

**News and Current Events :: Newsweek: In Search of the Spiritual**

Newsweek: In Search of the Spiritual - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/8/22 18:18

[Image: http://www.sermonindex.net/images/forum/2004/may/featured_news.gif]

Aug. 29 - Sept. 5, 2005 issue - The 1960s did not penetrate very deeply into the small towns of the Quaboag Valley of central Massachusetts. Even so, Father Thomas Keating, the abbot of St. Joseph's Abbey, couldn't help noticing the attraction that the exotic religious practices of the East held for many young Roman Catholics. To him, as a Trappist monk, meditation was second nature. He invited the great Zen master Roshi Sasaki to lead retreats at the abbey. And surely, he thought, there must be a precedent within the church for making such simple but powerful spiritual techniques available to laypeople. His Trappist brother Father William Meninger found it in one day in 1974, in a dusty copy of a 14th-century guide to contemplative meditation, "The Cloud of Unknowing." Drawing on that work, as well as the writings of the contemplatives Saint John of the Cross and Saint Teresa of Avila, the two monks began teaching a form of Christian meditation that grew into the worldwide phenomenon known as centering prayer. Twice a day for 20 minutes, practitioners find a quiet place to sit with their eyes closed and surrender their minds to God. In more than a dozen books and in speeches and retreats that have attracted tens of thousands, Keating has spread the word to a world of "hungry people, looking for a deeper relationship with God."