



The Centering Prayer logo has been seen in several ancient locations — on an ancient church in the land of Uz where Job resided, in old Jerusalem near the original stairs to the Temple; on the Southern Wall of the Old City near the Huldah Gates; and at a church in Galilee. The logo is taken from the monogram of Job's Redeemer, a symbol of patient waiting.

Centering Prayer Network Australia exists to promote the contemplative practice of Centering Prayer as taught by Fr Thomas Keating, an American Trappist monk at St Benedict's Abbey in Snowmass, Colorado, USA. We are part of a worldwide spiritual network of individuals and small faith communities committed to renewing the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in everyday life through the practice of Centering Prayer.

The contemplative dimension of the Gospel manifests itself in an ever deepening union with the living Christ and the practical caring for others that flows from that relationship.

Centering Prayer Network Australia Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

SEPTEMBER 2009

Contemplative Outreach Theological Principles discussed at 2009 Centering Prayer Network (Australia) National Conference



***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 neighbour as
yourself.***
Luke 10:27

Theological Principles

1. Contemplative Outreach is a community of individuals and Centering Prayer groups committed to living the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in everyday life.
2. A commitment to the

daily practice of Centering Prayer is the primary expression of belonging.

3. Listening to the word of God in Scripture through the practice of Lectio Divina is encouraged, particularly its movement into contemplative prayer, which a daily practice of Centering Prayer facilitates.

4. The source of Centering Prayer is the Indwelling Trinity. Its practice consists of responding to the call of the Holy Spirit to consent to the Divine presence and action within.

5. The Divine presence affirms our basic core of goodness made in the image of God.

6. The Divine action is the process of transformation in Christ which inspires and deepens our consent.

7. The contemplative dimension of the Gospel manifests as an

ever-deepening union with Christ and the practical caring for others that flows from this relationship. It reveals the deeper meaning of Christ's life and teaching.

8. Our relationship with the living Christ is the bond uniting us together in mutual love.

9. While formed by our respective denominations, we are united in our common search for God and our experience of Christ through Centering Prayer.

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

11. We affirm our solidarity with the contemplative dimension of

"No experience in this life can be God as he is in himself because God infinitely transcends all categories and experiences." Thomas Keating. *Invitation to Love*. Page 102.

other religions and sacred traditions.

12. Through the continuing practice of Centering Prayer, we experience a deepening commitment to the needs and rights of each member of the human family and an increasing respect for the interdependence of all creation.

13. We foster a spirit of unity, generosity and utmost charity in all our relationships.

14. Following the teachings of Jesus, we exercise leadership through an attitude of humility, listening and service.

15. We recognize and maintain a spiritual relationship with Saint Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado.

16. We acknowledge that any good accomplished by Contemplative Outreach is the work of the Holy Spirit.

So that they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in me, and I in you, may they also be one in us.
John 17:21

Our basic core of goodness is our true Self. Its center of gravity is God. The acceptance of our basic goodness is a quantum leap in the spiritual journey.

God and true Self are not separate. Though we are not God, God and our true Self are the same thing.

THOMAS KEATING
Open Mind, Open Heart, Guidelines For Christian Life, Growth and Transformation, No 2 & 3

Administrative Principles:

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.

I Corinthians 12:4-7

1. Contemplative Outreach is an evolving community with an expanding vision and deepening practice, serving the changing needs of Christian contemplatives.

2. As members of this evolving community we are responsible to foster and transmit the Vision of Contemplative Outreach.

3. We fulfil our Vision through attraction to the Centering Prayer practice not by proselytizing.

4. The gift of contemplative practice enables us to bring an attitude of humility, listening and service to our daily activities.

5. We reach decisions through discernment and consensus.

6. We serve in leadership, ordinarily in a voluntary capacity.

7. All who provide Contemplative Outreach services do so in consideration of, and in balance with their personal, family, and professional responsibilities.

8. We avoid indebtedness and owning real estate in order to remain free to devote our resources to sharing the gift of Centering Prayer.

9. We employ staff and contractors as our growth may require.

10. We cooperate with church authorities in the areas where we work, but do not seek to become a religious or lay institute.

11. We wish to remain accessible to everyone. For this reason, we do not endorse particular causes or take part in public controversies, whether religious, political or social. As private individuals, we act according to our conscience.

Reflection:

God's first language is Silence. Everything else is a translation.

--Thomas Keating

Centering Prayer Guidelines

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.

* Thoughts include body sensations, feelings, images, concepts and reflections.

We're on the Web:
[www.janssencentre.org/
meditation/cp-network-australia](http://www.janssencentre.org/meditation/cp-network-australia)