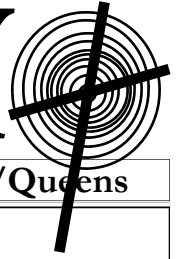

THE CONTEMPLATIVE LINK



January 2010

Newsletter of Contemplative Outreach of Long Island/Queens

Revisoning the Long Island/Queens **Contemplative Outreach Chapter ***

As you know, this Coordinating Committee for Contemplative Outreach of Long Island/Queens has been in existence for more than 10 years with mostly the same members for the whole time. After much discussion and soul searching on our part, we feel that there is a need to transition to new leadership. Contemplative Outreach has various models of chapter leadership that we can consider for Long Island:

(1) a single coordinator (2) co-coordinators -2 people (3) coordinator with an assistant.

All of the above leadership models include a Service Team of folks who assume responsibility for various activities/events of the Chapter. This way the Coordinator plus the Service Teams are considered the Leadership Team of Contemplative Outreach – Long Island. The present Leadership Team will be there to mentor you in this transition. With us helping when needed i.e. being presenters at Introduction to Centering Prayer Workshops, etc. we hope the new Leadership will find their roles easier.

To facilitate this process, we will be hosting a Visioning Conference on

Saturday, May 22nd at the Friends Meeting House in Westbury.

Roseanne Havrid, Eastern Regional Representative for Contemplative Outreach, will be facilitating this Conference. She has facilitated many of these conferences all over the country with great success.

I would like to ask each and every one of you to take the next months leading up to our Visioning conference in May to seriously consider what you can do for Contemplative Outreach of LI/Queens. We have been given this wonderful gift of Centering Prayer and I am sure that it is in the plan for this prayer to spread and be shared all over and, for us, especially on Long Island. In order to continue to offer events for the growth of everyone such as Introductory Workshops, Days of Enrichment, Retreats, Silent Saturdays, etc. we need people to organize and run them; we have been doing this all these years. I could go on and on, but I think you get my drift. We pray during the months leading to the Visioning Conference that you will consider how you will support Contemplative Outreach of Long Island/Queens with your time and talents.

Peace, The Committee for Contemplative Outreach of LI/Queens

* Remarks presented by Barbara Sullivan on Dec. 14 at the Advent Evening of Prayer

Revisioning the Long Island/Queens Contemplative Outreach Chapter *

Saturday, May 22nd at the Friends Meeting House in Westbury.

For additional information, contact Barbara Sullivan @ 516-481-0472

2010 UNITED IN PRAYER DAY: March 20, 2010 9:30 AM

Contemplative Outreach invites all to participate in the annual Global Day of Prayer at the Friends Meeting House, Westbury Coffee and Tea served in the morning. Please bring a brown bag lunch.

The day will include centering prayer, sharing, and fellowship. Suggested donation is \$15.

For additional information, contact Barbara Sullivan @ 516-481-0472

- ***New! Easier! DIRECTIONS TO OUR WEBSITE:***

Go to: www.centeringprayerny.org

Under LINKS: Click on "Long Island"

Prayer Group News: Notify Barbara Sullivan 516- 481-0472 of changes to your prayer group schedules and arrangements. Newcomers, please call the facilitator ahead of time to verify times and places. ***Please check our website for current prayer group listings!***

MANY THANKS TO VINNY AND TERRY CIRRITO for maintaining our mailing list and mailing the Contemplative Link to many of our members!

Your generous assistance is very much appreciated!

PRAYER GROUP LISTINGS 2010

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST LIST OF LOCAL CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER SUPPORT GROUPS

OR CONTACT BARBARA SULLIVAN

516 481 0472

PLEASE NOTIFY US OF A CHANGE OF ADDRESS for the Link!

Send changes of names and/or addresses or additions or removals from our mailing list to:

Mr. Vinny Cirrito

100 Grant Street Massapequa Park, NY 11762

CENTERING PRAYER WEEKEND RETREAT

Our Annual Silent Retreat

ST. IGNATIUS RETREAT HOUSE - SEARINGTOWN RD. MANHASSET

FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY

JUNE 25, 26, 27, 2010

This retreat is for beginners in Centering Prayer as well as those advanced in the practice. The retreat offers an opportunity to develop your relationship with God in a prayerful atmosphere of silence, solitude and community support. Periods of Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, organized presentations, and personal prayer time are scheduled. The spacious, wooded, and beautifully landscaped grounds of this estate are available for walking, reading and personal reflection.

A donation is requested.

\$245 PER PERSON FOR PRIVATE ROOM

\$215 PER PERSON FOR SEMI-PRIVATE ROOM

\$185 FOR A COMMUTER PARTICIPANT

\$135 FOR SATURDAY ONLY PARTICIPANT

Arrival time is 4 - 5pm Friday, June 25

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MAIL TO: BARBARA SULLIVAN, 80 CARL AVE, FRANKLIN SQUARE, NY 11010

A deposit of at least \$50 is needed to reserve a space. Scholarships available.

Please make checks payable to Contemplative Outreach LI/Queens

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

CHECK ONE:

PRIVATE ROOM _____ SEMI-PRIVATE ROOM _____

COMMUTER _____ SATURDAY ONLY _____

For additional information, contact:

Barbara Sullivan, 516-481-0472.

SOUNDS OF SILENCE

I hear waves lapping the shore in the distance –

deep sounds – coming out of eternity.

Cool sea breeze touches my face –

silent – coming from the same eternity.

Endless blue sky says not a word -

hangs over all.

Sounds of waves wash deep within me –

open an abyss at my center.

My slow quiet breathing points to it!

I feel a pain within my whole body –

pains of love – longing – desire.

Abyss takes hold of me -

penetrates my whole core.

Abyss is mystery – darkness – silence -

presence of my Beloved.

My Beloved is knocking at my heart – at my center.

Tears fill my eyes but I can say no words –

I have no words to say!

Sounds of the waves echo my endless longing.

Love – desire – feelings of fire close my throat.

My Beloved is other – transcendent – beyond me –

yet always deep within me -

a presence I have - do not have.

So I can only sit - wait - recite the

holy mantra:

‘For you alone, my soul waits in silence.’

Robert Trabold

**SCRIPTURES WHICH ALLUDE TO
CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER**

Psalm 46:10

**“Be still and know that I
am God.” (NRSV)**

Romans 8:26

**“...The Spirit too comes
to the aid of our weak-
ness; for we do not know
how to pray as we ought,
but the Spirit itself inter-
cedes with inexpressible
groaning.” (NAB)**

Psalm 62:1

**“For God alone my soul
waits in silence; from
Him comes my salva-
tion.” (NRSV)**

1 Corinth. 3:16

**“Do you not know that
you are the temple of
God, and that the Spirit
of God dwells in
you?” (NAB)**

Isaiah 30:15

**“...In returning and rest
you shall be saved; in
quietness and trust shall
be your strength.” NRSV)**

Isaiah 40:31

**“But those who wait for
the Lord shall renew their
strength, they shall
mount up with wings like
eagles, they shall run and
not be weary, they shall
walk and not faint.”**

Matt 6:6

**“Whenever you pray, go
into your room and shut
the door and pray to your
Father who is in secret;
and your Father who
sees in secret will reward
you.” (NRSV)**

ALWAYS A BEGINNER

*I sleep but my heart wakes.
I hear my beloved who knocks at the door. (Song of Songs, 5.3)*

In our journey in contemplative prayer and way, we will always be beginners. In this path, God who is a mystery touches us and reveals himself/herself to us. We sense this presence within our life being quite distinct and different because the divine is present at our center and still point. We also realize that it is a mystery and totally transcendent to us. Because God is present at the core of our person, we feel that he/she is closer to us than we are to ourselves. This intimacy and closeness goes beyond the kind of relationships we have in human friendship or in a good marriage where the other person is always external to us. For this reason, it takes a while to realize the deep intimacy we have with the transcendent. On the other hand, this presence within us is a mystery because with time, we realize that we cannot grasp God with our mind or intellect. We touch the divine rather by our desire to love and to grow in friendship. Because this relationship is such an intimate but a mysterious one, many of the mystics, most prominently John of the Cross, have used the image of the dark night to capture its uniqueness. In the contemplative path, we are on a journey of great intimacy but since God is ineffable, we journey in mystery and in darkness. The opening lines of the poem 'The Dark Night' by John of the Cross state this well:

"In a dark night, inflamed with passions of love"

If we look at our contemplative path carefully, we will see that we are always beginners for a variety of reasons. First, in contemplative prayer, it is the divine who takes the initiative and touches us to reveal its presence. It is something that we cannot automatically bring into our life, but have to wait until someday our Beloved touches us and makes himself/herself known. John of the Cross, in giving advice for growth in contemplative prayer, mentions that we have to be silent and listen so that we can see where the divine is leading us and revealing itself to us.

Secondly, we are always beginners in the contemplative path because we are journeying into mystery and trying to have a relationship with God who is transcendent to us. In this journey, we come to realize that the divine reveals itself in silence and darkness. Mystical writers mention that we are touched when we are silent and quiet. In this, we know that he/she is there and we are at peace with this presence. Our desire to love grows with this encounter and that is how we touch God deeply in our life. A saying in German states that the works of God are ones of stillness and the night. In this encounter, words get in the way. Meister Eckhardt tells us that the more we think that we know the divine, the less we know.

In sum, in our contemplative path and prayer, we are always beginners. We are waiting for the divine to touch us and reveal itself; this is not our initiative. It is a mysterious encounter because we know that we can never grasp God with our minds but can touch him/her by our desire to love. Therefore, as John of the Cross mentions, we have to be silent and listen. We are always beginning and growing in this friendship and are on a journey without end.

Robert Trabold

DIRECTIONS

CONTEMPLATIVE LINK

WESTBURY FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, POST AVE., WESTBURY

Use the Northern State Parkway to EXIT "Post Avenue, North." Drive about 1/3 mile. The Meeting House is on your right, before you reach Jericho Turnpike.

SAINT IGNATIUS LOYOLA RETREAT HOUSE

251 Searingtown Rd. Manhasset, NY 11030 Telephone 516 621 8300 Use the Long Island Expressway to EXIT "Searingtown Rd." Drive north on Searingtown Rd. for 3/10 of a mile, past the traffic light at Christopher Morley Park. Turn left from a left turn lane into the retreat house driveway. Need assistance? Phone 516-621 -8300