



Dear Centering Prayer Community of Arizona,

We welcome the slow and certain return of spring with its ardent investment in new life. Trees, flowers and bushes are mustering their stored energy reserves to burst into flower soon. Birds are pairing up, or trying their best to find a mate. We too respond to more sunlight and the reassurance that nature still reflects the glory of God, and that all of it – including us – is Good.

Many of us are eagerly returning to in-person connections. The Chapter Service Team presented its first live Introductory Workshop to Centering Prayer in three years on Saturday, January 28, at Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Sun City West. We were invited by the established prayer group there, led by Steven Gill, to refresh the members and attract some new ones. Thirty-six people attended!

We held the annual Post Intensive eight day retreat at Santa Rita Abbey in February with 7 retreatants and three facilitators (and marvelous cooks!) We were the first visitors to return to the abbey in three years, and the delight was palpable.

St. Barnabas on the Desert Episcopal Church in Scottsdale is bringing back Dr. James Finley on Saturday, March 18, 2023. He will be live-streaming in the sanctuary from his home in California, but requests that the audience be present and in-person. We all

need to meet and see each other again after this long drought!

On March 3rd and 4th, the international headquarters of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. will host the United in Prayer Day. This is a globally-hosted 24 hour day of prayer accessible via zoom. Each hour, often in a different country, will feature 20 minutes of Centering Prayer and a special program. You will find more in the newsletter about this exciting event.

Our Fall Speaker Series this year will bring back Fr. John Auther S.J. on the subject of “Christian Mindfulness – Meditation Lived Daily.” Again, this event will be live and in-person at Shepherd of the Hills UCC on Saturday, October 14, 2023. We hope to see many of you there.

We would be thrilled to schedule an introductory workshop to Centering Prayer or the Welcoming Prayer in your worship setting. It seems people are eager for Christian practices that bring new meaning to our faith. Just email or call one of the contacts in the newsletter for more information.

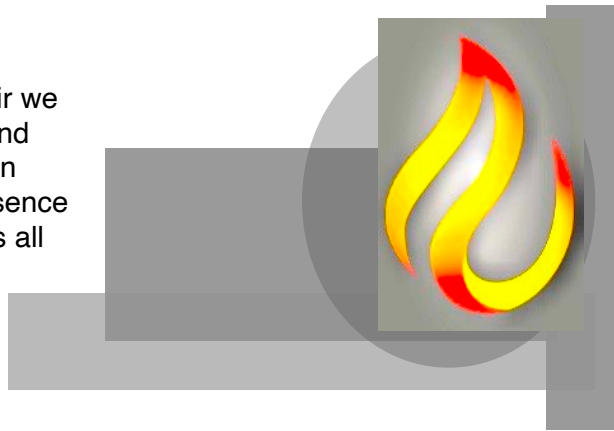
In the meantime, we send this newsletter, full of tender reminiscences and invitations, with our encircling love.

In Silence, Solitude, and Service.

Your Chapter Service Team

We rarely think of the air we breathe, yet it is in us and around us all the time. In similar fashion, the presence of God penetrates us, is all around us, is always embracing us.

Thomas Keating



James Finley Returns to the Valley

Live-Streaming at Saint Barnabas on the Desert

Saturday, March 18, 2023
9:30am to 1:00pm

The Contemplative Life Ministry Team at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, Scottsdale, AZ, is once again honored to present James Finley, Ph.D. offering a half day, virtual retreat entitled,

“Learning From Jesus How To Be a Healing Presence in an All Too Often Traumatized and Traumatic World.”

Finley speaks the truth of things in our lives that bring us peace and things that cause misery and ways to be present to them with both humor and reverence. He touches our hearts in ponderable ways to deepen our relationships with God, ourselves and others.

Registration is open from January 1, 2023 through March 18, 2023. The cost is \$45.00 for this event. Registration can be made at saintbarnabas.org/finley

Special Note: This event is not on Zoom. Dr. Finley has requested that those attending be present in the Sanctuary to experience the enrichment of community.

Questions regarding this event can be directed to Patrick Waugh at 602.989.1048 or patwaugh@cox.net

Event Calendar

In-Person at Shepherd of the Hills UCC

5524 E. Lafayette Boulevard, Phoenix, AZ
85018

Learn an 11th Step Practice of Meditation: Introduction to Centering Prayer for the 12 Step Community

Saturday, May 13, 2023
9 am to 12:30 pm

We will explore:

- How the practice leads to a deepening relationship with a Higher Power
- The four guidelines of the practice
- Detaching from our thoughts
- Fruits of the practice.

Welcoming Prayer -- Consent on the Go

Saturday, May 20, 2023
9 am to 12:30 pm

In this practice we will explore:

- How Welcoming Prayer extends Centering Prayer
- How to recognize when we are stuck in the “human condition.”
- What wisdom does the body have to offer?
- Moving through emotions, not around them.

Suggested donation of \$20 for each workshop.

For more information go to <https://www.contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org>

“The Garden of Love”

“Those who put their trust in You
are like giant trees
standing firm and rooted deep.
As the trees grow strong in fertile soil,
so we mature in the garden of Love,
nourished by the Word of Life.”

Psalm 25 **Psalms for Praying**



Reflections on a Post-Intensive Retreat

By Kathy Kramer-Howe

During the week of February 3 -11, 2023, the Trappist sisters of Santa Rita Abbey welcomed the return of Centering Prayer retreatants, after three years of COVID caution. I couldn't say whose delight was greater, those of us on retreat or the sisters. Although secluded from us, they prayed for us every day, and from the chapel guest wing, we participated in their divine office of Lauds, Vespers, Compline and Holy Communion. On our last morning, we gathered at the opening to their chapel and raised hands towards them in a blessing, led by Fr. Tom, one of the retreatants.

The psalm excerpt above was read this morning during a weekly Centering Prayer group at St. Theresa Catholic Church (that has been going on for thirty years). It struck me that the retreat opportunity for community extended silence was truly like a garden of Love. Just as trees in a forest sense each other through their wide-ranging root system, sharing nourishment with the stressed, sick and young, the Grand Silence we shared

sitting in chapel or at the dining table fed each of us in profound ways. The free-flow of the Holy Spirit is infinitely sensitive and healing, giving our whole beings exactly what is needed to grow in our journey with God.

I reflected that the world-wide community of contemplative practitioners is like a great forest root-system, taking in nourishment from our times of listening to the Holy Spirit. In turn, we nourish the world without even knowing it. We could be sustaining a wounded and stressed world of people, ecosystems and living things by the very nature of God's presence in the depths of our beings.

Going on retreat strengthens our own roots so we can nourish our world. I encourage you to experience a retreat as often as you can. They are truly transformative. Deep thanks to the trio of amazing women who served our retreat, and to the sisters of Santa Rita for sustaining a place of sacred sanctuary.

AZ Contacts

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PEACE ABIDE
Mary Kathleen “Kate” Brophy
June 21, 1933-January 13, 2023

by Mary Leonard

Contemplative Outreach of Phoenix remembers with gratitude and love one of the pioneer members of the Community, Kate Brophy. From the early 1990's until this past year, Kate's vibrant presence was among us. Remarkably, throughout the last third of her life, Kate was dedicating her days to living and sharing Contemplative Prayer.

It was a good fit. Contemplative Outreach arrived in Phoenix at the same time Kate had established a small women's contemplative prayer group. There was a deep yearning for quiet prayer. She had done the reading. The book shelves were bulging with the great Contemplatives from the Desert Mothers and Fathers, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, Julian of Norwich, Meister Eckart, Therese of Lisieux to some of the 20th Century giants: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Merton, Henri Nouwen, Kathleen Norris, Richard Rohr and Eckart Tolle. Some women of inspiration in her life were: Dorothy Day, (whom she had met when Dorothy stayed at the Brophy home in Phoenix), and writers Flannery O'Connor and Caryl Chessell. When Thomas Keating came to Phoenix, Kate was ready to join.

Being a woman of strong belief in service, Kate joined what was known at the time as “The Core Group.”

It was a small group, maybe seven to nine members. We met at a home; prayed together; shared a potluck and started establishing ways to share Centering Prayer in the Valley. At Introductory Centering Prayer Workshops, Kate would be present setting up the book table and offering hospitality throughout the day. Many years later Kate would still be found greeting people at CO's United in Prayer Day and at an annual prayer day in the Valley when a guest lecturer was presiding.

During summers, as a young person, Kate could be found riding with cowboys herding the cattle on the family ranch in southern AZ. Her mother had introduced her to the Cistercian (Trappistine) Sisters at

Santa Rita Abbey in Sonoita, a beautiful spot with a panoramic view of mountains and the desert extending into Mexico. In turn, Kate introduced Contemplative Outreach to the sisters. It was Kate's dream that we have Intensive Retreats at the Abbey. And it came to be. For several years Kate was part of the staff, cooking and leading Centering Prayer periods. She cooked with imagination and a certain zest. If food supplies ran thin, she knew exactly how to concoct a secret recipe. All would marvel.

Retreatants would ask for the recipe. The cooks would reply, “Ask Kate!”

When the 12 Step Community was developing a connection with Centering Prayer, Kate was instrumental in supporting a group as they worked their way through the Keating Spiritual Journey Videos. From that group, the 12 Step Program has become one of the strongest in the nation. Kate was one of the 12 Step members from Phoenix who spent time with Fr. Thomas in Snowmass dialoguing about ways the 12 Step Community could establish their own method of presenting Centering Prayer. And that, too, came to pass.

Kate was a presence, there is no doubt about that. She wanted to know who you are and what was going on in your life! In a small weekly group at Saint Theresa's she will be dearly missed for her challenging intellect and persistent probing for the essence of a thought, a question or a prayer. Kate was a woman of impassioned opinions and deep feelings. A sense of Justice directed her ways, even when it might make others uncomfortable. Along with this, non-violence was of vital importance to her. Kate could speak her truth. Life was never dull when Kate was there! At the same time, Kate was taking thoughtful notice of someone's struggles or absence. Often a phone call would follow. Or Kate would make an unannounced follow up visit with some good homemade food, financial assistance or good cheer. Dorothy Day had left a deep imprint!

Kate lived life to the fullest. She loved the outdoors and the Arizona beauty. No one was happier in the desert than Kate Brophy leading a hike. She knew hiking throughout the state - in southern AZ around the ranch or down along the border near Sasabe or walking along the San Pedro River; closer to Phoenix she hiked almost daily in the area around Piestewa Peak or in the McDowell Mountain Regional Park; up North she was familiar with hikes near Flagstaff, Oak Creek Canyon and on the Navajo Reservation. She knew the local history, the flora and the fauna. She would watch the cloud formations and know if a hike needed to end early to be safe from a thunderous storm. Always there was time set aside for Centering Prayer. And most likely, the spot was beautiful, near water and shade if possible, and offering a lovely view across vast valleys.

Kate loved the land. In her later years she often spoke in a language of lament as she witnessed the terrible years of drought. From her vantage point of age she knew and had experienced a pristine Arizona landscape giving way to an expansive development of cities and suburbs. She worried about water.

Kate delighted in the arts. She lived the arts as an actor, play director, literature teacher (Phoenix College) and as a storyteller. Her verbal skills and Irish humor were delights that will be missed. She enjoyed reading novels, plays and poetry; she wrote plays and poetry as well. In the last decade she was busy writing an extended Brophy family history. Music, too, warmed Kate's heart. She was a dedicated Symphony attendee. At home, if the right moment came along, one could be treated to Kate Brophy on the piano. A fine pianist!

Although a confirmed extrovert, Kate chose a quiet setting for her service in the last years of her life. She trained as a visitor to be with people at a Hospice of the Valley home. She seemed to take to the setting of learning about, and listening to, the other in a new way. Without a doubt Kate loved engaging with another. She was good at that all her life. But in the hospice setting, she was ready to listen. It seemed her love of being with people, generously serving the other, and her love of quiet prayer, merged into a contentment, a contentment she had longed for over the decades.

Kate's passing marks the end of her generation, eight Brophy siblings. Her Irish grandfather arrived in Arizona in the early 1880's as a young man. Since then the Brophy family has enriched the Phoenix Valley in countless and significant ways. And it is still going on!

At the end of a letter or note from Kate, she often closed with the comforting words:

Peace Abide-

Now, that the closing of Kate's life on this earth has come,

Peace does abide,

For dear Kate abides in Peace.

Walking the Pathway of Love

by Becky Weinberg and Sherry McCarville

Our Centering Prayer group, which began several years ago at St. Bridget's in Mesa, has been on Zoom for the past four years. Once COVID became part of our lives and Zoom soon followed, it was an easy decision to embrace our members through technology. During these past few years we lovingly began a new journey by surrounding two sisters who moved home to Michigan...one who was very ill, and one who was going through the process of letting go.

As time went on, our Centering Prayer group heard the still small voice of God asking each of us to lovingly hold each sister in our hearts. As one was caregiving and grieving while embracing her sister, the other was creating a space to draw each one of us into her journey to the Beloved. Even when she was in a nursing home, she joined us every week for

prayer. Although she was no longer able to speak, her smiling face every week was a reminder of the 'letting go' we are each called to.

The week before she passed she told us, "I am ok with listening, sometimes we don't do enough of it but now I have no choice. God sure has his way of doing things." Sadly, in January her earthly life ended.

Through our shared Centering Prayer, each sister nourished us and we transformed into a community of communion with each other. And as we suffered our loss, we too were embraced by God as we began our movement towards wholeness.

In processing her loss, our dear sister who remains with us reflected, " She always just showed up, no matter what...and isn't that what the prayer is all about?"



The modern world lies under a pervasive sense of anguish, of being abandoned, or at least experiencing God as absent. Yet events that seem to turn our lives upside down and inside out are part of God's redemptive plan, not only for us, but for the world in which we live. God may be preparing a great awakening for the world, if God can find enough people to cooperate in this mysterious plan.

Thomas Keating

In-Person Fall Enrichment Day With Fr John Auther S.J. Christian Mindfulness - Meditation Lived Daily

Fr. John is a member of the pastoral staff of the Jesuit Retreat Center of Los Altos. A priest for over 30 years, Fr. John has worked as a high school campus minister, an associate pastor and pastor. In his pastoral ministry he has devoted a good deal of time to Spanish-speaking work, detention facilities and retreats. Believing that powerful things from God happen on retreats that don't happen at other times, he has always viewed retreat ministry as a wonderful way to serve the Lord.



Come join us for a day of spiritual enrichment and contemplation as Fr John, a practitioner of Contemplative Prayer since the late 70's, shares with us on integrating mindfulness and meditation into our daily Christian lives.

**October 14, 2023, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Shepherd of the Hills United Church of Christ
5524 E. Lafayette Blvd. Phoenix, AZ 85018**

The fee of \$35 includes lunch (vegetarian option available)

Register on-line at:

www.contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org

Or mail registration to:

Fall Enrichment Day
6140 E Joshua Tree Lane
Paradise Valley, AZ 85253

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **important:** check for vegetarian lunch _____

Make check out to *Contemplative Outreach of Phoenix*

For additional information, contact: David Murray
at 602-999-2736 or email dmurray1_98@yahoo.com

For information regarding scholarships, contact: Sister Rachel Torrez
at 602-944-2728 or email rtorrez@cox.net





A free, globally-hosted 24-hour day of prayer accessible via Zoom.

In the global unity of silence as God's first language,
we hold vigil for suffering humanity and all creation,
and we honor Fr. Thomas Keating's birthday (March 7)
and the growing presence of Christ among us.

United in Prayer Day March 3-4, 2023

Join in silence and community at any time,
as many times as you are able.

Each hour will include 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.

As we participate in the 24 hours of United in Prayer,
let us remember and hold in our hearts all the members
of the worldwide Centering Prayer community who do not have access to Zoom / internet
technology including those who live in remote areas and those who are incarcerated.

No registration necessary. Check the following webpage for updated information and the Zoom
link which will be posted early in March

<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/event/2023-united-in-prayer-day/>



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