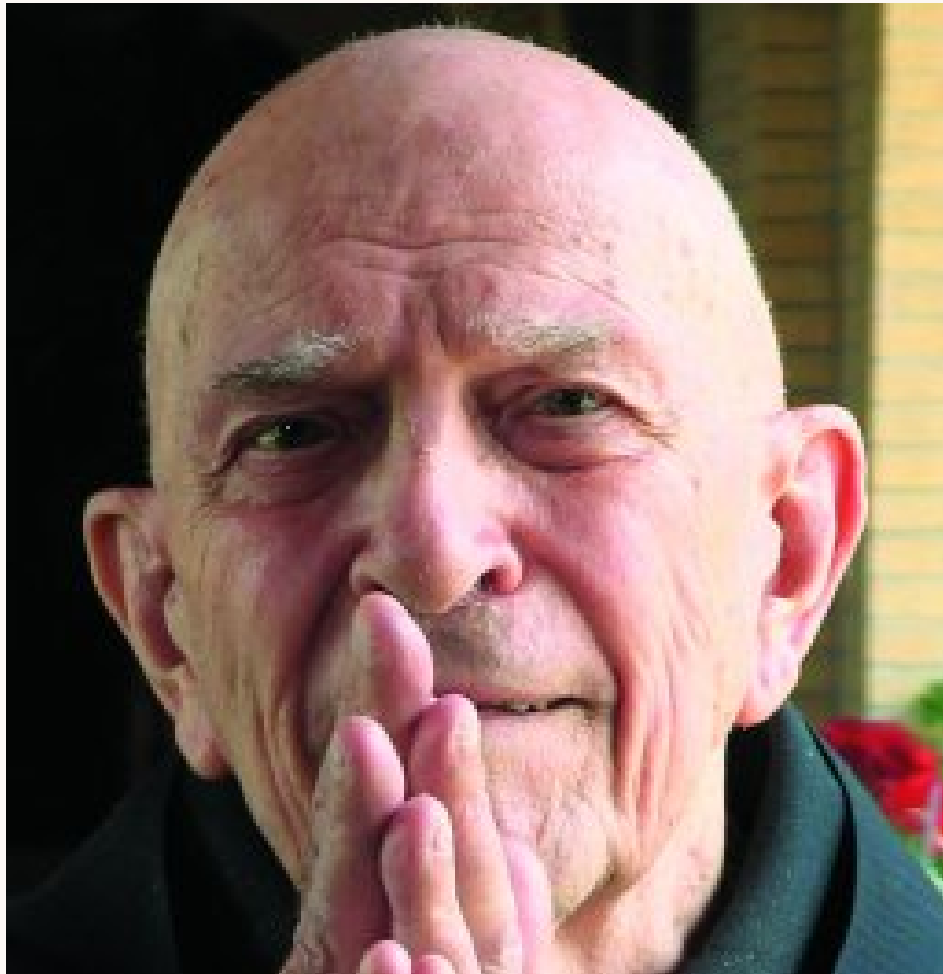




# *Dawn of InterSpirituality*



## **Father Thomas Keating**

March 7 1923 - October 25, 2018

*Silence is the first language of God.  
All other languages are poor translations.*

Fr. Thomas Keating is now in eternal silence with God. He passed away last night at 10:07 pm at St. Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts, where he has been residing for a few months. Prior to that Thomas was based at St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado.

Fr. Thomas Keating has been a profound inspiration and one of the great spiritual leaders of our time. He co-founded Centering Prayer and Contemplative Outreach, which brought back the practice of silent contemplative prayer to hundreds of thousands of Christians all across the globe. His pioneering work in the Snowmass Conference and interspiritual dialogue brought religious leaders together over a period of 32 years from all the major world religions - to discover deep common ground, share contemplative practices, and learn from the depths of their respective spiritual journeys.

In our lives, Fr. Thomas has been an incredible mentor, spiritual director, friend, and unwavering supporter of us and our mission. Will first met him in Snowmass in 1987, and in 2002 - 2003 co-organized a global inter-religious peace prayer project with him. Cynthia first met him in 2006, and Thomas has been a central pillar of spiritual and prayerful support for our Gender Equity and Reconciliation work. In 2007 we introduced Thomas to Sr. Lucy Kurien of India, and they became fast friends, and Thomas has been a strong supporter of Sr. Lucy's Maher project, and mentor for Lucy as a Catholic nun. Thomas' pioneering work in the

Snowmass Conference and interspiritual dialogue was and remains the primary inspiration for our Dawn of InterSpirituality series of retreats and conferences since 2009. Prior to that Thomas mentored us closely for several years in our intensive retreats on interfaith mysticism.

As a spiritual guide and director, Thomas was superb - devoted, discerning, inspiring, and impeccable. By his own account Thomas prayed for us and our work continually, which has been a profound blessing, and he did the same for many others. Even when we visited him in hospice in recent months, Thomas was still asking us for specific updates about certain details and people in our lives, for whom he continued to pray. Thomas also gave us spiritual direction and mentorship for decades - an unbidden gift and blessing beyond measure, as he held us in his heart and prayers through thick and thin.

As we reflect on who Thomas has been in our lives, our hearts fill with tears of deep gratitude, sorrow, and joy - all at once. No words can express our gratitude. We will miss Thomas terribly, yet we also know that he is still with us. His presence will grow ever stronger in his absence.

"The day of my death is my wedding day with eternity," says Rumi. Thomas has been ready and preparing for this day for a good while now, and in the midst of our grieving over the loss, and the pain of missing him on the earthly plane, we also celebrate Thomas' wedding with eternity. As Rumi says,

"My decline you have seen,  
now discover my soaring ascent!  
Can setting cause any harm to the sun, or moon?  
To you, my death seems a setting,  
but really, it is a dawn. It is a dawn!  
Does the tomb seem a prison to you?  
It is the liberation of the soul."

Dearest Thomas, our love and prayers go with you, as your soul is liberated and embarks upon this deepest journey in God.



Contemplative Outreach is organizing a 24 hour prayer vigil,  
and a memorial service in Denver, Colorado.  
Details available soon on their website.

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