

**Contemplative Living**  
**The Spirituality of Daily Life**  
a program of  
**Oasis Ministries for Spiritual Development**

**Syllabus**

**Opening Retreat**

**October 2-3, 2008      THE BEGINNING: PAYING ATTENTION AND BEING AWAKE**

**Themes:** Contemplative living as being attentive and awake  
Noticing and opening: in the natural world and in our selves  
Introduction to the program  
Introduction to contemplative practice

**Readings:** DeWaal, Esther, *Lost in Wonder*, Ch. 1, “The Starting Point”, Ch. 2, “Seeing with the Inner Eye”, Ch.3, “Silence”, Ch. 4, “Attention”.  
Norris, Gunilla, *Inviting Silence*. Pg. 1-70, or more.

Note: The Norris readings are listed for November also.  
Dwell with these reflective readings over the next few months.

**Packet Reading:** Griffiths, “Winding the Golden String”  
May, “Contemplative Spiritual Formation: an Introduction”  
Huddleston, “Beauty, the Forgotten Attribute: Beauty’s Role in Holiness”  
McEntyre, “The Presence of God and the Life of the Body”  
“Quotations about the Nature of Contemplation”

**Recommended:** Hanh, Thich Nhat. *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, especially Ch. 1-4 and 7. Beacon Press, 1987. ISBN 0-8070-1201  
May, Gerald. *The Wisdom of Wilderness*. Harpercollins, 2006. ISBN13 978-0-06-084540-7  
Nepo, Mark. *The Exquisite Risk*. Crown Publishing, 2005. ISBN0-307-33584-4  
Newell, Philip. *The Book of Creation*. Paulist Press, 1999. ISBN 0-8091-3899-9  
Wuellner, Flora Slosson. *Prayer and Our Bodies*. Upper Room Books, 1987. ISBN0-8358-0568-9

**Monthly Meetings**

**October 30, 2008      BEING WITH OUR SELVES, OUR LIVES**

**Themes:** Contemplation as the doorway to the true self  
Being with our longings

**Readings:** Continue with Norris' *Inviting Silence*, 1-70.  
DeWaal, Esther. *Living with Contradiction*. Ch. 4, "Living with Myself",  
Ch. 8, "Gift and Grace"  
Rohr, Richard. *Everything Belongs*, pgs. 13-43, Ch. 3, "Ego and Soul", and  
pgs. 93-114.

**Packet Readings:** Kingsley, Peter and Maria. "As Far As Longing Can Reach"  
Morris, Robert. "Meek as Moses"  
Rensberger, David. "Thirsty for God"  
Vaughan-Lee, Llewellyn. "The Pain of Divine Love"

**Recommended:** Kidd, Sue Monk. *When the Heart Waits*. HarperCollins, 1992.  
ISBN 0-06-064587-3  
Norris, Gunilla. *Being Home*. Bell Tower, 1991. ISBN  
0-517-58159-0  
Nouwen, Henri. *Can You Drink the Cup?* (see Biblio.)  
Finley, James. *The Contemplative Heart*, esp. Part One. (see Biblio.)

## **December 11, 2008 DEEPENING IN THE DARKNESS**

**Themes:** Illusion and Dis-illusion  
Being in the Darkness  
Living with our Fears

**Readings:** DeWaal, Esther. *Lost in Wonder*, Ch. 6, "Dark and Light".  
Merton, Thomas. *Essential Writings*. Ch. 1, "A Call to Contemplation"  
Nouwen, Henri. *The Inner Voice of Love*.

Note: Begin the Nouwen meditations, but journey  
slowly with them over several months.

Rohr, Richard. *Everything Belongs*. pgs. 43-59, 114-121.

Note: If you're not familiar with *The Awakened Heart* (Gerald May),  
read Ch. 1-3.

**Packet Readings:** Bieber, Nancy. "The Gift of Presence"  
Blomquist, Jean. "The Close and Holy Darkness".  
Rensberger, David. "Deserted Spaces"

**Recommended:** Kidd, Sue Monk. *When the Heart Waits*. (see previous month)  
Lane, Beldon. *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes*. Oxford University  
Press, 1998. ISBN0-19-511682-8  
May Gerald. *Dark Night of the Soul*. HarperCollins, 2004  
ISBN 0-06-055423-1  
Nouwen, Henri. *The Dance of Life Weaving Sorrows and Blessings  
Into one Joyful Step*. Ave Maria Press, 2005. ISBN 978-1-59471-

**January 15, 2009 WILLING TO BEING SHAPED**

**NOTE:** Paper is due this month.

**Themes:** Yielding and trusting  
The Fruits of our Willingness  
Hope as a Spiritual Practice

**Readings:** Continue with Nouwen's *The Inner Voice of Love*.  
DeWaal, Esther. *Lost in Wonder*. Ch. 5, "Change".  
May, Gerald. *The Awakened Heart*. Ch. 4, "The Consecration of Hope"  
Ch. 5. "Entering the Emptiness", Ch. 6, "Practice"

**Packet Readings:** Burton-Christie, Douglas. "We Already Have All That We Seek."  
Prevallet, Elaine. "Borne in Courage and Love: Reflections on  
Letting Go".  
Stonecipher, Diane. "Details Within"

**Recommended:** DeMello, Anthony. *The Way to Love*. Doubleday, 1995.  
ISBN 0-385-24939-x  
Kelly, Thomas. *A Testament of Devotion*, esp. "The Light Within"  
and "Holy Obedience". Harper, 1991.  
Kidd, Sue Monk. *When the Heart Waits*. (see previous month)

**February 12, 2009 THE RHYTHMS OF OUR LIVES**

**Themes:** The Rhythm of Work and Play  
Contemplative Creativity  
The Rhythm of Solitude and Community

**Readings:** Continue with Nouwen's *The Inner Voice of Love*.  
DeWaal, Esther. *Living with Contradiction*. Ch. 6, "Living with the  
World", Ch. 9, "Desert and Marketplace"  
May, Gerald. *The Awakened Heart*. Ch. 7, "The Little Interior  
Glance", Ch. 8, "The Prayer of the Heart"

**Packet Readings:** Berger, Rose Marie. "The Art of Savoring"  
Flinsch, Margaret. "A Child's Ground of Discovery"  
Martine, Jean. "Working for a Living"  
Rahner, Karl. "God of My Daily Routine" from *Encounters with  
Silence*.  
Thompson, Marjorie. "Creating Still"  
"Contemplative Checklist for Living in Disciplined Wildness"

**Recommended:** Chittister, Joan. *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*, especially Ch.7

and 8. (see bibliography)  
Kelly, Thomas. *A Testament of Devotion*, especially “The Simplification of our Lives”. (see previous month)

McDaniel, Jay. *Living from the Center Spirituality in an Age of Consumerism*. Chalice Press, 2000. ISBN0-8272-2130-4  
Merton Thomas. *Thoughts in Solitude*, especially “The Love of Solitude” Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999. ISBN 10 0-374-5325-2  
Muller, Wayne. *Sabbath Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in Our Busy Lives*. (see bibliography)

**March 12, 2009**      **CONTEMPLATIVE ATTENTION IN DAILY RELATIONSHIPS**

**Themes:** Loving God within the Other  
Daily Relationships in Harmony and Conflict  
Family as School for the Spirit

**Readings:** DeWaal, Esther. *Living with Contradiction*. Ch. 7, “Together and Apart” and Ch. 11, “Praying the Conflicts”  
May, Gerald. *The Awakened Heart*. Ch. 10. “Contemplative Presence”  
Rohr, Richard. *Everything Belongs*. Ch. 5, “Don’t Push the River”.

**Packet Readings:** Green, Elizabeth. “The Power of Attending: Family Life as Spiritual Practice”  
Morris, Robert. “The Second Breath: Frustration As a Doorway To Daily Spiritual Practice”  
Peerman, C. Gordon. “Anger: An Instrument of Peace”  
Ryan, Thomas. “Noisy Contemplation”

**Recommended:** Boyer, Ernest. *Finding God at Home: Family Life as Spiritual Discipline*.

Harper and Row, 1988. ISBN 0-06-061054-4  
Chittister, Joan. *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*, especially Ch. 4 and 9. (see bibliography)  
Muller, Wayne. *Sabbath Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in our Busy Lives*. (see previous month)  
Norris, Gunilla. *Being Home*. Bell Tower, 1991. ISBN 0-517-58159-0

**April 16, 2009**      **COMPASSION: THE OVERFLOW OF CONTEMPLATION**

**Themes:** Loving for the World  
Discernment of the Call

**Readings:** May, Gerald. *The Awakened Heart*. Ch. 11, “Loving in the World”, Ch. 12, “Loving for the World”.

Merton, Thomas. *Essential Writings*. Pg. 89-94, 135-136.

**Packet Readings:** Glenn, Mike. "Meditations on the Parable of the Good Samaritan"  
Johnson, Jan. "Mary's Merciful Song of Justice".  
John of Ruysbroeck. "In the Mirror of Generosity"  
Nouwen, Henri. "Power, Powerlessness, and Power"  
Robbins, Patience. "Healing Prayer for the World"

**Recommended:** Chittister, Joan. *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*, especially Ch. 14 and 15. (see bibliography)  
Kelly, Thomas. *The Testament of Devotion*, especially "Eternal Now And Social Concerns. (see January listing)

**Closing Retreat**

**May 14-15, 2009      THE OPENED HEART**

**Themes:** Grounded in gratitude  
Integration for the journey

**Readings:** DeWaal, Esther. *Lost in Wonder*. Ch.7, "Mystery", Ch.8, "Gift", Ch. 9, "Epilogue"  
Steindl-Rast, David. *Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer*. Ch. 1, "Aliveness and Wakefulness", Ch. 2, "Surprise and Gratefulness, Ch. 3, "Heart and Mind, Ch. 4, "Prayers and Prayerfulness"

**Packet Readings:** "Be Still and Know That I Am God"