



CONTEMPLATIVE COMPANIONS

The Bimonthly Centering Prayer Newsletter of Contemplative Outreach of San Diego

May-June 2009

Easter-Pentecost - Final Issue

Volume 14: Issue 3

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The resurrection of Jesus is not only an historical event. The words of Jesus to Thomas suggest something more. They might be paraphrased as follows: "You based your faith on seeing me, Thomas, but there is a greater happiness – to believe in my resurrection because you experience its effects within yourself." This, of course, is an important message for us. It tells us that it is far better to relate to the risen Christ on the basis of pure faith that rests not on appearances, feelings, external evidence, or what other people say, but on our personal experience of the Christ-life rising up and manifesting its fruits within us. This is the living faith that empowers us to act under the influence of the Spirit – the same Spirit that Jesus breathed upon the apostles on the evening of his resurrection.

Thomas Keating, *The Mystery of Christ*

The Vision of Contemplative Outreach

*"Be still and know
that I am God."*
Psalm 46:10

*The intent of
Contemplative
Outreach
is to foster the
process
of transformation in
Christ
in one another
through the practice
of Centering Prayer.*

*"Love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your strength,
and with all your mind;
and your neighbor as yourself."*
Luke 10:27

2009 Calendar of Contemplative Events

May 2, 2009

CENTERING PRAYER INTRODUCTORY PROGRAM • Saint Luke Church • 1980 Hillside Road • El Cajon, 92019 • Registration: 8:30 a.m. • For pre-registration and details phone Kathy Di Fede at 619-749-4141.

May 16, 2009

SPECIAL EVENT with Fr. Thomas Keating: "Contemplation: The Heart of the World" • Registration: 1:30 p.m. Talk to follow: 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. • St. John the Evangelist Church • 1003 Encinitas Blvd. • Encinitas • \$35 Suggested Donation • Walk-ins are welcome if seating is available. • Please register by May 1st • Phone 760-745-8860.

May 29, 2009

SPECIAL EVENT: Welcome our New COSD Coordinator, Kathy Di Fede • Mission San Diego de Alcalá • California Room • **5:30 to 7:00 p.m.** • Mission Gorge Area • Come celebrate new beginnings with COSD. α We will begin promptly with a period of Centering Prayer.

Y This is the last issue of the
Contemplative Companions Newsletter
Thank you for all your loyal support throughout these years!

α Please Note: **COSD continues its outreach!** With our new chapter coordinator, Kathy Di Fede, the COSD office is being relocated; (note the new address on page 7). A **new edition** of the **COSD newsletter** will be created in the coming months under the direction of COSD's incoming leadership. If you are interested in helping create, edit, or support the new version of the COSD Newsletter, please contact Kathy Di Fede at 619-749-4141 to offer your service. **Thank you!**

LEADERSHIP CHANGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SERVICE

| Article by Renée Daniels, Servant Leadership Team Member

If you haven't already heard the good news, on behalf of the Servant Leadership Team, I'm happy to announce that Kathy Di Fede has taken the 'leap of faith' and stepped forward to serve as COSD's new Coordinator. Kathy brings many gifts and talents to the position and a deep commitment to Centering Prayer and the vision of Contemplative Outreach. For more information about Kathy, please see her article on page 4.

We have scheduled an event on Friday, May 29th from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at Mission San Diego de Alcalá to introduce and welcome Kathy to the COSD community. The event will include time for prayer and time to connect with fellow contemplative companions, as well as a commissioning ceremony to officially install Kathy in her new role. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us.

The change in leadership will create opportunities to serve the COSD Community with Kathy on the Servant Leadership Team. Speaking from my own experience, I believe that

anyone who agrees to serve in a leadership capacity soon learns that leadership roles create opportunities for growth, and perhaps more importantly, transformation. Our daily practice of Centering Prayer provides the strong foundation that keeps one grounded during the unsettling times that can occur within the transformation process. Invitations for growth occasioned by the transformation process are not always easy to answer. Much of the time there seem to be no answers, only the knowledge that steadfast commitment to the prayer will ultimately lead from darkness and confusion to light and love—to real transformation!

When we provide genuine service to each other—the God in me serving the God in you—we become agents of transformation, and in our own small spheres of influence, we are united with others around the globe who strive to bring more peace, light and love into our world. I hope and pray that you will consider the opportunity for transformative service with Kathy. ♦



Come Celebrate New Beginnings

Friday, May 29th, 2009 – Mission San Diego de Alcalá

Welcome our Incoming COSD Coordinator, Kathy Di Fede

- α Where..... **California Room**
- α Time..... **Friday evening, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.**
- α We will promptly begin with a period of Centering Prayer

Come greet Kathy Di Fede and have an opportunity to renew past friendships and acquaintances. Please join us!



Easter is the demonstration of God that
life is essentially spiritual and timeless.

∞ Charles M. Crowe

Extensión Contemplativa de San Diego

Santa Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz ❖ Modelo de Oración

≈ Artículo por Cristina G. Romero ∴ *Segunda Parte*

Edith Stein (1891-1942) nació de familia judía en Alemania, estudio filosofía y posteriormente convertida al catolicismo decide entrar al Monasterio Carmelita en la ciudad de Colonia en donde toma el nombre de Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz. Es enviada al monasterio de Hecht en Holanda para proteger su vida; sin embargo, el 2 de mayo de 1942 la Gestapo la localiza y la lleva prisionera junto con su hermana Rosa, convertida al catolicismo. Son trasladadas a Polonia y muere el 9 de Agosto de 1942 en Auschwitz en la cámara de gas.

Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz, es canonizada en 1998 como mártir y proclamada patrona de Europa por el Papa Juan Pablo II en 1999.

Santa Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz nos da testimonio de su amor a Jesús aceptando lo que le toca vivir y poniendo su destino en manos de Dios como ella misma lo aconsejaba en sus escritos. Ella nos da testimonio de que el camino para todo cristiano es la oración que nos conduce a la plenitud de nuestra relación con Dios: “Entregarse a El y a su servicio por amor es la verdadera vocación no solo de algunos elegidos sino de todo cristiano”.

En la vida cotidiana solemos encontrar dificultades para encontrar un ambiente en donde poder hacer oración. Santa Teresa, muy consciente de todas las limitaciones

del ser humano, propuso un camino sencillo: “Le he dado un consejo: ser como un niño y poner la vida entera en manos del Padre para que sea El quien les ayude”. Con esta actitud de niño en manos de su padre debemos comenzar el día poniendo todos nuestros proyectos en manos de Dios.

El Padre Keating al igual que Santa Teresa Benedicta nos habla de la oración como una relación íntima con Dios. Quien vive dentro de esta dinámica termina por descubrir que la oración no es una práctica sino una vida profunda en unión con Dios. Debemos orar verdaderamente en el nombre de Jesús y no solo con el nombre de Jesús en la boca, sino en el espíritu y el sentir de Jesús.

Lo importante es crear el espacio donde uno puede retirarse en cualquier momento para tomar conciencia de la presencia de Dios y recuperar la paz interior. La oración vivida en esta forma lleva al que ora a experimentar la bondad de un Dios Padre que solo desea nuestra felicidad.

El esta siempre presente y puede darnos en un instante todo lo que necesitamos. El mejor tesoro que podemos descubrir es el sentirnos sostenidos en las manos de Dios.

[*Bibliografía:* Francisco Javier Sancho Fermín, OCD. Escuela de grandes orantes. Magnificat 2008.] ❖

Silence: A Level Beyond Words

As a people we are afraid of silence. That's our major barrier to prayer. I believe silence and words are related. Words that don't come out of silence probably don't say much. They probably are more an unloading than a communicating. Yet words feed on silence, and that's why we have the Word of God ... the written word, the proclaimed word. But the written and proclaimed word doesn't bear a great deal of fruit – it doesn't really break open

the heart of the Spirit – unless it's tasted and chewed, unless it's felt and suffered and enjoyed at a level beyond words.

If I had to advise one thing for spiritual growth, it would be silence. ❖

From Richard Rohr, Franciscan priest and contemplative; an excerpt from his book, *Contemplative Prayer*

Thanks for 15 Years Worth of Memories!

A special, heartfelt thanks to all those who so lovingly and generously committed themselves to the creation, editing, printing, folding and taping, and mailing of the *Contemplative Companions Newsletter* for the last 15 years! Special recognition goes to Rachel Cave, Renée Daniels, Marlene Rogers, Mary Jane Weismann, Minnie

Miller, Ruth and Richard Rice, Esther Kirby and all the prayer group members who regularly supported the production and transmission of this newsletter. We were blessed to share this labor of love together!

≈ Fr. Justin Langille

A Story to Share with New Beginnings

| Article by Kathy Di Fede, Incoming Chapter Coordinator

Dear Friends,

Often, when I get together with family or friends the conversation turns to some shared story, a “remember when.” The remembering reconnects us, makes us laugh, or helps us remember how much we are loved.

All of us have our stories to tell of God’s love for us, of His presence and action in our lives. We are connected by our shared commitment to, and experience of, Centering Prayer.

My name is Kathy Di Fede and I am the new coordinator of Contemplative Outreach of San Diego. I would like to tell you some of my story. I was introduced to Centering Prayer by Fr. Basil Pennington when he visited San Diego about 18 years ago. As I listened to him speak and then experienced 20 minutes of Centering Prayer, I realized this was something I had been searching for in my spiritual journey. God was calling me.

At the time, my children ranged in age from five years to 22 years. Needless to say, my husband and I had a busy household! As I set aside time to simply be with God, to consent to His presence and action in me, God was there in the daily life of raising our children. Taking time for Centering Prayer everyday gave me new perspective and more

patience. Over the years God has helped me to accept situations or circumstances that were difficult and also to recognize where I needed to change. Centering Prayer has kept me rooted in Jesus as I try to follow Him more and more every day.

I’m excited about serving all of you as we continue this journey together. I encourage you to share your stories with me, with your prayer groups and with those who have not experienced Centering Prayer. Simply share what God has done for you.

I hope that many of you will attend Fr. Keating’s talk at St. John the Evangelist Church in Encinitas on May 16th. This is a rare opportunity to receive the wisdom of Fr. Keating.

I also look forward to meeting with you on Friday May 29th at the Mission as we pray together and celebrate our COSD community.

And I ask you to pray for those who will attend the Introductory Workshop on May 2nd at the Church of St. Luke and the continuing sessions that God will call them as He has you.

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. You are always with me in prayer. ♦

Living For God Alone

It is almost impossible to overestimate the value of true humility and its power in the spiritual life. Humility contains in itself the answer to all the great problems of the life of the soul. In perfect humility all selfishness disappears and your soul no longer lives for itself or in itself but for God; and it is lost and submerged in God and transformed into God.

Thomas Merton (1916-1968) in *New Seeds of Contemplation*

Be Still

You need not leave your room. Remain sitting at your table and listen. You need not even listen, simply wait. You need not even wait, just learn to become quiet, and still, and solitary. The world will freely offer itself to you to be unmasked.

Franz Kafka (1883-1924), Austrian-Hungarian Poet & Philosopher

“The heart and soul
of Contemplative Outreach
are the Centering Prayer Circles.”
≈ *Abbot Thomas Keating*

Prayer Groups of Contemplative Outreach of San Diego

	Area	Leader(s)	Telephone	Location	Meetings Day & Time
1	Chula Vista	Adela Detrinidad	619-216-2538	Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church 293 H Street, Chula Vista	Mondays: 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Business Office-Chapel
2	Del Cerro	Sue Gossman Rosemary McGeary	619-466-3150 619-582-9508	St. Therese Catholic Church 6016 Camino Rico, San Diego	Saturdays: 10:00 a.m. Adult Ministry Office
3	El Cajon (1)	Anne Clark Lisa Davis	619-444-9700 619-444-9700	1 st Presbyterian Church of El Cajon 500 Farragut Circle, El Cajon	Saturdays: 9:00 a.m.
4	El Cajon (2)	Anne Clark Lisa Davis	619-444-9700 619-444-9700	1 st Presbyterian Church of El Cajon 500 Farragut Circle, El Cajon	Tuesdays: 3:00 p.m.
5	El Cajon (3)	Irma Eichinger Crissa Campbell	619-449-8400 619-589-8583	Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church 2766 Navajo Road, El Cajon	Mondays: 9:00 a.m. Knights of Columbus Hall
6	La Jolla (1)	Karen Downs	858-488-1014	All Hallows Catholic Church 6601 La Jolla Scenic Drive South, La Jolla	Wednesdays: 5:00 p.m.
7	La Jolla (2) (Spanish Speaking)	Cristina Romero Antonia Villalpando	858-457-4120 858-454-8342	Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church 7669 Girard Avenue, La Jolla	Saturdays in the Library: 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
8	La Mesa	Susan Jarboe	scj123@cox.net	Home of Veryl Snowhill 6335 Southern Road, La Mesa	Thursdays: 7:00 p.m.
9	Lemon Grove	Mary Kay Sieckman	619-588-4107	St. John of the Cross Catholic Church 8086 Broadway Avenue, Lemon Grove	Saturdays: 8:45 to 10:15 a.m.
10	Mission Valley	Ardy Woodmansee	858-279-7278	Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá 10818 San Diego Mission Road, Mission Valley	Mondays: 7:00 p.m. In the California Room
11	Old Town	Fr. Mark Campbell	619-295-4148 X32	Immaculate Conception Catholic Church 2540 San Diego Avenue, Old Town	Thursdays: 7:00 p.m. Fr. Junipero Serra Hall
12	Point Loma	C. J. Carlo Ginger Ramos-Dunn	619-226-4486 619-823-5075	All Souls' Episcopal Church 1475 Catalina Boulevard, Point Loma	Wednesdays: Library Annex: 5:15 to 6:00 p.m.
13	San Diego City (1)	Lucinda Parsons	619-282-1462	Saint Paul's Senior Homes & Services 328 Maple Street, San Diego	Thursdays: 5:30 p.m. Meets: St. Paul's CCC Chapel
14	San Diego City (2)	Bryan McNutt	619-540-6560	Saint Paul's Senior Homes & Services 328 Maple Street, San Diego	Mondays: 7:00 p.m. Meets: St. Paul's CCC Chapel
15	San Diego City (3)	Rev. Wilbert Miller	619-234-6149	First Lutheran Church 1420 3 rd Avenue, Downtown San Diego	Wednesdays: 7:00 p.m. Meets in the Church Sanctuary
16	Spring Valley (1)	Mary Jane Weismann	619-463-9743	Santa Sophia Catholic Church 9800 San Juan Street, Spring Valley	Mondays: 8:30 a.m. Bell Tower, Upper Room
17	Spring Valley (2)	Rom and Kay Smith	619-460-4723	Santa Sophia Catholic Church 9800 San Juan Street, Spring Valley	Mondays: 6:30 p.m. Bell Tower, Upper Room
18	University City	Michele Lambotte	858-558-9386	Our Mother of Confidence Catholic Church 3131 Governor Drive, San Diego 92122	Thursdays: 9:00 a.m. Katharine Drexel Room

“The great silence itself,
in which the Divine Self is,
is not the negation of thought.
It is its *transcendence*.”

≈ **Abhishiktanda (Fr. Henri LeSaux, OSB, 1910-1973)**

The Brilliance of New Beginnings

Long ago and far away a Native American tribe recorded its own creation story which described a massive cave. Not a dry, safe cave where people found shelter, but a dark, cold cave people feared and avoided. No light penetrated its sunken and shaded opening, which looked like a rocky mouth with crooked, teeth-like projections. It was said that the cave hated the light and plotted against the Sun.

The Sun was unaffected by the cave and always remained bright and radiant. When the cave fumed, the Sun shined. When the cave raged, the Sun beamed. Finally, the huge cave dared the Sun to come down to earth for a final battle, secretly planning to overpower the Sun. The Sun graciously agreed to come down, and later that evening, when the Sun began to set, the cave howled with a sinister laugh and swallowed the Sun whole. All the people of the land shook with fear and huddled together in the bitter-cold darkness that seemed endless.

All seemed lost until, all of a sudden, late that night, the cave began to belch out trillions of stars! Bright beams bounced off its glassy stalagmites; radiant rays glowed like mirrors on its crystal stalactites. Blasts of brilliance ricocheted up the cave's throat and exploded out of the cave's mouth to spray the sky with stars. Forever after, the cave glowed like a luminous quartz warmed from within, and the night sky now became a crystal chandelier that reminded heaven and earth of the Sun which came down to earth and set, only to explode into an even more expansive light.

Easter is the celebration of the triumph of God over a world that wanted to swallow up the Son of God on Good Friday. What looked like a dismal, miserable ending became a stunning, brilliant new beginning! Most of Jesus' disciples huddled together in fear grieving His absence. Instead, the resurrection was an explosion of Love into an even more expansive presence. Christ Jesus was no longer limited to human form, but burst forth into every cell and quark of the cosmos. Christ became 'no-thing,' no longer limited by the material order of space and time, so that he could be 'everything,' dwelling everywhere and in everything.

The three resurrection accounts in Luke's Gospel reveal how there are *potentially* three transforming moments in the life of every Christian. In Luke's first resurrection account, we are like the disciples who first hear from the women returning from the tomb that Christ has risen from the dead, but we have not seen Him, we have no experience of His presence. That's how we begin a life of faith. Others tell us about Christ, and we are invited into the life of a community of believers.

In Luke's second resurrection account, we meet Christ like the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We have learned things *about* Christ, but do not yet *know Him*. We are invited to see Christ in word and sacrament, in the breaking open of the scriptures and in the breaking of bread. Quite amazingly, as

these two disciples returned to Jerusalem, they understood that Jesus was simultaneously appearing to Peter and the other disciples while He was appearing to them! Word and sacrament both point to the understanding that Christ is simultaneously everywhere and in everything. Certainly, our commitment to a life of faith grows through word, ritual, and sacrament, but there is an even deeper way of *knowing* and *seeing* Christ.

In Luke's third resurrection account, we are invited to be like the disciples whom Jesus appeared to in the upper room, those that saw Him 'face to face.' Contemplative prayer and living opens us up to *see* Christ as He *is* in everyday life, not restricted by our physical senses, not confined by our emotions or expectations, not limited by the forms the mind imposes. Christ invites us to die to our old way of viewing life so that we can *see* with the eye of the heart.

Our Centering Prayer practice vastly accelerates seeing through this 'third eye,' which certainly opens us up to the presence of Christ in word and sacrament, but even moreso to that which transcends intellectual knowledge, where we *know* Christ 'face to face.' This is a 'knowing in unknowing.' It is a free-fall into the unknown, an invitation to drop our separate sense of self in order to *be one* with Christ.

The resurrection invites us to move beyond the limitations of our fearful, darkened caves. The Russian genius, P.D. Ouspensky once remarked, "The most difficult thing to give up is our suffering." We *are* afraid to give up our suffering, this letting go seems to make us too vulnerable. We don't want to lose control of what is known and comfortable, even if it is suffering. We resign ourselves to a life of suffering. But the brilliance of the resurrection burns away the veil of separation exposing what we are in Christ. In radical vulnerability, we allow Christ to love us into a whole new way of *being*, a whole new way of *seeing*, a whole new way of *living* ... free of 'me'!

Like the disciples, we initially miss recognizing the Risen One right in front of us, because we are looking through the eyes of 'me.' We miss Christ, not because He isn't present, but because He is *too close*: closer than our breathing, our heartbeat, our thinking, our feeling, closer than human consciousness itself. The Risen Christ *is* our inmost being, the very aliveness of our life, offering the Divine Invitation to be *no-thing*, so that we too can be *all things* to all people in Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 9:22).

As COSD takes the leap of faith into an adventure of new beginnings, we invite all who have been loyal contemplative companions, and greatly blessed by the fruits offered through COSD, to help sustain the energy that welcomes new passion, new involvement, new servant leadership so that many others may also learn to see through the eyes of the "contemplative dimension of the Gospel." May 'the good work that has begun in us be brought to its completion' in the Risen Christ. ♦

≈ Fr. Justin Langille, Outgoing Editor & Spiritual Director

The Four Guidelines of Centering Prayer

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

CONTEMPLATIVE COMPANIONS, the Centering Prayer Newsletter of the San Diego Chapter of Contemplative Outreach International, has been published for 14 years on a bimonthly basis at the Wellspring, the Center for Contemplative Outreach of San Diego (COSD). COSD is an ecumenical, spiritual organization supported primarily through the generous contributions of those who believe in the importance of Centering Prayer. As of May 2009, the new mailing address is 15420 Olde Highway 80, Space 98, El Cajon, California 92021. COSD's new telephone number (Kathy Di Fede's Home) is 619-749-4141. COSD's new email: kathyjoannemarie@gmail.com

Outgoing Editors: Fr. Justin Langille and Rachel Cave Outgoing Layout & Design: Fr. Justin Langille
Outgoing CC Staff: Rachel Cave, Renée Daniels, Minnie Miller, Marlene Rogers, and Mary Jane Weismann
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Send corrections or name withdrawals to: COSD Newsletter - 15420 Olde Highway 80, Space 98, El Cajon, CA 92021. Kathy Di Fede, Coordinator.

An Explosion of Divine Love

And He departed from our sight
that we might return to our heart,
and there find Him.

For He departed, and behold, He is here.

St. Augustine, Confessions

'I pray now, not I, but Christ prays in me.'

("Yet I live now, no longer I, but Christ lives in me")

A contemplative rephrasing of Galatians 2:20, by Fr. Laurence Freeman
From the dialogue between Thomas Keating and Laurence Freeman
at the 2008 Annual Conference, "Oneness, Unity in Contemplation."

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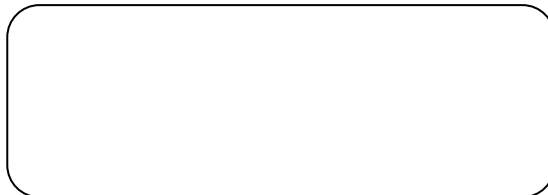


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This is the Final Issue of the
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□ □ The Contemplative Book Nook □ □

Prayer of the Heart: *The Contemplative Tradition of the Christian East*, by George Maloney, (Ave Maria Press, 2008, 212 pages). George Maloney, (1924-2005), a highly-popular teacher and retreat leader, authored over 80 books, journals, and popular articles, on prayer and Eastern Christian spirituality. *Prayer of the Heart* is regarded as one of his best and most influential books. This second edition has treasures sprinkled throughout it guiding us to the riches that await us in the peace of our hearts. “Turn deeply within and find Jesus Christ sending his Spirit of love upon you. It is he who will teach you in a non-verbal way how to know the Father and his Oneness with Jesus, the firstborn of the Father.” (See page 140). *Keep a copy of this fine work in your personal library.*

Eat This Book: *A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading*, by Eugene H. Peterson, (Eerdmans Publishing, 2006, 186 pages). Peterson’s work is an encouragement to contemplative prayer and living. He cautions the reader not simply to read the Bible the same way we read a textbook, a magazine, or even a great novel. Rather, he encourages Christians to feed on, imbibe, absorb, and digest Scripture. His approach underscores the prayerful practice of Lectio Divina, meditating on short passages of Scripture and allowing God to speak through the text. Peterson clarifies that Lectio Divina is not a systematic way of reading, but a “developed habit of living the text in Jesus’ name.” His final chapter is a reflection on his own experience of digesting the Scriptures. *Inspirational.*

*Life that has not been examined, is not worth living,
Life that has not been lived, is not worth examining.*

≈ Plato (428-347 BC), Greek Philosopher

For the latest schedule of COSD Centering Prayer Introductory Programs, Special Events, Current and Past Newsletters:

<http://www.contemplativeoutreachsd.org>

] COSD’s New Telephone: 619-749-4141 • COSD’s New E-mail address: kathyjoannemarie@gmail.com (Kathy Di Fede, COSD Coordinator).

] Contemplative Outreach International Websites: www.contemplativeoutreach.org or www.centeringprayer.com.

Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. International Office Telephone Number (Butler, New Jersey): 973-838-3384. Their e-mail address is office@coutreach.org.

Not part of a Prayer Group? Need More Information about Events? Call Kathy Di Fede at 619-749-4141