



CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH ONTARIO

SILENCE SOLITUDE SOLIDARITY SERVICE

OUR NEWSLETTER



WINTER 2015 - N°5

A Word from the Editor

As I prepared this new issue of Our Newsletter, two events came to mind: Carolyn Gratton's death at Christmas a year ago and the 2016 Contemplative Outreach Ontario (COO) Conference /Retreat in Niagara Falls, Ontario, this coming May.

Carolyn was the person who started, about twenty years ago, the CO movement in Canada, specifically in Ontario. She is still known by many members of the Contemplative Outreach community, in Ontario, in Canada and abroad.

The second event is a gathering Carolyn would have loved to attend. When we first talked about it towards the end of 2014, with very few specifics needless to say, she was so enthusiastic about it that she "spilled the beans" immediately and, a few days later, the news had already spread considerably. When I started receiving phone calls from people asking for more information, I didn't know what to say.

Now, I know. In five months, we'll be in Niagara Falls, with many of you I'm sure, to celebrate 20 years of Contemplative Outreach in Ontario and look to its future. Someone told me not long ago, "It's such an opportunity!" It is indeed – to measure our sense of belonging because our groups are not isolated; they belong to a broader network. The theme is *Second Wind*. Now that Carolyn is no longer with us, we have to find our own way. We'll have ample time to pray, together or alone, to refresh

and to deepen our reflection. Carolyn would not expect less from us. We owe it to her. You are all invited to come and celebrate. The registration form is part of this newsletter. Fill it in and send it back. We shall be happy to welcome you.

Have a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you in Niagara Falls!

Marie-Noëlle Maillard
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Theological Principle

We identify with the Christian contemplative heritage in which Centering Prayer is rooted. We recognize this heritage as the common ground for Christian Unity. (Principle 10)

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Upcoming Events

20th Anniversary Contemplative Outreach Conference/Retreat

Friday, May 27 to Sunday, May 29, 2016
Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre, 7020
Stanley Avenue, Niagara Falls, ON
Theme: Second Wind / *Deuxième souffle*

Come to deepen, teach and refresh. We'll celebrate 20 years of CO in Ontario, experience prayer together, deepen our wisdom through teaching and listening, and look to the future of CO with joy and anticipation. See the registration form in this issue and mark your calendars!

Deepening the Contemplative Dimension of Servant Leadership

Sunday, July 24-Saturday, July 30, 2016
Marianist Center, Eureka, Missouri (just southwest of St. Louis)

For further information, contact Susan Komis: SusanKomis@coutreach.org

Regional Spotlights

SOUTHWESTERN

The groups are now in full swing after a summer break. Two of the groups began their fall season with a Retreat Day which they held at Holy Family Retreat Center in Harrow (Oxley). They felt it was a very positive experience to begin the 2015-16 year of the Centering Prayer group meetings. It provided a time for re-connecting, updating, and reflection in a beautiful environment on Lake Erie.

There are 2 new groups beginning in our area: one in Chatham, and one in Goderich after the Introductory Workshops held in

those locations this fall. We continue to be inspired by the enthusiasm, faith and commitment of the people we meet in the Introductory Workshops and process of beginning new groups as well as those who are practicing Centering Prayer throughout our area.

Debbie Wilson-Safa completed both Leadership Workshops held by Contemplative Outreach in St. Louis, Missouri, July 2014 and July 2015. She found them to be very beneficial and enjoyable as she describes below.

We are very grateful for her commitment and dedication and that she has generously assumed the role of Facilitator Trainer for our area, again as she describes in her report below.

The Facilitators and the Service Team held their meetings in Chatham again this fall. It is a more central place for both groups to gather now that our area has expanded to include both Chatham and Goderich. Some of the endeavours the members of our Service Team includes inviting members of the groups to volunteer with the existing volunteers in various functions as a way of mentoring and recruiting new volunteers on the service team and where needed as our chapter continues to grow.

The Service team has a need for another Commissioned Presenter as Marlene will be resigning from this role in the near future. There is one person who has expressed an interest in becoming a Commissioned Presenter and we are extending the invitation to others who may be interested at this time. The Service Team is working on a proposal to meet the Formation and Commissioning requirements in the next year or two to address this need. If there are other Chapters nearby who have the same need, perhaps we could work together on the process.

The Events planned by the SWOCOO Service Team for 2015-16 include:

Advent Reflection Day on Nov. 28, 2015
from 9:30 to 3:00.

Lenten Reflection Day on Feb. 13, 2016
from 9:30 to 3:00

World Day of Prayer on Mar. 19, 2016 from
9:30 to 3:00

These events will be held at the Church of
the Ascension (Anglican), 1385 University
Ave., in Windsor.

We are eagerly looking forward to and
hearing more about the Contemplative
Outreach Ontario Conference in Niagara
Falls on May 27 to May 29, 2016! We greet
opportunity it will present and offer to the
region.

Continued union of prayer,

Marlene Kelly Kolotylo, Coordinator
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This past summer I attended the
Contemplative Outreach Servant-Leader
Formation Workshop in St. Louis travelling
with Marie-Noëlle Maillard. It was a
wonderful week of reconnecting with old
friends and making new ones. We
experienced times of silence and had two
30-minute sessions of Centering Prayer
each day. The workshop covered topics of
how Contemplative Outreach came into
being 30+ years ago, the Essence of
Contemplative Service, who is a Servant-
Leader. We also covered the areas of how
we come together administratively - how
chapters are formed and who fills the
different roles such as Coordinators,
Contact Person, Facilitator, etc. An
afternoon was spent looking at current
technology uses to assist us in locating
resources, online courses, and sharing the
opportunity with others to deepen their
relationship with God. "*God in me, serving
the God in others.*" As the Facilitator Trainer
for our chapter here in Southwestern
Ontario, I am currently training six
Centering Prayer practitioners to become

facilitators. We began in September, with
following sessions in October, November
and December. Our time together has been
prayerful, a time of learning from one
another and sharing our love of God. The
Holy Spirit is working in and through
them as they transform into Servant
Leaders.

Debbie Wilson-Safa
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CENTRAL ONTARIO

Peter Donovan, Johnson Ling and Marie-
Noëlle Maillard participated in the
Servant-Leadership Workshop / Retreat in
St. Louis, Missouri in July 2015.

Annual Potluck on Saturday, August 15, 2015

The tradition of the summer potluck is
alive and well in Central Ontario. Once
again this year, people from across the
region gathered for what has become our
annual potluck supper. On August
15, Marie-Noëlle Maillard opened her
home – and her pretty garden – for this
very pleasant event. By the time she said
grace, every surface in her dining room
was laden with the offerings of the group.
Salads, savouries and desserts - the choice
was endless! And it was topped off with
the perfect complement: a little wine for all,
which was dispensed by the steady hand of
Peter Catt, who played bartender in the
adjacent kitchen. It was a beautiful, sunny
evening of good food and fellowship that
was enjoyed by all. Thanks to Marie-
Noëlle for her generous hospitality. Long
may the tradition continue!

Laura Davison
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The Near North Facilitators' Support Day held on Saturday, October 3, 2015

Beeton, Ontario, Henry Carr Farm – The
farmhouse overlooked a browning
cornfield. Ripened apples dropped

randomly from a tree near the porch door. Outside: an autumn day, gusty, brisk, and grey. Inside: light, warmth and spirit. About forty of us gathered, groups from all over Central Ontario, to pray and reflect, to exchange stories, ideas and resources, and to look to the future. We opened with a prayer and a Centering sit, a reminder of the profound effect of unified prayer in deep silence and emptiness.

A guided discussion followed, highlighting the Near North Groups. Facilitators were asked to comment on their groups, the origins, the membership, the meeting content and any difficulties they encountered along the way. Finally, they were asked how their group connected to the larger Contemplative Outreach Community. After this, the entire group was invited to join in, and the bonus to this discussion was that we got to reconnect, renew past relationships and initiate new ones.

Following a remarkably fine “sit” and a discussion about facilitator formation, available retreats and workshops and the cost and travel involved in attending them. This led to a lively exchange regarding suggestions that we might, in future, consider taking advantage of such technological advances as Skype, webcasts and webinars in order to frame local events around a remote educational component. This would open up attendance to a larger number and eliminate excessive travel and related costs. Things got so spirited that we ran out of time but agreed to keep our options open.

The meeting concluded with a brief presentation by Marie-Noëlle Maillard concerning the planned 2016 COO Conference/Retreat in Niagara Falls, May 27-29.

On behalf of the Near North groups, many thanks to those who planned and financed this event, especially Marilyn Brandon, Johnson Ling and the COCO volunteers who worked behind the scenes. Kudos for the excellent lunch. Credit to Johnson for

alerting us to “Bee Town”, once the commercial honey capital of Canada. And special thanks to the Basilians of Henry Carr Farm for their graciousness in providing this pastoral venue.

In closing, we need not be overly concerned about our groups’ numbers. There will be ebb and flow as the Spirit dictates, but there will always be just enough. Our prayers — the prayers of the few — radiate outward to the greater community, and we may never know the extent of their efficacy. We might remember the symbolism of the parting gifts from the Basilian Fathers — a small jar of honey and a tiny beeswax candle is “just enough.”

Steve Parrotte, Newmarket Group
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Upcoming Events

United in Prayer Day, Saturday, March 19, 2016

Because of the COO Conference next May, the Servant Leadership Team of Central Ontario suggests that in 2016, the United in Prayer Day be a personal day retreat or facilitated at your support group level. Details and suggested format for the day is usually provided by Contemplative Outreach and will be sent out to all facilitators in due course.

Retreats at Bethany Retreat Center Frenchville, Pennsylvania, USA

Do not hesitate to visit the Bethany Retreat Center website at www.bethanyretreatcenter.org.

EASTERN

On behalf of the service team in Eastern Ontario, I am happy to update you on our last year. You may also want to look at our website (www.coeo.community) for information. We serve 9 prayer groups both in the greater Ottawa area, as well as in Kingston and Renfrew. Of these, a new

group started at St Luke's Anglican Church, Ottawa, which now offers Centering Prayer on Monday and Wednesday. We also have strong links with *Prière de consentement* Québec-Outaouais branch. (You may not know that Centering Prayer is known in French as *prière de consentement*.)

Our service team is presently comprised of John Zegers (Introductory Workshops), Father Gregor Sneddon (Coordinator, Introductory Workshops), Susan Lewis (Communications), Tim Kehoe (Governance), Susan Kehoe (Retreats), Deacon Christine Jannasch (Treasurer, Registrar) as well as Hélène Goulet (liaison to *Prière de consentement* Québec.) The team met several times in 2014 and into 2015 in order to discuss governance issues such as roles and team functioning and from that produced a summary to guide us in our work. The aim was to reduce the workload for the coordinator; to encourage participation in leadership through role clarification; and to maintain enough flexibility to respect each other's work and family commitments.

After a summer break, we have returned with our third edition of Pilgrim's Way. Pilgrim's Way 2015- 2016 includes three Saturday retreats at St. Luke's Church in Centretown Ottawa and a Lenten silent retreat at Galilee House, Arnprior. The silent Saturdays are themed "Transformation: You can get There from Here" (Sep. 26, 2015); "The River has Two Banks: Action and Contemplation" (Nov. 28, 2015); and "Held in the Gaze: Praying with Icons" with Father Andriy Chirovsky (Jan. 16, 2016.) Each day includes contemplative opening and closing liturgies, a brief review of the method of Centering Prayer, several times of prayer practice, one or more presentations related to the theme, and opportunities for silent or shared reflection. The residential Lenten retreat is an opportunity to deepen silence and this year is scheduled for Feb. 25-28, 2016. The theme is "Return Again," led by Gregor. Outside Ottawa, a weekend Centering Prayer retreat entitled "Love in

Freedom" was given in Kingston, Sep. 18-20, 2015.

Our offerings this season are lower in number than in previous years, because, in addition to other commitments of team members, Gregor is on sabbatical until after Christmas, Hélène is enrolled in a graduate diploma in Contemplative Theology and Spiritual Mentorship at St. Paul University, Ottawa and Susan Lewis is enrolled in a Master of Divinity program, also at St. Paul University. We wish them every blessing.

Registration in the Lenten retreat has been around 30 in recent years, and we hope to welcome this number again in 2016. Registration for the Pilgrim's Way days has dropped, but feedback forms continue to be very positive in their comments. Participants value the chance to share silent prayer and to deepen their understanding of the journey of transformation. I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who attends, whether for one event or many, helping to create a nurturing, contemplative community.

Christine Jannasch
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Upcoming Events

* 2016 Centering Prayer Lenten Silent Retreat: Return Again, with Gregor Sneddon

Thursday, Feb. 25 to Sunday, Feb. 28, 2016
at Galilee Centre, Arnprior, Ontario

Return again,
Return again
Return to the home of your soul.

Return again,
Return again
Return to the home of your soul.

Return to who you are
Return to what you are
Return to where you are
Born and reborn again.

Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach

The cost of the retreat is \$350.00, with an **EARLY BIRD SPECIAL OF \$325.00 paid by January 1st, 2016.** This includes 3-night lodging, our retreat leader, spiritual direction and all meals from Thursday Supper to a Sunday breakfast and midmorning snack.

Gregor Sneddon is the founding Coordinator of Contemplative Outreach Eastern Ontario and serves as Presbyter in The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa at St. Luke's Church. Gregor completed his graduate work at the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies. When not with his family he likes to be cooking, in the woods, or swinging the Blues.

The retreat begins with arrivals at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 25th and concludes at noon on Sunday February 28th. As always, bring some warm clothes and boots for walking outside. All bedding is provided.

To register online, please see our website at www.coeo.community or contact Christine Jannasch, 805, rue des Saisons Gatineau, QC J9J 3B8 - (613) 818-1754 christine@deaconchristine.ca

Please visit the Galilee Centre website for directions or call them directly. They are located at 398 John Street North, Arnprior, ON (613) 623-4242, www.galileecentre.com

* Pilgrim's Way 2015-2016

January 16, 2016
Held in the Gaze: Praying with Icons
With Father Andry Chirovsky
At St. Luke's, 760 Somerset West
Ottawa
9:30 a. m. to 4:00 p. m.
\$30. Bring a bag lunch, refreshments provided.

From the COO Resource Centre

This is a new column by Lourdes Crabtree who is in charge of the resources of Contemplative Outreach Ontario since the office was closed in March 2013. In the future, she plans to share with us in every Newsletter what she would have discovered in the previous six months. In this issue, she shares with us her reading of Uniformity with God's Will, by St. Alphonsus de Liguori (1696-1787).

"Reading a good book, or listening to a powerful CD or watching an exceptional DVD can leave you transformed, such that you are no longer the person you were prior to engaging in the activity. The Contemplative Outreach Ontario, Resource Centre is a source for such transformation.

I recently picked up a small book, a mere 30 or so pages entitled Uniformity with God's Will. It certainly sounded like an interesting read. Little did I know how much I would grow. I stepped into the world of St. Alphonsus de Liguori, a world where musicians like Mozart and Haydn were impressing their gifts for all time; an Industrial Revolution was stirring creating a new world and wars were raging in the Northern and Eastern regions of the World reshaping political boundaries. Yet, through all the chaos and dramatic changes, St. Alphonsus sought uniformity with God's Will. I was left asking many questions. My 'previous' thinking was being challenged as I entered more deeply into his thoughts; into the depths of his closeness to God; into surrendering to Love. Uniformity with God's Will is filled with love and humility as St. Alphonsus gently invites us to attune our will to God's will.

If you would like to borrow a book, CD or DVD from the Resource Centre, please contact me."

Lourdes Crabtree
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Seeds Sown

Chatham, Southwestern Ontario.
Jim and Pearl Clarke, Jim-clarke@live.ca

Goderich, Southwestern Ontario.
Rev. Kevin Steeper, kevin@lakeshoreuc.ca

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Anthony Gatti, ajmgatti@gmail.com

Henri Nouwen On Silent Prayer

We simply need quiet time in the presence of God. Although we want to make all our time, time for God, we will never succeed if we do not reserve a minute, an hour, a morning, a day, a week, a month or whatever period of time for God and Him alone. This asks for much discipline and risk-taking because we always seem to have something more urgent to do and “just sitting there” and “doing nothing” often disturbs us more than it helps. But there is no way around this.

Being useless and silent in the presence of our God belongs to the core of all prayer. In the beginning we often hear our own unruly inner noises more loudly than God’s voice. This is at times very hard to tolerate. But slowly, very slowly, we discover that the silent time makes us quiet and deepens our awareness of ourselves, and God. Then, very soon, we start missing these moments when we are deprived of them, and before we are fully aware of it, an inner momentum has developed that draws us more and more

into silence and closer to that still point where God speaks to us.

In Reaching Out

In Memoriam

Peter Donovan (1941-2015)

Denis Peter Donovan passed into eternal life on August 5 at his Muskoka cottage following a heart attack. He was just back from a week-long workshop-retreat in St. Louis, Missouri on Servant Leadership with the other two members of Contemplative Outreach Central Ontario Team.

Peter studied history and philosophy at the University of Toronto receiving an Honours B.A. followed by a C.A. at McGill in Montreal. He completed his graduate studies with an MBA from the University of Western Ontario and worked as financial executive in Brazil, Ireland and Canada until retirement.

With all these sheepskins under his belt, no wonder he always had an intellectual approach. But “he didn’t speak much about his background,” said Peter Catt.

“He was always a quiet, reflective, and spiritual person,” wrote Ruthanne Wrobel, of Enneagram North, the organization of which he was a long-time member.

How he came to Centering Prayer is not known. Faithfully, Elizabeth, his wife, drove him to the Monday group. Lately, due to the demands of his theological studies, he didn’t come as often. He went regularly to Snowmass, Colorado, for retreats with Father Keating. He had been a member of the then Steering Committee of Contemplative Outreach Ontario for several years and was still a member of the Servant Leadership Team of CO Central Ontario. With Peter Catt, he was involved in Contemplative Fire, an organization whose aim is to bring together the different

Christian groups practising contemplative prayer.

He was a Renaissance man, adapting himself to new circumstances in the course of his life and always embracing new challenges and interests. He started playing the piano as an adult but played only in his private moments. He practised yoga. At the time of his death, he had completed his course work for a Masters degree in Theological Studies at Regis College and was about to begin his thesis this fall.

Like Paul, you have fought the good fight, Peter, you have finished the race and you have kept the faith. Rest in heavenly peace forever.

Marie-Noëlle Maillard, with input from Elizabeth Donovan, Peter Catt, Angelo Iascone and Ruthanne Wrobel

Father Christopher Iredale, CSB (1931-2015) passed away on October 15.

We have missed his presence, since poor health made it difficult for him to come to our meetings, on Monday nights. We will continue to miss him even though he is now celebrating a new life with God.

In addition to his priestly responsibilities, he was a teacher, school librarian and vice-principal. He enjoyed doing presentations on Lectio Divina and offering Introductory Workshops. He was also a man of order, regularly reminding us to begin meetings on schedule and would announce that tea time was NOW. He was very approachable and open to discussion with anyone who had questions.

He gladly celebrated the Eucharist with us on our retreats. This practice continued even after his health prevented him from participating in the entire retreat.

Please continue to keep us in your thoughts and prayers, Chris. Rest in peace and continue with us as a companion on

the journey.

God bless you and keep you.

Mary Alice O'Connor Hayes
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Wherever you are in Ontario, if you want to share something with other members of COO, such as a reading or a book, or contribute to *Our Newsletter* in any way, please contact the editor. Many thanks. Merci beaucoup.

This newsletter is being sent to all facilitators. Facilitators, please forward this newsletter, in turn, to all members of your groups. Group members, please feel free to forward it to interested friends. If for any reason you wish to receive future newsletters directly, please contact the editor. Conversely, if you don't want to receive them anymore, please advise the editor.