



## Diocese of Galveston-Houston

Office of the Bishop

May 1, 2003

Dear brother priests and deacons:

It is with great pleasure that I announce to you that Fr. Thomas Keating, OCSO has agreed to give a special training presentation on Contemplative Prayer to the priests, permanent deacons and their wives. As you know, this form of Christian meditation, or Centering Prayer, originated with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century desert church fathers and continues on through our more contemporary mystics including the Trappist monks, Fr. Thomas Merton and now Fr. Thomas Keating.

Fr. Keating has authored many books on the subject and was instrumental in bringing back this ancient prayer practice. In 1983 he co-founded Contemplative Outreach, an ecumenical organization now numbering over 55,000 members worldwide.

The training presentation will cover the origins and historical background of the prayer practice, its method including practice sessions, and the handling of the thoughts and obstacles that arise. Perhaps most importantly he will discuss the beautiful effects of the practice in our personal lives as well as in our ministries.

I strongly encourage you to come and allow one of the church's most ancient, authentic, and profound prayer practices to deepen your spirituality and to grow closer to God. This session may influence the way you pray! I also encourage you to attend because our congregations are hungry for this practice and we must be there to serve them.

The session will be held on Saturday, May 24, 2003 at St. Mary's Seminary with training from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the Bishop Nold Education Center then Mass, for those who wish, presided by Fr. Keating at 4:00 p.m. in the Chapel. Ongoing follow-up formation will be facilitated by trained clergy throughout the remainder of the year. So that the Diocese may provide adequate accommodations, including lunch, I am asking you to RSVP by no later than Monday, May 19 to Blanca Flores at e-mail: [bflores@diogh.org](mailto:bflores@diogh.org) or phone: 713-659-5461. The cost for this day, including lunch, is \$25 per person.

This is indeed a rare opportunity, not only to learn but to have a time for direct personal access to one of the Church's foremost contemplatives.

With prayerful best wishes, I am

Fraternally in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza  
Bishop of Galveston-Houston

JAF:acl

cc: Reverend Brendan Cahill  
Reverend Maurice Restivo