



## Seekers of Ultimate Mystery, by Fr. Thomas Keating

Every seeker of Ultimate Mystery has to pass through interior death and rebirth, perhaps many times over.Â Our contemporary world desperately needs persons of boundless generosity who dedicate themselves to great ideals and who wish to transform themselves and contribute to the transformation of the world.Â A great vision is what gives ordinary daily life its direction and invests it with purpose.

Seekers of Ultimate Mystery have to share in the agony of our time.Â Only trust can make this experience transforming for themselves and for others.Â As the sense of alienation from Ultimate Mystery, from human values, and from oneself is very deep in our time, so also participation in that experience is bound to be very deep.Â It may involve an inner poverty so intense and so complete that no word can describe it, except "death."Â But this spiritual death leads to an inner resurrection of one's true self that can move not only oneself, but the whole human family in the direction of transformation.Â From this perspective, the spiritual journey is the very reverse of selfishness. It is rather the journey to selflessness.

What needs to be emphasized by seekers today is the contemplative dimension of human nature, whether they identify the aim of their search as liberation, transformation, enlightenment, nirvana, divine union or whatever. [â€] The growth of the contemplative dimension leads to the stable perception of the presence of Ultimate Mystery underlying and accompanying all reality as a kind of fourth dimension to ordinary sense perception.Â To dispose oneself for this awareness, one needs a discipline that engages all the faculties and a structure appropriate to one's life circumstances that can sustain it.

To begin with, one needs to cultivate a practical conviction of the primacy of being over doing.Â Our society values what one can do and this becomes the gauge of who one is.Â The contemplative dimension of life is an insight into the gift of being human and inspires a profound acceptance and gratitude for that gift. [â€]

Our culture is at a critical point because so many structures that supported human and religious values have been trampled upon and are disappearing. To find a way to discover Ultimate Mystery in the midst of secular occupations and situations is essential, because for most people today it is the only milieu that they know.Â Humanity as a whole needs a breakthrough into the contemplative dimension of life.Â The contemplative dimension of life is the heart of the world.Â There

the human family is already one.Â If one goes to oneâ€™s own heart, one will find oneself in the heart of everyone else, and everyone else, as well as oneself, in the heart of Ultimate Mystery.

â€“ Fr. Thomas Keating in Contemplative Outreach newsletter, June 2010

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