

Books for Further Reading on Contemplative Practice and Centering Prayer

Father Thomas Keating, Father M. Basil Pennington, and the Reverend Cynthia Bourgeault are among the leaders of the contemporary movement to encourage Christian contemplative practice and centering prayer. They, and the late **Thomas Merton**, have written extensively on these subjects. Here are a few of their books, which you may find interesting and encouraging as you explore centering prayer and contemplation.

Father Thomas Keating lives in the St. Benedict Monastery, a Cisterian (Trappist) monastery in Snowmass, Colorado. In 1984 he founded Contemplative Outreach, Ltd., an international organization dedicated to reclaiming the Christian tradition of contemplative prayer. He writes and lectures on the contemplative life. The monastery at Snowmass hosts intensive retreats on centering prayer. Here are some of Keating's books:

Keating, Thomas. 1994. *Intimacy with God*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company.

Keating, Thomas. 1992. *Invitation to Love: The Way of Christian Contemplation*. New York: Continuum Publishing Company.

Keating, Thomas. 2001. *Open Mind, Open Heart: The Contemplative Dimension of the Gospel*. New York: Continuum Publishing Company. NOTE: Keating can be very intellectual or academic in his writing. Though this book is considered a "primer" on centering prayer, *Intimacy with God* or *Invitation to Love* may be better books to start with.

Cynthia Bourgeault's style can be easier to read on centering prayer. Here is her main book:

Bourgeault, Cynthia. 2004. *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications.

Other books on centering prayer and contemplation

Iachetta, S. Stephanie. 2007. *The Daily Reader for Contemplative Living: Excerpts from the Works of Thomas Keating*. New York: Continuum Publishing Company. NOTE: This is a daily devotional book.

Merton, Thomas. 1996 (original date 1969). *Contemplative Prayer*. New York: Doubleday Image Books.

Merton, Thomas. 1960. *Spiritual Direction and Meditation*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press.

Pennington, M. Basil. 1980. *Centering Prayer: Renewing an Ancient Christian Prayer Form*. New York: Doubleday Image Books.

Reininger, Gustave (ed.). 1999. *The Diversity of Centering Prayer*. New York: Continuum Publishing Company. NOTE: Keating, Bourgeault, and Pennington are all contributors.