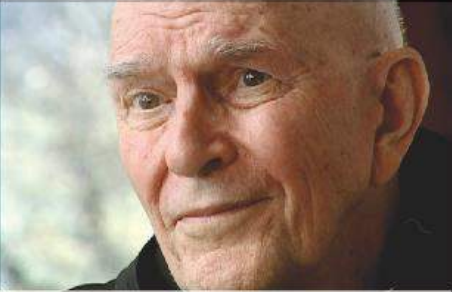
[HOW TO BEGIN](#)




FATHER THOMAS

Fr. Thomas Keating is a founding member and the spiritual guide of Contemplative Outreach. He is one of the principal architects and teachers of the Christian contemplative prayer movement.

[LEARN MORE](#) | [SEE VIDEOS](#)




FEATURED PRODUCTS



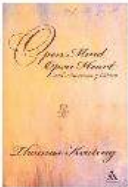
The Secret Embrace
THOMAS KEATING

\$25



That We May Be One
THOMAS KEATING


\$25



Open Mind, Open Heart
THOMAS KEATING

\$25

[ALL PRODUCTS](#)



Special Event

The World Community and Contemplative Outreach invite their members around the world to join this special online session to pray for Fr. Thomas Keating in our spirit of friendship.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Mobile App



Mobile App Statistics for 2018

	new devices in 2018 (downloads)	avg daily active devices	avg active users/week	avg active users/month	total sessions in 2018
CP iOS	40,237	3,377	8,908	16,401	1,831,274
CP Android	16,362	1,409	3,737	6,904	998,471
Total	56,599	4,786	12,645	23,305	2,829,745
% inc/dec over 2017	+9%	+27%	+28%	+27%	+25%

The Centering Prayer mobile app for iPhones and iPads is now almost five years old. Among other things, the app functions as a prayer timer to support a Centering Prayer practice. In 2015, upgrades were made, including adding new prayers, new backgrounds, a Spanish-language version and the ability to purchase Contemplative Life Program (CLP) PDF booklets via in-app purchase. The CLP helps establish and support a contemplative life of practice and devotion. CO started to see some small income from the CLP purchases beginning in September 2015, which has increased slowly over time (\$930 in 2018).

The Android version was introduced to Google Play and Amazon in February 2015. In 2016, a Spanish-language option was added to the platform, as well as prayers and backgrounds to make it commensurate with the iOS app platform.

App downloads and usage is still strong, increasing each year. The app continues to reach a younger audience than is traditionally attracted to and served by Contemplative Outreach. In 2018, about 17.5% of new devices (downloaded the app and opened it up) were from 25-34 year old persons and about 44% of new devices are from 35-54 year old persons. About 37% of new downloads are from those 55+ years old, usually CO's largest audience segment by far. (Note: not all new devices allow for age determination; age statistics relate to about half of all new devices tracked).

2018 focused on fixing issues associated with device software upgrades, optimizing performance and ongoing maintenance.

Facebook, Twitter and YouTube

The hiring of a part-time communications coordinator to assist with ongoing communications (ebulletin and newsletter) and social media has injected new life into the CO social media presence, including the addition of an Instagram account. Posting is now done regularly several times each week and, in some cases, daily. The Facebook presence continues to grow rapidly, now with over 9,900 global members, with dozens of new members added each week. The Centering Prayer Twitter feed reaches over 8,400 followers. Instagram has 165 followers. CO YouTube channel subscribers have roughly doubled year over year due to increased video content and probably the death of Fr. Thomas – 5,797 subscribers, 479,521 views in 2018.

Digital video

The digital video infrastructure is continuing to be maximized. In 2018, CO continued adding to the library of digital video (downloadable and streaming) and audio recordings. This is especially useful for those who wish to view videos without an internet connection, for group presentations, and for international practitioners who currently have to pay exorbitant shipping costs for hard-copy materials.

Online Courses

In 2018:



Last year was the fifth year CO has hosted a yearlong program of online courses in partnership with Spirituality & Practice (S&P) and 2018 was the biggest endeavor yet.

For a number of years there had been discussion in the CO community about creating a curriculum to lay a foundation of teaching, formation and community support for first understanding, and then living, the Christian contemplative life. An idea emerged from Fr. Thomas Keating, who in January 2017 stated that he felt his legacy was the *Spiritual Journey* videos. He went on to express his desire that their viewing and study be stressed as foundational to understanding the journey and that it should be experienced by all who aim to take this journey.

From this conversation with Fr. Thomas came the idea to offer a yearlong, in-depth, online program with the *Spiritual Journey* series as the foundation. This yearlong program was offered throughout 2018.

Based on Thomas Keating's classic *Spiritual Journey* video series, this program is an integrated wisdom map of the psycho-spiritual aspects of the transformative awakening and healing that can happen to Christian seekers committed to the contemplative path of consent.

A team of five people worked together to create and host this yearlong program for 463 participants. The program included 102 email messages, 58 video and one audio segment, transcripts of each, and two live teleconferences.

In 2019, this program is being re-run with S&P and has 192 participants. It is also being replicated for the members of two local contemplative communities in the U.S. And during 2019, the online series will be published in a packaged offering of DVDs and a guidebook.

In 2019:

In addition to the re-run of the yearlong *Spiritual Journey* series, other online courses are being offered:



In 2018, *The Word of The Word*, which had been a part of the annual series, became a standalone offering to encourage practice and formation with a liturgical connection within a worldwide community. It was offered in collaboration with S&P and attracted 145 participants. This year it is being hosted completely within CO for the first time with its own weekly Zoom prayer group and online forum. As an experiment, it is being offered on a donation-only basis. There are 1,112 subscribers (the largest number of participants in any CO program ever) who have contributed over \$6,600.



Centering Prayer as Practice, Process and Way of Life

Finally, a three-part online series on Centering Prayer, each six weeks in duration, is being offered through S&P. Part I will be offered March 11-April 18. Part 2 in the summer and Part 3 in the fall. Each of the courses will include a Zoom-enabled prayer chapel to practice Centering Prayer together.

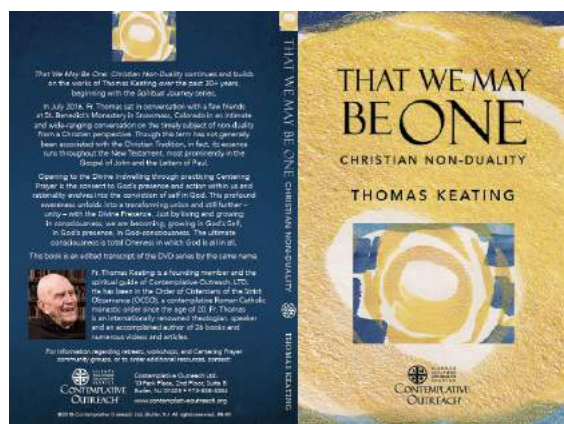
Since 2008, over 19,000 people have participated in the online courses.

The Prayer Chapel

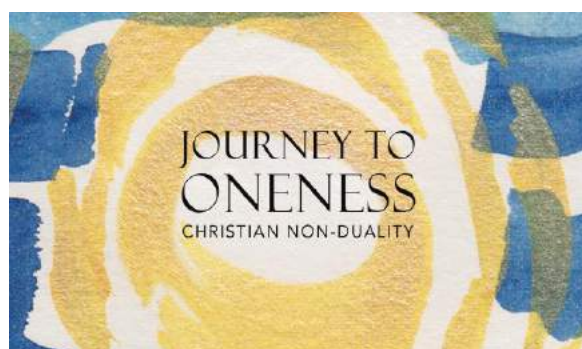
In March 2018, Contemplative Outreach began an experimental partnership with The Meditation Chapel, an online, Zoom-enabled prayer chapel originally created by members of the WCCM community and now operating and managed independently with its own steering committee with a CO staff member in a leadership role. A pilot training program of 15 prayer group facilitators was engaged in May 2018, which also included Spanish and French-speaking representatives. CO now has 14 weekly Centering Prayer groups on the Thomas Keating Chapel (formerly Peace Chapel), including groups in Spanish, French, Portuguese and the 12-step tradition.

The chapel has influenced a new movement of offering online prayer groups, as other prayer groups also meet on CO-specific Zoom accounts. In addition, the Zoom video platform is changing how the organization works, as most staff, Governing Board and Service Teams are now collaborating in this way. New ideas for offering programs are being considered because of the affordability and global-reach of the platform.

New Offerings

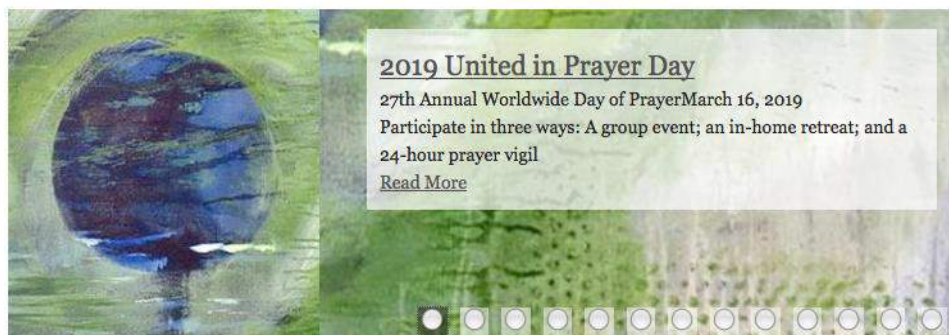


That We May Be One continues and builds on the works of Thomas Keating over the past 30+ years. In July 2016 Fr. Thomas sat in conversation with a few friends at St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado in an intimate and wide-ranging conversation on a timely subject of non-duality from a Christian perspective. The DVD series of this conversation was published in the Fall 2017; the companion book, an edited transcript was published in mid-2018.



Launched on January 7, 2019, *Journey to Oneness* is a new weekly series of two-three-minute excerpts of spiritual enrichment from the footage of *That We May Be One: Christian Non-Duality*. A new offering will be presented each week and posted to the homepage of the website, as well as to CO's Facebook page. English and Spanish transcripts are also posted. The series replaces *Love Matters* which was offered during 2017-2018.

United in Prayer Day



Contemplative Outreach annually organizes a United in Prayer Day in March, where local prayer groups and chapters gather together all over the world to unite in silent prayer and celebrate the contemplative dimension of life. 2019 will be the 27th year of this event and it is devoted to celebrating the life of Thomas Keating and the gifts of Centering Prayer. For six years, CO has offered a virtual retreat for those who do not have local retreats or cannot attend one. The virtual retreat includes a suggested schedule and a choice of digital offerings for spiritual enrichment. Three years ago, a 24-hour prayer vigil capacity was added to the website in both English and Spanish, which features a sign-up in the person's local time zone for ease of planning. Anyone with any silent prayer practice is welcome to sign-up for 30-minute segments, either as an individual or in groups. Confirmation and reminder emails are sent to participants.

Newsletters and Monthly E-News Bulletins

Two semi-annual published newsletters were printed and mailed in the U.S. to 20,000 for each edition and 12 monthly e-news bulletins were developed and distributed globally in 2018. Website traffic always spikes (doubles, even quadruples) in the days following each e-news bulletin. Each e-bulletin also stimulates orders in the online store.

Nov/Dec 2008 e-bulletins

Number Sent 9,662

December 2018 e-bulletins

Numbers sent: 28,351

A new initiative launched in 2018 was a quarterly newsletter, *The Voice*, sent to 1,300 volunteers to keep them abreast of important resources and events specifically geared to servant leaders.

Free videos on YouTube

Many talks given by Fr. Thomas Keating and others have been made available for free on YouTube in order to promulgate the contemplative message of oneness, compassion and hope. This began in 2016 and will continue in 2019. The entire original *Spiritual Journey* series is now available for free on YouTube.

And, some of the volunteer and prayer group numbers ...

- ❖ Over 1,500 volunteers worldwide
- ❖ Almost 300 Coordinators and Contact persons in 90 chapters in 47 states in the U. S. and Canada
- ❖ Over 100 International Liaisons

Special Happenings

- 1) An International Conference will again be held in Denver, September 19-22, 2019, bringing together servant leaders from around the world.
- 2) The thirteenth annual gathering of the Circle of Friends was held at St. Benedict's Monastery, July 19-23. This year's gathering will be held July 17-21.
- 3) Pat Johnson retired as Interim-Administrator and Denis Sheehan was hired as permanent Administrator. Isabelle Robinson was hired as part-time communications coordinator to assist with the publishing of the semi-annual newsletter and monthly e-bulletins, and social media presence. As of January 1, Kathleen Gilgannon was hired as bookkeeper.
- 4) A second part-time communications coordinator is planned to assist with podcast start-up, optimize the bookstore, investigate e-commerce automation features and assist with other special projects.

In gratitude ...

Over 1,500 donors generously donated to support the movement of Centering Prayer and the furtherance of the Christian contemplative life around the world through CO. Due to the generosity of donors, 240 scholarships for online offerings, retreats, and chapter-related events were awarded.

Financial Highlights

Income



-**Contributions/Grants:** Circle of Friends, DMAs, monthly donations, newsletter donations, tithes, designated income, restricted gifts, other donations.

-**Chapters:** Chapters, UiP

-**Programs:** Online courses, international [In 2017, this included the International Conf. and two sponsored retreats, totaling \$124,826 in income before expenses].

-**Books/Other Products:** Books & Other Products, CLP, St. Anthony royalties, Sounds True royalties, other TK book royalties

-**Investments:** Dividends, interest and unrealized gains on Christian Brothers and Fidelity investments

Expenses



-**Chapters:** Chapters, UiP

-**Programs:** International, online courses, newsletter, special projects

-**Books/Other Products:** Books and other products, CLP

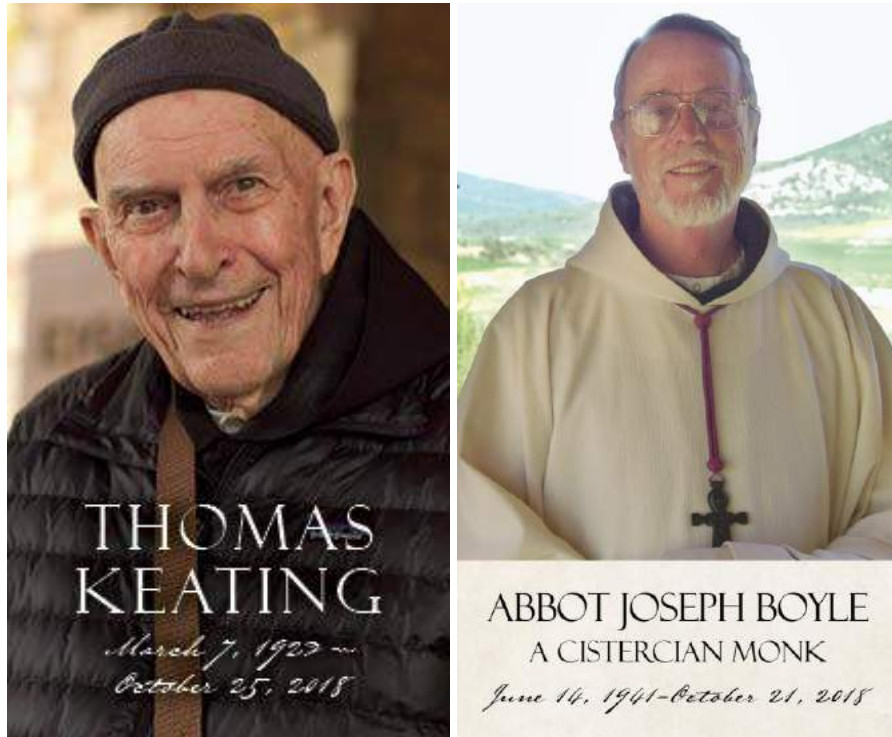
-**Website & New Media:** Website, mobile app

-**Fundraising:** Circle of Friends, DMAs, monthly donations, other fundraising

-**Scholarships:** Matching scholarships and free videos posted on YouTube

-**G&A:** General & Administrative, Governing Board, Gift Committee, Transitions

Finally, a worldwide community brought together in love and sorrow, in life and death ...



We celebrate the lives of these two men who gave so much to the world: one by his presence, his teaching, his wisdom and love; the other by his wisdom and love and by serving as the long-time abbot of St. Benedict's Monastery, the spiritual home of Contemplative Outreach.

A memorial video, a 24-hour prayer vigil, and a forum for people to share their stories and memories were created to honor Fr. Thomas. Over 30,000 people have viewed the memorial video which is posted to YouTube.

We close with the exhortation that Fr. Thomas gave eight years ago on the occasion of a meeting of the CO board held at St. Benedict's Monastery. Its poetic truth remains with us today:

The essential thing that we are called to contribute is to serve the coming into humanity in our time
of a deeper awareness of the love of God ...

- ❖ To see Christ as present in everything and everyone.
- ❖ To create a context in which the transformation of humanity can take place.
- ❖ To make the practice of Centering Prayer and its conceptual background as widely available as possible.

- ❖ To heed the call to be transformed and then to rely on God to enable us to pass on the mercy, forgiveness, compassion and love to all humanity that we have received.
- ❖ To acknowledge that good accomplished is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Y

Because God is important,
everything is important
Thomas Keating, *The Secret Embrace*

We are very blessed and grateful.

