

CONTEMPLATION IN A CISTERCIAN CONTEXT

Compiled and Edited by

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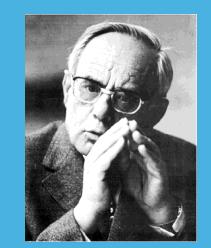
Why this topic? Why now?



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"The church of the future will be mystical or it will not be at all."

``````Karl Rahner







# What is the first word in the LCG Plan of Life?



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### CONTEMPLATON

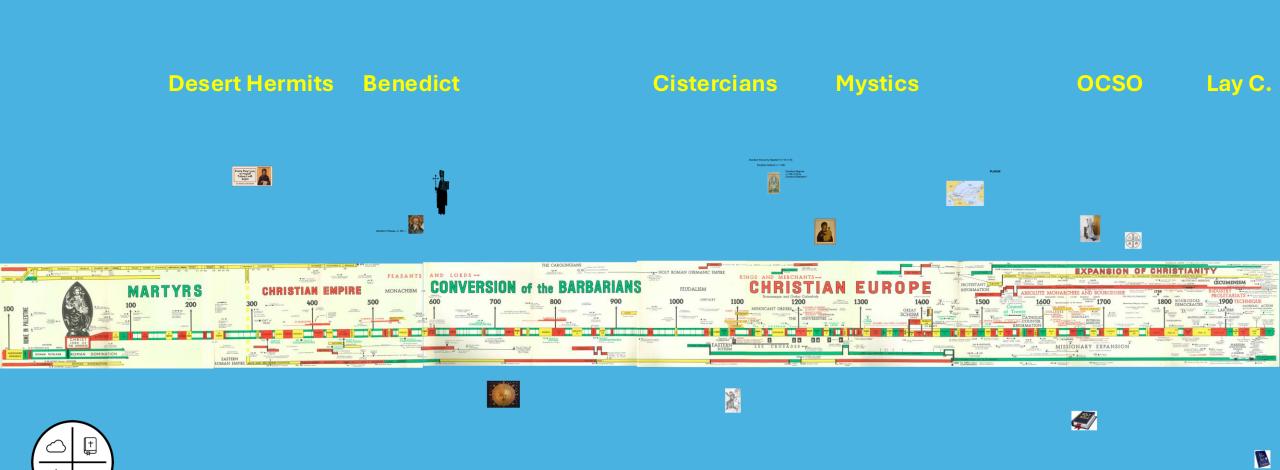
# What is the "contemplative life"?

Fr. Michael Casagram, OCSO
Abbey of Gethsemani

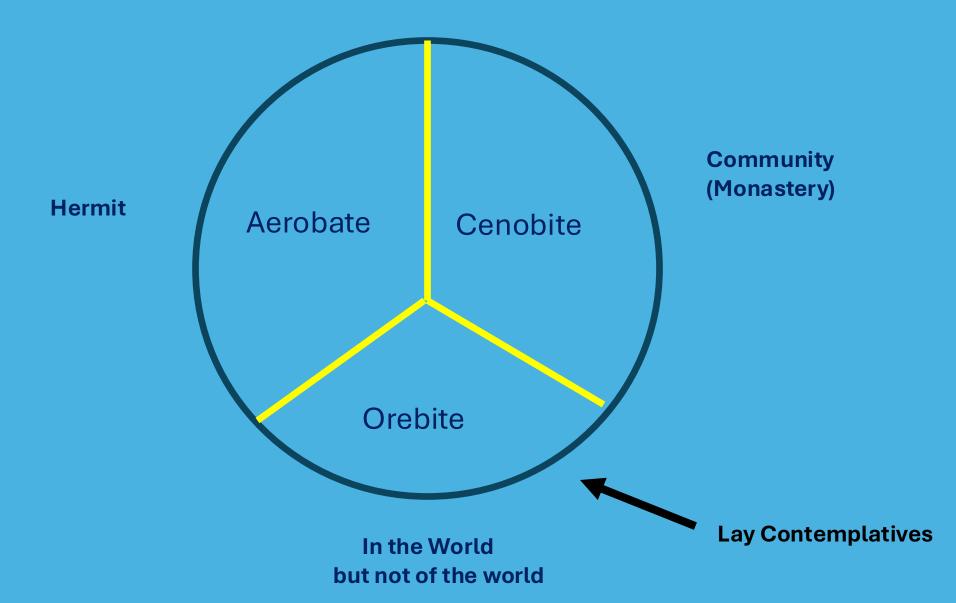


"Contemplation is the highest expression of man's intellectual and spiritual life. It is that life itself, fully awake, fully active, fully aware that it is alive. It is spiritual wonder. It is spontaneous awe at the sacredness of life, of being. It is gratitude for life, for awareness and for being. It is a vivid realization of the fact that life and being in us proceed from an invisible, transcendent and infinitely abundant source. Contemplation is, above all, awareness of the reality of that Source."

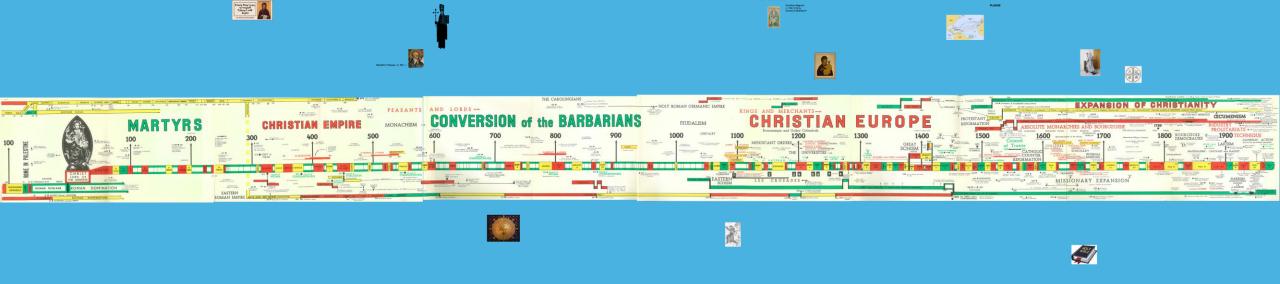
**Thomas Merton** 



### **Contemplative Types**







### The Cloud of Unknowing

Merton

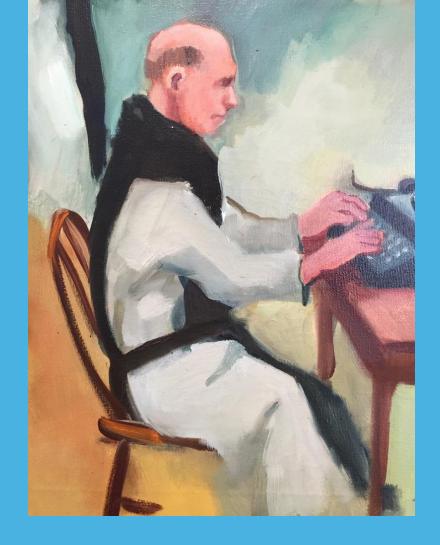
Keating



Lay Cistercians?



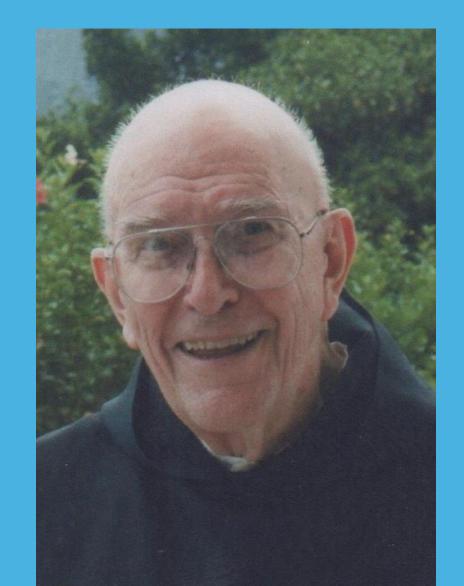




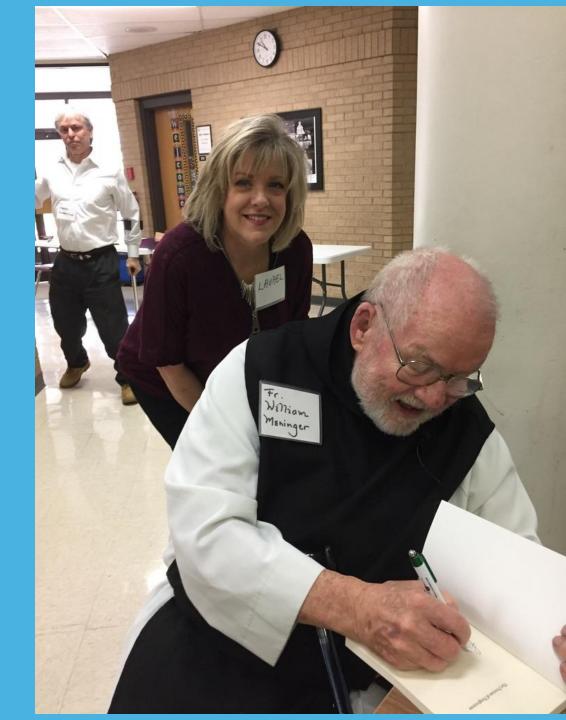
**Thomas Merton** 



### Fr. Thomas Keating



### Fr. William Menninger

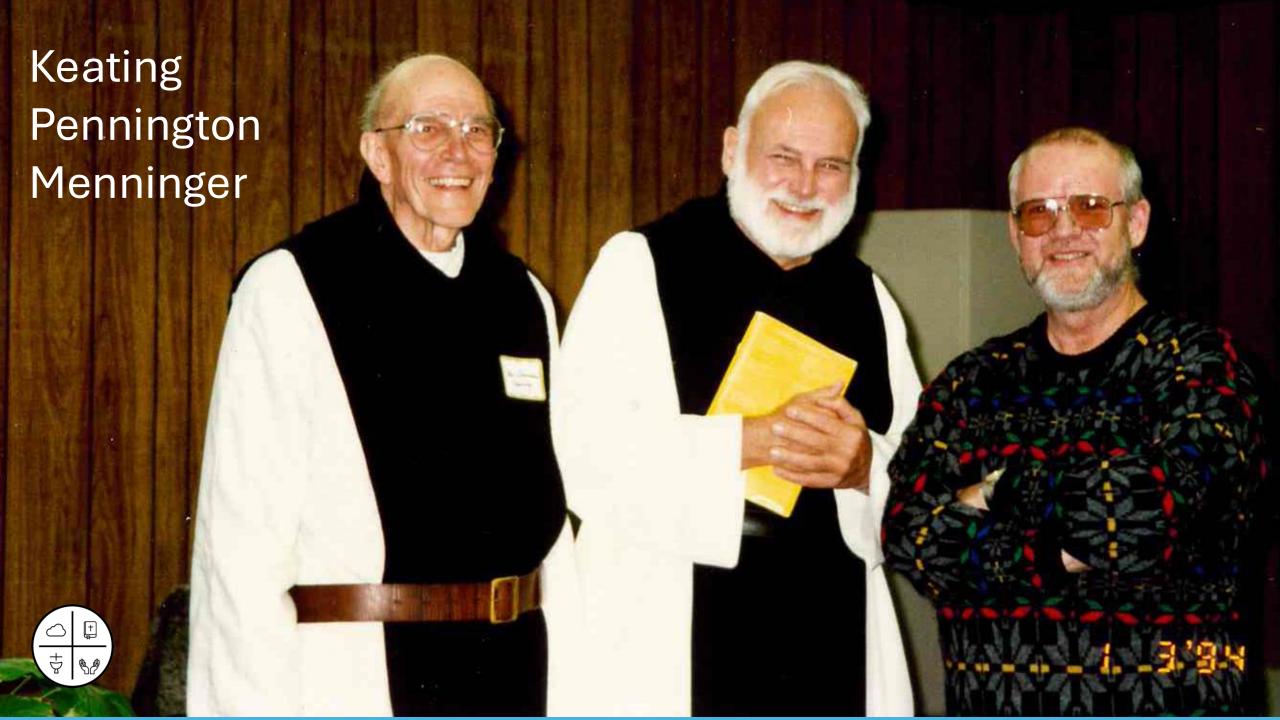




Fr. Basil Pennington







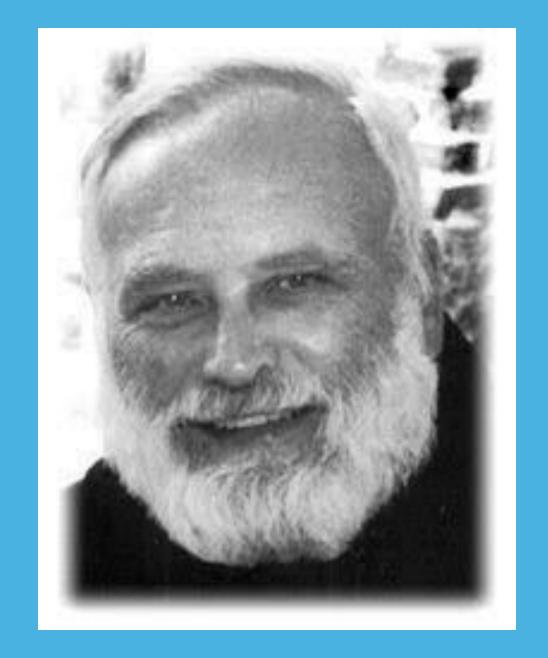


# **Centering Prayer**



# "Conceived in a Monastery by Cistercians"

Basil Pennington
Talks About
Centering Prayer,
Prayer of the Heart





### **VOCABULARY**



**Source: Open Mind Open Heart, Keating** 

Lectio Divina is our starting point.



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Contemplation is what we "receive."



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The Contemplative life is what we "become."



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The Plan of Life provides "modules" that underpin living this life.



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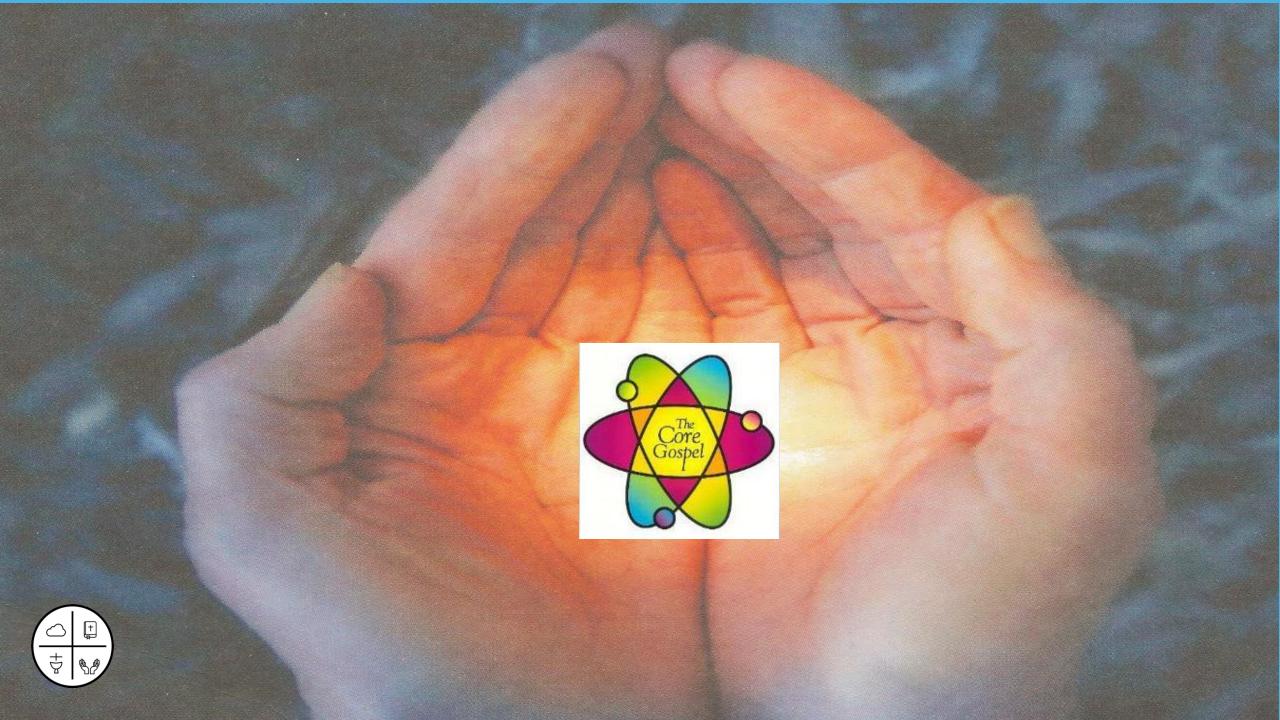
In the end it is about apophatically experiencing LOVE.



**Unleashing God's Power** 

**Thru The** 

**Holy Spirit** 



### WHO AM I?

### Mind, Body, or Spirit



# Could it be that "we" are neither our mind nor our body?



"The mind is an embodied and relational process that regulates the flow of energy and information." **Daniel Siegal** 



### "The Lord Is My Data Processor"

If the mind is indeed a regulating process, it is not the "real thing". It is like a computer's operating system that works in the background. Sometimes a computer's OS gets tangled up, overloaded or hit by a virus. It slows down, won't do what we want, or simply crashes. And sometimes programs (malware) are inserted that are really damaging. The human mind can be affected in the same way.



Centering prayer puts the mind "on hold" so that the inefficiencies (trauma, incorrect thinking, afflictive emotions, etc.) can be subconsciously processed (by the Holy Spirit) out of it.



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Perhaps (in Christ) we, at our deepest level, are one with the s/Spirit.



"If "we" are not our mind or our body, then who are we?

Perhaps (in Christ) we, at our deepest level, are one with the s/Spirit.

And God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) are our data processors.

## **PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER**



God's power is unleashed by the Holy Spirit in the form of love at the silent intersection of study and prayer.



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The Holy Spirit's voice is as loud as your willingness to listen.

#### A WEEDLESS GARDEN

The Holy Spirit functions initially through our subconscious minds, a part of us science was not even aware of until the last century. Thus, the phrase "The kingdom of God is within you." God is everywhere and God is also within one's subconscious; so God with one's intentional consent - in the silence between one's thoughts, and through the knowledge found in the wisdom of the Bible and through others who exude His presence – is able to directly break through to your conscious mind, enter into a personal relationship, and empower you to interact with His will and love on a conscious level. This, if given the chance, will result in a transformation over time from the Human Condition to a new condition that exhibits the 'fruit of the Spirit', including love, joy, peace, etc. The unnatural 'broken' patterns of behavior are deprogrammed and replaced with one's 'true self'. And THAT is the life you really want and deserve to have, a weedless garden.





P.S.

CONTEMPLATION is not the same as CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

## **Centering Prayer**



...a receptive method of Christian silent prayer which deepens our relationship with God, the Indwelling Presence ... a prayer in which we can experience God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself.



## **Centering Prayer**



This method of prayer is both a **relationship** with God and a **discipline** to deepen that relationship.

A movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with him.

Prepares us to receive the gift of contemplation.



Is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer.

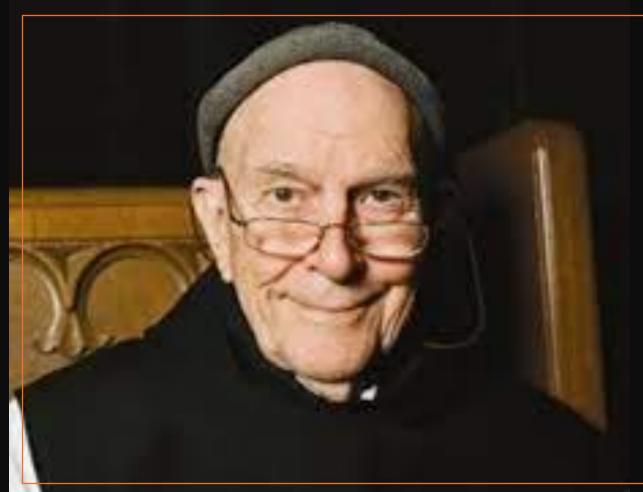
## **Centering Prayer**



"When the day comes you will know that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you."

(John 14:20)





Let's hear it from Thomas Keating himself.



• 1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.



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- 3. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.



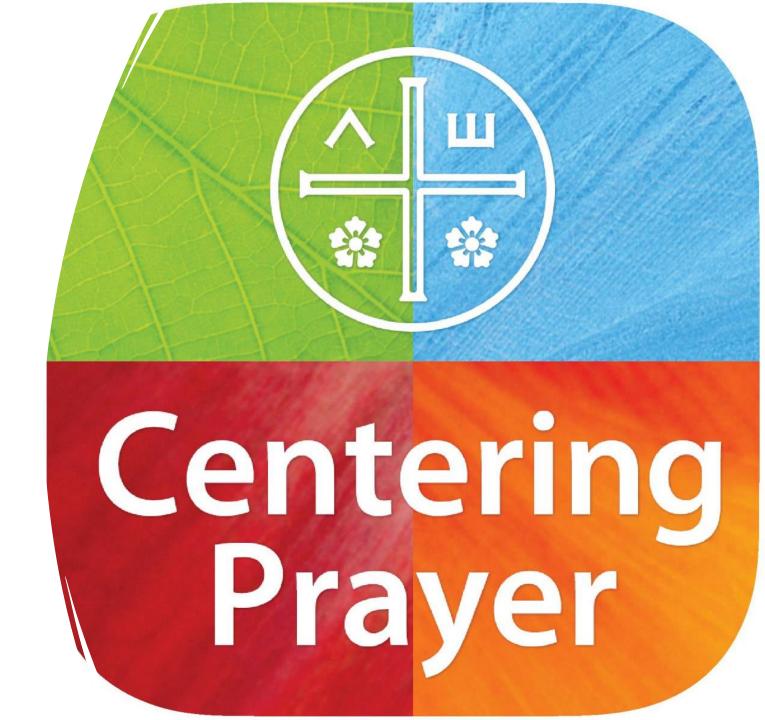
- 1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
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- 3. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
- 4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes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





## There's an app for that!

- You can find the app in the the <u>App Store</u> or the
- Google Play Store if you have an Android; search for
- Centering Prayer, select the one by Contemplative Outreach.



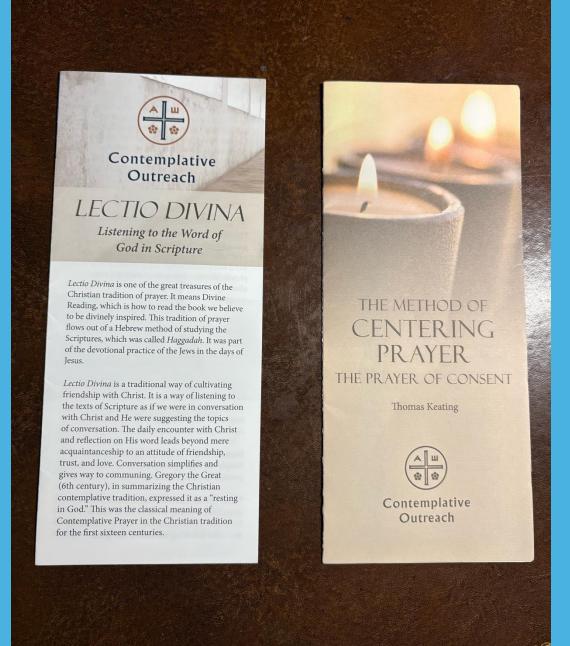


#### **Lectio Divina**



Or

Read
Reflect
Respond
Rest



#### **Centering Prayer**

- 1. Choose sacred word.
- 2. Settle comfortably.
- 3. Return ever so gently.
- 4. Remain in silence.







## QUESTIONS?



#### **Presentation Modules**

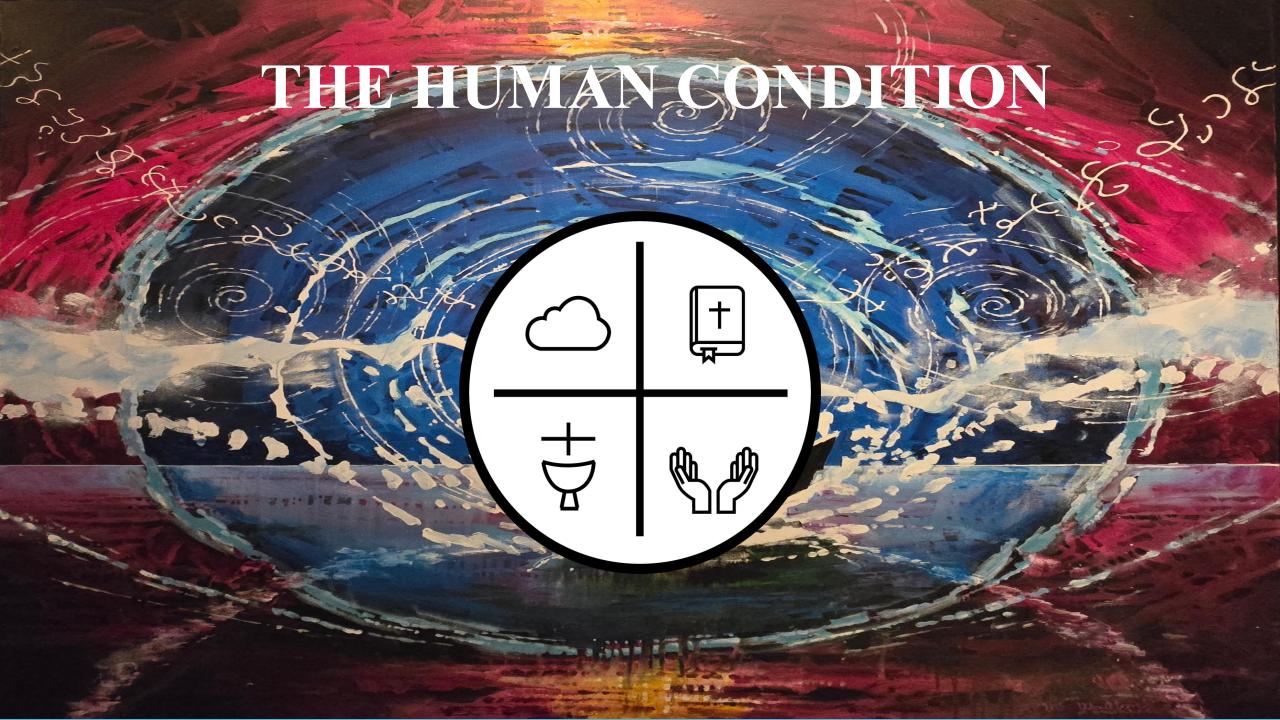


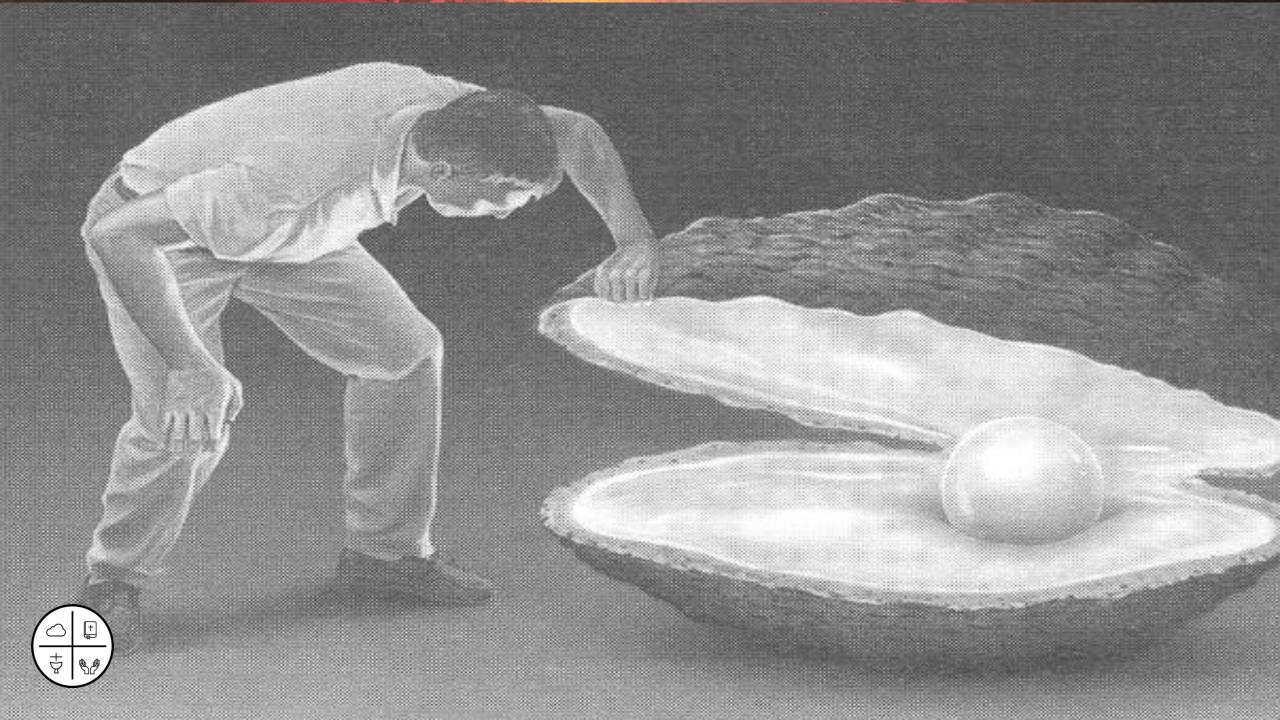
The Cistercian's Contemplative Life

**Centering Prayer & Lectio Divina** 

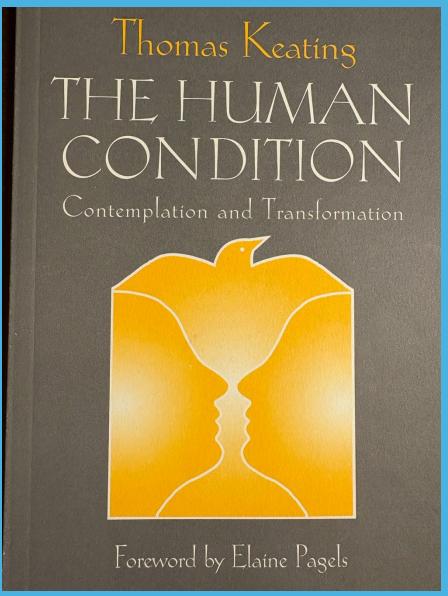
**The Human Condition** 





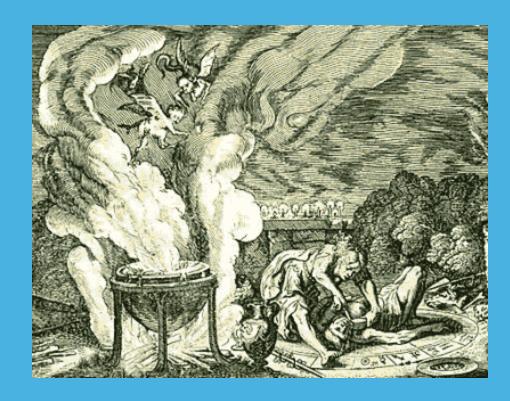






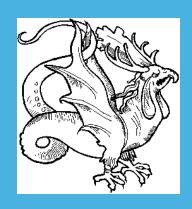


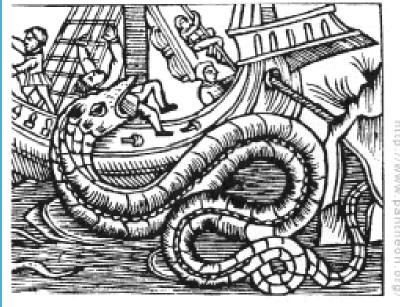
### Mideval Witches & Serpents:





Also: Indulgences & Relics yield miraculous stories

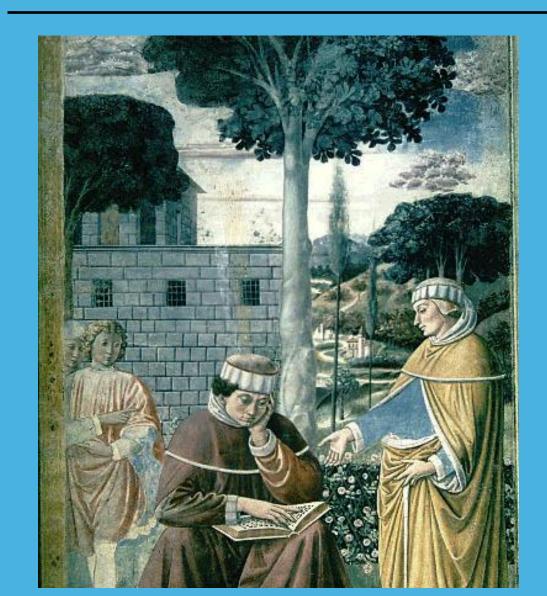








#### Original Sin (an orthodox doctrine)



Augustine of Hippo (354-430)



#### Three consequences:

1. We don't know where *happiness* is to be found (ignorance);



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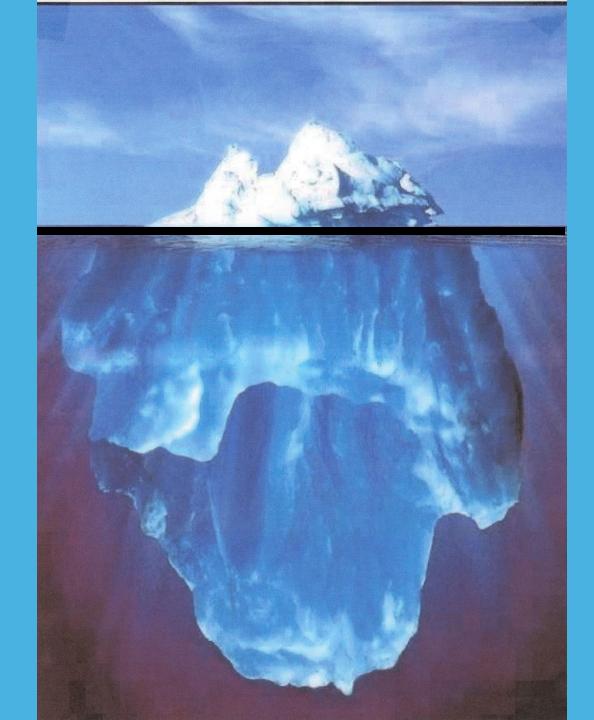
This has been Christianity's dilemma.

#### Understanding the Unconscious

Contemporary psychology has provided a knowledge of the unconscious.



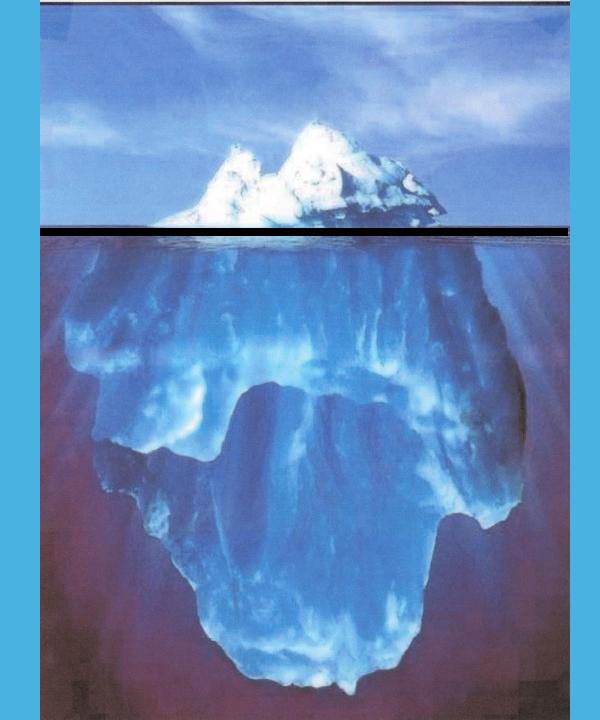
We can only commit to God that part of ourselves which we are aware of, that portion that lies 'above' the water, in the conscious portion of the mind.





Much of our spiritual work occurs in the <u>unconscious</u> area which we cannot perceive, below the water.





#### We All Have Three Fundamental Needs



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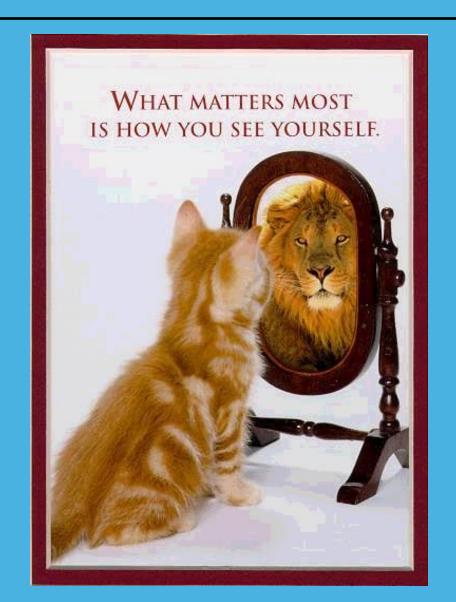
SAFETY / SECURITY

AFFECTION / ESTEEM

POWER / CONTROL



#### **The Homemade Self**





Original State \_\_\_\_ Deficit State Emotions/Feelings\_\_\_\_ Patterns



**Original State** 

**Deficit State Emotions/Feelings** Patterns

**Acceptance** 

Belonging

Competence

**Equity** 

**Identity** 

**Security** 

**Significance** 

**Trancendence** 



Acceptance

Belonging

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**Trancendance** 

Rejection, shame, depression

Loneliness, longing for intimacy

Inadequacy, failure, low esteem

Being vulnerable, exploited

Confusion, emptiness, instability

Anxiety, mistrust, uncertainty

Worthlessness, low esteem, jealousy

Meaninglessness, hopelessness,

chaos, low spiritual well-being



#### **Original State**

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#### **Deficit State Emotions/Feelings**

Rejection, shame, depression
Loneliness, longing for intimacy
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#### **Patterns**

Perfectionist
Codependency
Overcompensation
Power seeking, give up
Suppressed anger
Compulsion disorders
Sloppy living



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#### SIN



| Original State                                                        | Deficit State Emotions/Feelings                                                                                                                                                                                                | <u>Patterns</u>                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Acceptance Belonging Competence Equity Identity Security Significance | Rejection, shame, depression Loneliness, longing for intimacy Inadequacy, failure, low esteem Being vulnerable, exploited Confusion, emptiness, instability Anxiety, mistrust, uncertainty Worthlessness, low esteem, jealousy | Perfectionist Codependency Overcompensation Power seeking, give up Suppressed anger Compulsion disorders Sloppy living |
| Trancendence                                                          | Meaninglessness, hopelessness, chaos, low spiritual well-being                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                        |

SAFE LOST



**Original State Deficit State Emotions/Feelings Patterns** Perfectionist Acceptance Rejection, shame, depression Loneliness, longing for intimacy Belonging Codependency Inadequacy, failure, low esteem Competence Overcompensation **Equity** Power seeking, give up Being vulnerable, exploited **Identity** Confusion, emptiness, instability Suppressed anger **Security** Anxiety, mistrust, uncertainty Compulsion disorders **Significance** Worthlessness, low esteem, jealousy Sloppy living **Trancendence** Meaninglessness, hopelessness, chaos, low spiritual well-being

SAFE \_\_\_\_\_ LOST



## The Journey

To the extent these are perceived to have been withdrawn (especially in early childhood), we devise programs for happiness that result in our "false self system" that is driven by the "ego". In this state, we don't know where true happiness is. We look for it in all the wrong places. And if we ever find it, the Will is too weak to follow thru. This is known as "the human condition". Thomas Keating



## The Journey

"The ego is blind to the presence of God."
Randy Harris





# CIRCUS





## WHO AM I?

Body, Mind or Spirit



## "The mind is an embodied and relational process that regulates the flow of energy and information."

**Daniel Siegal** 



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Centering Prayer (leading to Contemplative prayer) puts the mind "on hold" so that the inefficiencies (trauma, incorrect thinking, afflictive emotions, etc.) can be subconsciously processed (by the Holy Spirit) out of it.



## "I want everything I come in contact with to be affected by the presence of God in my life."



Sr. Alice PottsSenior ChaplainM. D. Anderson Cancer Center

Remember: The contemplative life is "...becoming a temple of God"



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Perhaps (in Christ) we, at our deepest level, are one with the Holy Spirit.

And God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) are our data processors.





The Lord is my data processor I shall not be without an answer.

He key-punches my Goals.

He fills my memory banks with His love Het computes the right answers for His name's sake.

Yea, though I pass through situations without precedent will not worry. Thy truth and computer, they guide me

Thou steerest my hands as I stand before my tasks Thou fillest my mind with faith My heart overflows.

Surely happiness and love shall follow me all the days of my life. For my subconscious computer is in the hands of the Lord forever.

Parsy.



(1943 - 1996)



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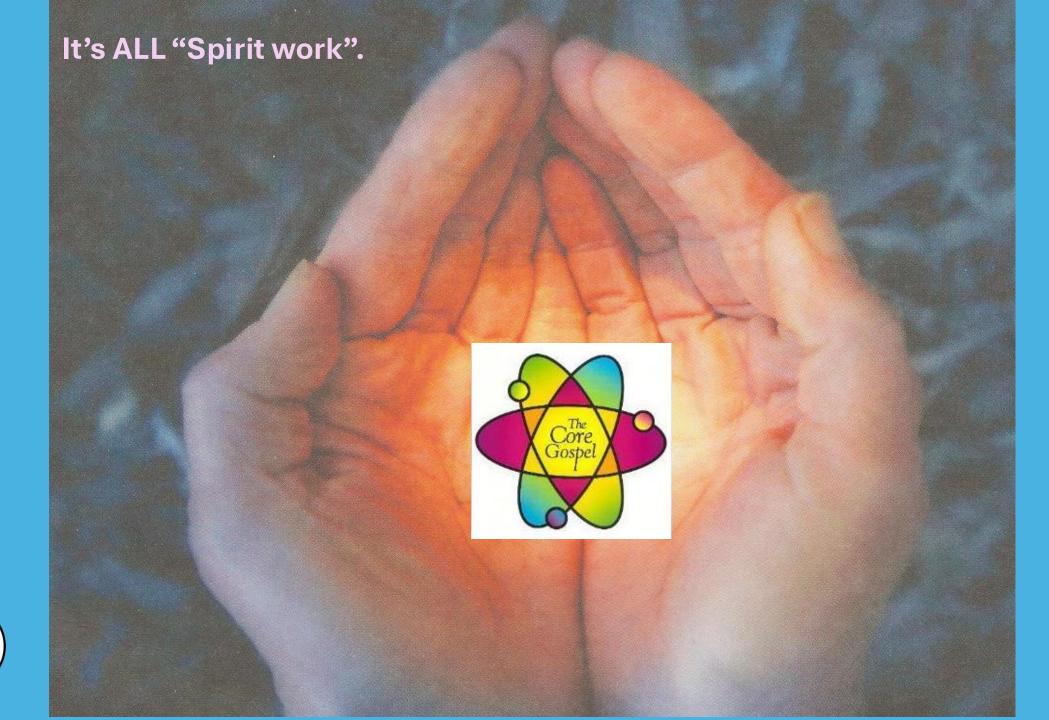
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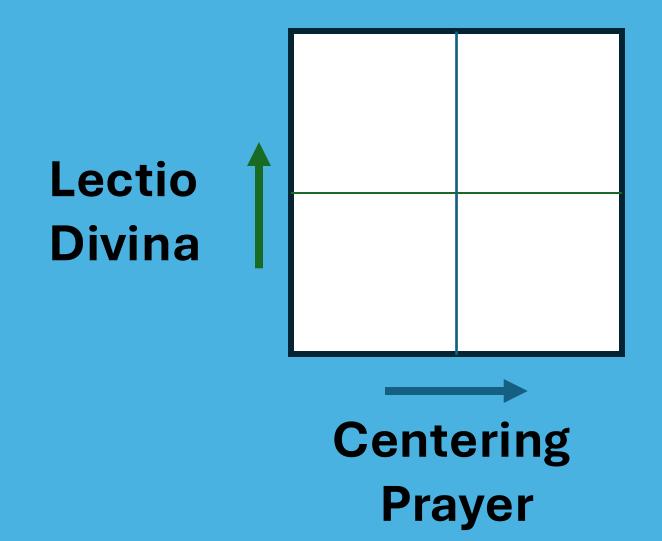








#### DISPOSING ONE'S SELF TO CONTEMPLATION





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