



## Contemplative Outreach Spiritual Journey with Thomas Keating Part 5 Tape 25(b)



### Continuing the Divine Banquet and Dance The Theological Principles of Centering Prayer

The Indwelling of the Trinity, the Paschal Mystery, Community, Transformation.

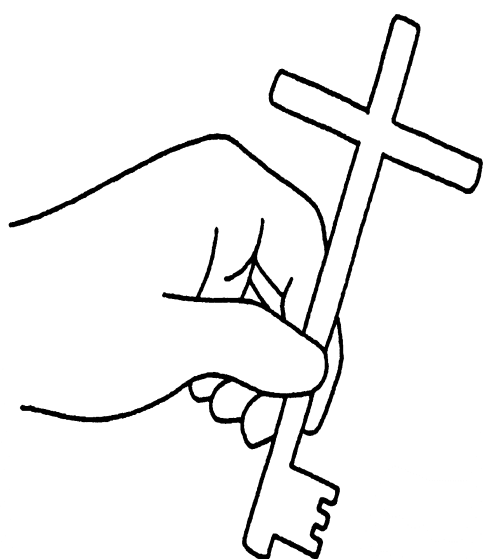
#### The Indwelling of the Trinity

The Trinity's dance of love is picked up in our Centering Prayer which is an effective way of accessing contemplative prayer. Our Centering Prayer is rooted in our baptism and the indwelling of the Trinity. God is present in us and in everything and everybody else. This is the basis of contemplation. God is always awaiting us. This is reality as it truly is rather than as we usually perceive it. All we have to do is to reduce the obstacles to God's presence in so far as we can, listen in silence to God's presence and adopt a receptive attitude.

Signs that the obstacles to God's presence are being reduced in us and that the risen Christ is present in us are the **infused moral virtues** (justice, prudence, temperance, fortitude), the **theological virtues** (faith, hope, charity), the seven **gifts of the Spirit** (cf Isaiah 11:2-3) and the **fruits of the Spirit** (cf Gal. 5:22-23). These are signs, therefore, of our deepening relationship with God and are the effects of Centering Prayer.

#### The Paschal Mystery

Centering is a sharing in the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. We can only receive the love of God. We do not earn it. Though we can reduce some obstacles, basically, God does not ask us to earn anything. Centering educates us in underserved mercy. In Centering, we sit with Christ who "sat" on the cross.



In a sense, stripped of divinity, God "dies" on the cross having taken the full cup of human misery and evil upon Himself, along with the consequences of going against conscience – humanity's feelings of guilt, humiliation, shame, discouragement, despair, helplessness, desolation, loneliness. When we too accept such things they can become part of our transformation.

The three stages of Christ's assimilation of the human condition are: the agony in the garden; the crucifixion and death on the cross and his descent into the state of consciousness of people who are in the "hell" of feeling rejected by God.