



# CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH ONTARIO

SILENCE SOLITUDE SOLIDARITY SERVICE

OUR NEWSLETTER



SUMMER 2019 – N° 10

## A Word from the Editor

The summer days are quickly going by. Hope you are enjoying them to the fullest.

As you'll see in this edition of Our Newsletter, the three regions, through thick and thin, are faithful to living the contemplative dimension of the Gospel.

The preparation of COO 2019 is now in full swing. If you have not registered yet, this is the time. The final date to register is Tuesday, August 20, 2019. See Upcoming Events on page 2. We even have a Facebook page. Go and like us...

For those of you who are gardeners at heart — gardening is a contemplative activity *par excellence* — enjoy your garden to unwind, and to appreciate its fruits.

After the Vision rewording in the previous issue, we'll continue with the new wording of the Theological Principles (with Commentary for each of them) and, later on to the Guidelines for Service (formerly the Administrative Principles).

Have a restful and safe summer and a colourful autumn. Let's all pray for peace in this troubled world of ours.

Marie-Noëlle Maillard  
[logos302@sympatico.ca](mailto:logos302@sympatico.ca)

## Theological Principle with Commentary

1. Contemplative Outreach is a network of communities and individuals seeking the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit and to contribute to the renewal of the Christian contemplative tradition through the practice of Centering Prayer.

*Commentary*

*The fundamental purpose of Centering Prayer and of Contemplative Outreach is to further the knowledge and the experience of God's love in the consciousness of the human family. Contemplative Outreach provides basic instruction in Centering Prayer and additional programs to sustain the development in contemplation and the process of transformation.*

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## Your COO Team

Rev. Kevin Steeper, representing the Southwestern region

Jennifer Pothier and Marie-Noëlle Maillard, representing the Central region

Hélène Goulet and Susan Kehoe, representing the Eastern region.

— Hélène and Marie-Noëlle are co-coordinators.

## Upcoming Events

**\*\* COO 2019, from Friday, September 27 around 6:00 p.m. to Sunday, September 29 before noon, in Niagara Falls.** The theme is: “Cultivate the roots. The leaves and branches will take care of themselves.” Our guest speakers will be Nada Conic, from Toronto, Ontario, and Kess Frey from Anchorage, Alaska. Cost: shared room is \$400; single room is \$450; commuter is \$280 and Saturday only is \$150. There is a generous scholarship program. So, don’t hesitate to use it. Attached is the registration form. Don’t delay as the deadline to register is **TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2019**. For commuters and “Saturday Only” participants, this deadline is **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019**.

**\*\* Silent Retreats in Granby, Quebec November 10-15, 2019 or November 10-19, 2019**  
**A 6-day or 10-day silent retreat organized by *Prière de consentement Québec*, in Granby.**

The retreats will be in total silence with three hours of Centering Prayer/Prayer of Consent per day and an optional *Lectio divina* at night. This year, up to seven places are reserved for people from Ontario who know enough French to understand basic instructions.

Cost is \$376 for the 6-day retreat and \$684 for the 10-day retreat.

Contact information: Hélène Goulet at 613 728-1242 or [goulet.h@gmail.com](mailto:goulet.h@gmail.com)

**\*\* Introductory Workshop, Saturday, February 1st, 2020, at Mount Mary Immaculate Retreat Centre, 437 Wilson Street East in Ancaster, ON L9G 3K4,** with Mary Catherine Doyle and Sue Woollard as commissioned presenters. Details to follow. For more information, please contact Sue Woollard at 647 302-8596 or at [sue.woollard@rogers.com](mailto:sue.woollard@rogers.com)

**\*\* Directed Retreat on St. John of the Cross Monday, March 16-Sunday, March 22, 2020 (March Break).** A retreat facilitated by Susan Komis, from St. Louis, Missouri, at Jericho House in the Niagara Region on St. John of the Cross — *Dark Night of Soul: Night of Sense, Night of Spirit*. Susan came for a retreat on Teresa of Avila during March Break 2018. She is back by popular demand. The number of rooms is limited so do not delay in booking one. Scholarships available. Contact Information: Marie-Noëlle Maillard at 905 372-1054 or [logos302@sympatico.ca](mailto:logos302@sympatico.ca).

## Regional Spotlights

### *SOUTHWESTERN (SWOCCO)*

Greetings from SWOCCO!

In the last issue, I began by noting the passing of Fr. Thomas Keating. Sadly, I begin on a similar note with the death of one of our own. In April 2019 members of the Centering Prayer community gathered to say goodbye and to celebrate the life and ministry of Fr. Joseph Quinn, C.S.B. Fr. Joe was a spiritual father, mentor and friend to many of us here in SWOCCO. He served the Centering Prayer community for many years in a variety of capacities bringing those gifts of heart, mind and spirit that were uniquely Fr. Joe's life. He was a man of keen intelligence and academic accomplishment but that was combined

with the heart of a contemplative. He will be deeply missed by all of us who had the privilege of knowing him and in a small effort to honour him a memorial fund was named in his honour to support the ongoing work and ministry of SWOCCO.

We had a wonderful retreat weekend at the beginning of May 2019 at the Holy Family Retreat Centre in Oxley, Ontario. A good number of participants from the region took part once again. We had the pleasure of welcoming H  l  ne Goulet as our keynote speaker for the event. She spoke on the subject of "The Welcoming Prayer," bringing to it a level of depth and richness that was appreciated by all of the participants. H  l  ne's teaching coupled with prayer and silence made for a spiritually nourishing weekend.

At present we are enjoying the hazy days of summer but plans are in the works for the upcoming months. An introductory workshop will be taking place in October in Windsor. This will be followed by our Advent Reflection Day in November with further events to take place in the New Year. We are also looking forward to the COO gathering (COO 2019) in Niagara Falls in September.

Blessings and peace,  
The Rev. Kevin Steeper, coordinator  
KSteeper@united-church.ca

### *CENTRAL (COCO)*

Sue Woollard, a member of the COCO Servant Leadership Team, went to a conference by Richard Rohr on his new book, The Universal Christ. Here is her take:

"My husband and I are just two of the 325,000 people who receive Fr. Richard Rohr's daily meditations. When he announced a conference about his new book, The Universal Christ in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from March 28 to 31, 2019, we knew we had to attend.

There were 2,000 people in the room and another 3,000 who live-streamed globally. The premise of the daily liturgies was that we live in 'A Christ-Soaked World.' When the agenda called for 20 minutes of 'group practice' it was quite amazing to join 5,000 other like-minded people in contemplative practice.

Richard Rohr says that there is nothing new in this book. He draws on Scripture, history and spiritual practice. He never has to write another book. At my stage of understanding and experience of the character and nature of God, Richard's framing rings so true. His understanding feels complete for me and inspires me to surrender more to the Christ who lives within us all. I trust it will be so for you when you read this thought-provoking book."

In Brampton, the group who has been for a long while under the careful leadership of Tom Manley is now facilitated by Debbie Jervis-Baker.

The Central Region has now two Religious Book Clubs: one in Niagara region, the other in North-East Toronto.

The COCO Servant Leadership Team has launched a survey in order to know better the needs of the Central Region and its 30+ groups. The response was encouraging. We'll analyse the results in the afternoon of our regular meeting on Saturday November 16, 2019, in Toronto. You are more than welcome to come and participate. Please let us know if you are interested ([logos302@sympatico.ca](mailto:logos302@sympatico.ca))

See you in winter. In the meantime, enjoy the last month of summer, then the fall, and "go well" as Carolyn's would say in her telephone greetings.

We continue to serve you in humility and love.

Marie-No  lle Maillard, coordinator  
[logos302@sympatico.ca](mailto:logos302@sympatico.ca)

## *EASTERN (COEO)*

*“For human beings, the most daunting challenge is to become fully human. For to become fully human is to become fully divine.”*  
Thomas Keating in *Manifesting God*

Our little volunteer team has found its groove in offering two retreat days a year in town and two longer immersions into silence. The Advent retreat is two nights and our Lenten retreat, now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, is three nights long. Both of these longer retreats are held at the Galilee Centre in Arnprior, about 40 minutes west of Ottawa. See our Upcoming Events 2019-2020 below.

Many thanks to H el ene Goulet who has worked steadily to bring Kess Frey to Canada in September. She will host him throughout his stay in Ottawa, Granby, Quebec and Niagara Falls.

We will have an opportunity to listen to this wisdom teacher here in Ottawa (Kanata) on September 19, before he heads to Southern Ontario for the COO conference — COO 2019. We already have over 35 registered. It would seem people are hungry for some depth.

In the middle of summer, as I write this, with renovations going on and new baby grandson, the daily rhythm of Centering prayer is somewhat scattered.

A recent Sunday Gospel reading is the story of Martha and Mary. I take encouragement from a contemporary interpretation that within each of us are both elements: Mary and Martha. Our ongoing task is to grow in balance with these two energies. Our daily active “Martha” life sourced from a deep reservoir of “Mary” life borne out of the practice of Centering prayer. Trust and joy when the spontaneous arising of the sacred word comes to steady us when the day is almost too full with activity.

As summer continues in all its abundance, May I — may we — be blessed to hear that

still small voice within saying: pause, wait, stop, rest...

### Upcoming Events 2019-2020

Visit our website at [COEO.COMMUNITY](http://COEO.COMMUNITY)

#### **\*\* Thursday, September 19, 2019:**

Unfolding Centering Prayer, with Kess Frey  
St. John’s Church, 325 Sandhill Road  
Ottawa, ON

#### **\*\* Saturday, October 19, 2019**

Introduction to Centering Prayer  
St. Luke’s Church, 760 Somerset Street  
West, Ottawa, ON

For these two events above, contact H el ene Goulet at 613 728-1242

#### **\*\* Two Silent Retreats**

at The Galilee Centre, Arnprior, ON  
- **Advent:** A two-day immersion into Silence, December 8-10, 2019

- **Lent:** A three-day immersion into Silence, March 12-15, 2020

For these two retreats, contact Susan Kehoe at 613 725-9878

Thanks be to God in whom we live and move and have our being. Summer blessings,

Susan Kehoe, coordinator  
[smkehoe@rogers.com](mailto:smkehoe@rogers.com)

## In Memoriam

\* From Central Ontario, Norma Carpenter, sister of Mary Carpenter-Smith, a long-time friend of Carolyn, who came regularly to the famous Carolyn’s Weekends.

\* From Southwestern Ontario, Joseph Quinn, C.S.B. Father Joe has been the spiritual father for many members of SWOCCO .

## Latest Publications

\*\* Carolyn Gratton's book, Discovering the Art of Soul Friending, published after her death, is now available for purchase. Paul Fleming, a founding member of Contemplative Outreach Ontario, was one of the book's talented editors. Paul worked with a group of Carolyn's friends to ensure that this beloved final project of Carolyn's was brought to fruition. The book can be purchased online at Amazon, Friesen Press, and Indigo. We will also have copies to purchase at the September COO 2019 conference in Niagara Falls and at the 2020 March Break retreat.

\*\* At long last, Intimacy with God is now in French. It is published jointly by *Les Editions de Bellefontaine*, and *Les Editions du Cerf* and we are eagerly waiting for the announcement of its upcoming release.

### Thomas Keating On the Seven Gifts of the Spirit

The contemplative Gifts of the Spirit are active within us from the moment that we seriously begin to do a regular practice of Centering Prayer. The Spirit then begins to communicate the Gifts of Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom. The Gifts are interrelated as we saw, like the fingers of your hand. Each finger has a special shape and capacity. Each is important and useful, but they all work together. If one of them grows, they all grow. The contemplative Gifts of the Spirit are God's way of grasping our entire being so that the whole of us may belong to God: body, soul, and spirit.

The active Gifts of the Spirit — Reverence for God, Fortitude, Piety, and Counsel — are just as important and necessary. They are designed to enable us to bring the contemplative experience that we have had in deep prayer into all of our activities, and indeed in even greater detail.

In *The Thomas Keating Reader*, pp. 117-118

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 at [logos302@sympatico.ca](mailto:logos302@sympatico.ca). Many thanks. Merci beaucoup.

This Newsletter is being sent to all facilitators, as well as to members-at-large of the COO community. 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. Similarly, please advise the editor if you no longer wish to receive this publication.