

Contemplative Outreach of Indianapolis

Fall 2022 Newsletter



Greetings, All!

If you are still planning to attend the Weekend Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat at the Benedict Inn, there is still time to register, but you need to do so quickly, as the deadline for registration is October 3. The retreat is October 21-23. See p. 2 for the registration form.

Our 2nd Saturday Lectio sessions on Zoom continue. Check out the calendar on p. 2 for details about our other activities this quarter, and don't forget the Contemplative Nature Walk on the winter equinox on December 21.

As usual, the last page is reserved for suggested spiritual reading, courtesy, this quarter, of the St. Thomas Aquinas, Lafayette Centering Prayer Group. Thanks so much for your contribution!

I hope everyone is enjoying our delightful fall weather, and I hope to see you at the retreat!

Peace,

Karen Spear
Communications
Servant Leadership Team

CALENDAR

2nd Saturdays—9:00-10:00 a.m. via Zoom

- October 8; November 12; and December 10
- Join us for Centering Prayer and *Lectio Divina*
- Reminder will be sent the Tuesday prior; Zoom link will go out Friday prior
- Use [this link](#) to access 2nd Saturdays readings from COI Public Folder in our Google Drive. (It's a good idea to bookmark this link for future reference).



4th Saturdays—9:00-11:00 a.m. in person and via Zoom

- November 26—John Drake on Julian of Norwich

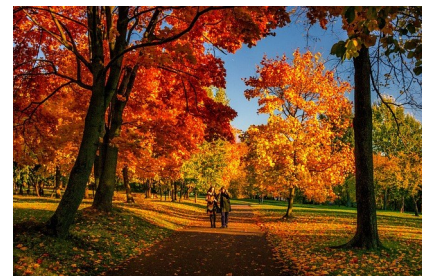
NOTE: There is only one 4th Saturday educational program this quarter. Please consider attending the Weekend Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat October 21-23 (details below).

Retreat

- October 21-23: Weekend Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat at the Benedict Inn and Retreat House in Beech Grove, IN, offered by the Indianapolis chapter of Contemplative Outreach—Click [this link](#) for more information and to register.

Contemplative Nature Walk

- The CO Indy Chapter is hosting its next contemplative nature walk for the winter solstice on Wednesday, December 21. See details on p. 5



What is an Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat? by Mary Kendall



Our Indianapolis chapter of Contemplative Outreach is blessed to be offering our 2nd Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat. I've attended several in Ferdinand, IN, and elsewhere in the years I've been part of COI. Last year we held a longer retreat at the Benedict Inn in Beech Grove, which was amazing. This October there is an opportunity for a weekend experience.

These centering prayer retreats were an opportunity to step away from the day-to-day home and

work setting and rest in the silence and deepen my relationship with God. There were several sittings of prayer each day, offering times to go deeper into the silence and say "yes" to being present to God. The rooms at Benedict Inn were cozy, and other nooks and crannies were available to be in silence. There were places to be with God in nature – walking in the nature flower garden, walking the labyrinth, sitting on a bench or chairs scattered throughout the grounds. God was everywhere inviting me to be present and attentive to His presence within myself.

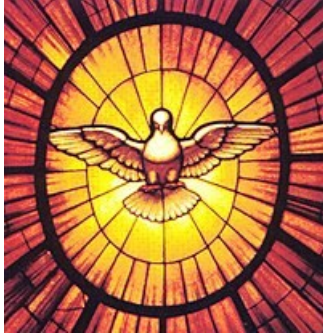
We watched videos from a series by Fr. Thomas Keating – which never get old. I find there is always something new that strikes me each time I listen and breathe in Fr. Keating's sharing on the human condition as I journey to consent to God and deepen my personal relationship.

For me, the retreats are a time of renewal for my spiritual well-being and to ponder and sit with the 4th Theological Principal: "Consenting to the Divine Presence and action within us is the heart and soul of Centering Prayer." To respond to the call of the Spirit is to consent to God's presence and action within myself and to the transformative process initiated by the Spirit, which enables participation in the divine nature and to become one family in Christ.

These retreat opportunities offer a unique opportunity to enter into silence in community. We practice both exterior and interior silence. Exterior silence is quiet outwardly. Interior silence is allowing a space in which God can communicate with me as I quiet that internal chatter.

During the retreat, silence is practiced, except during scheduled discussions, some meals with conversation, or private interviews. Exterior silence is the practice of silence of the body, speech, and mind. Any form of communication with others takes us away from our intent to be with God. There is an unexplainable connectedness of community being together in silence. We come together in silence to encounter oneness with the other and as a result we soul-friend with one another and bond in silence.

Why I Retreat by Mary Beth Riner



Retreat – is this the re-giving of a treat? Hmmm... In many ways going on retreat is a gift I give myself. Or maybe going on retreat is a gift given to me by the Spirit. One thing I've learned over my years of retreating, whether 3-days, 5-days, 8-days, 21-days in length, is that they are a treat. By this I mean they are a special time. The meals are prepared for me, and there are beautiful grounds to enjoy, spiritual companions to pray with, and small programs for thoughtful attention. There is a retreat leader who has prepared material on the retreat topic and offers individual listening sessions where I can share how the retreat is going for me. And most special of all, I have plenty of time to sit with myself and Christ's Spirit within, who rejoices in this time we have together. Over my many years of retreating, there has been an inner shift in my awareness of the inner presence of the Spirit - at work loving me.



Are you still hoping to go on the Weekend Intensive Retreat October 21-23?

The deadline for registering for the retreat is coming up fast on **Monday, October 3**. But there's still time to register if you act fast!

Click on [this link](#) for the registration form and information. Fill out the form and return it to Mary Kendall at the address provided.

Review: *Altogether Gift: A Trinitarian Spirituality*

by Michael Downey

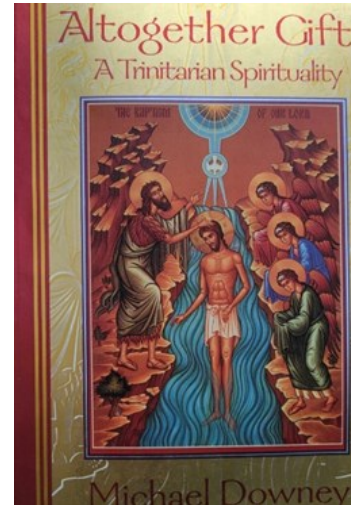
Reviewed by Ed Metzler

In a review quoted on the back cover of this book, *America* magazine says, “Dense, abstract theological notions are expressed in prose on the brink of poetry. In ‘Altogether Gift,’ chilly doctrines are expressed in a way that moves the heart to prayer.”

When I received the book 15 years ago, I immediately shelved it. I couldn’t imagine rehashing that inscrutable theology nuns and priests tried to drill into me in 14 years of schooling.

*(From “The Baltimore Catechism,” Question 181:
Can we find an example to fully illustrate the mystery
of the Blessed Trinity?*

*A: We cannot find an example to fully illustrate the
mystery of the Blessed Trinity, because the mysteries of
our holy religion are beyond comparison.)*



But while cleaning out my bookcase this spring, I decided to give it another try. I’m glad I did. Downey says his mission is “to make available in somewhat more accessible language that great mystery which the grammar of the Trinity seeks to express. It is my hope that [it will] be an invitation to receive the gift and the life that flows with and from it ..., [I]t holds out a vision and offers an invitation to receive the gift and take up the task of deification through which we participate in the very life of God.”

Downey says the doctrine of the Trinity is the Church’s attempt to describe the mystery at the heart of God’s superabundant outpouring of Love and the nature of relationship, which God is. “What the Trinitarian doctrine seeks to throw light on is the altogether relational character of the Love who loves in and through pouring life forth for the other,” Downey writes. “It is a grammar of gift.”

In 143 pages, Downey makes the Trinity doctrine “practical,” if I can use that word for such a lofty doctrine. “The Trinitarian doctrine is expressive of what it means to participate in the life of God through Jesus Christ in the Spirit,” he writes. In words that will resonate with practitioners of centering prayer, he writes, “It is true that prayer is a discipline, a practice. But prayer, the silent, loving, attentive heart at rest in God, is a whole way of life. ... Prayer is nothing more or less than breathing with the Spirit, speaking the Word.”

This short, readable book is a pleasure and a blessing. It not only makes the doctrine of the Trinity clearer, but shows its everyday implications for those on the spiritual path.

Contemplative Nature Walks

*Spring Equinox March 20, Summer Solstice June 20,
Autumn Equinox September 22, Winter Solstice December 21, 2022*

Getting outside into fresh air can bring joy and peace as the sun shines on us, the wind blows across our skin, and we see new life, or life in new ways.

Wind

by Mary Beth Riner

The same wind that blows across my face
blows across the face of all people everywhere.

It is the same wind that blows across all the continents, countries,
cities, and communities.

In this wind is the Spirit of Oneness. Let us turn our face to the wind and be filled with the Oneness of all our brothers and sisters.



Walking Tips

Preparing:

- Decide your place, pace and time.

Beginning:

- Stand still for a few moments, take some deep breaths, and set an intention of being present. Consider bringing to mind a very brief scripture passage, or a sacred word, to support your effort to be present in a relaxed way.

Walking:

- As you begin, set a pace that allows you to pay attention to the environment. Let yourself notice the ground as you take steps. Consider how you are both blessing the ground and being blessed by the ground.
- Notice what draws your attention. Look for what shimmers or what the Japanese poet Basho called “a glimpse of the underglimmer.” Become aware of the total environment and receive what may come as gifts (sights, sounds, wind, colors, scents, other persons, other beings, etc.)
- Develop a sense of being in a sanctuary, in the presence of God. Pause regularly to simply receive the gifts. Breathe them in. Let these gifts have space in your heart. Then continue on until something else catches your attention.

Ending:

- Stop and remain standing for a moment. Savor and appreciate the opportunity to walk on the sacred ground in the presence of God.

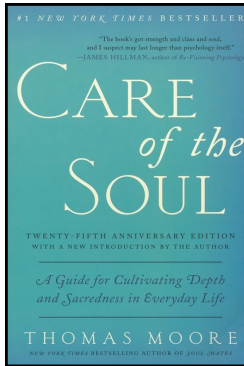
Alternative:

- If it is not feasible for you to be outside, consider gazing out a window and noting the environment with a contemplative attitude.

WHAT WE'RE READING

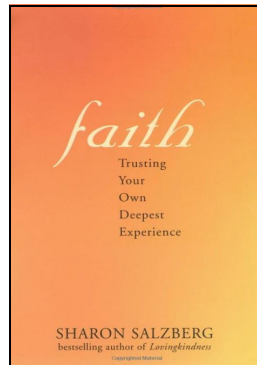
Over this quarter and the next, members of the St. Thomas Aquinas, Lafayette, Centering Prayer Group will share with us some titles of their personal spiritual reading.

If your group is interested in sharing what your members are reading in their personal prayer time, please contact Karen Spear at kspear@marian.edu.



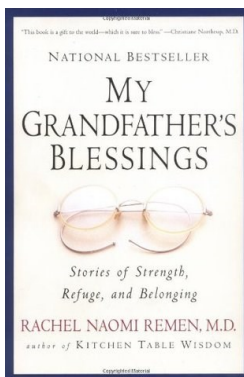
[Care of the Soul](#)

by Thomas Moore



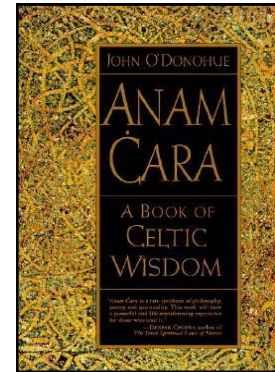
[Faith: Trusting Your Own
Deepest Experience](#)

by Sharon Salzberg



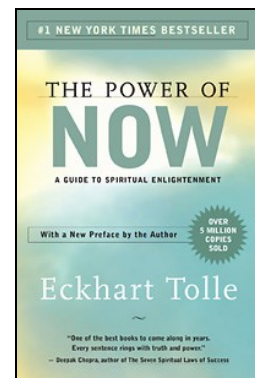
[My Grandfather's Blessings](#)

by Rachel Naomi Remen



[Anam Cara: A Book
of Celtic Wisdom](#)

by John O'Donohue



[The Power of Now](#)

by Eckhart Tolle