

# Christian Meditation in Canada

NEWS NOTES SUMMER 2005 VOL. 14 NO. 2 THE WORLD COMMUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

## Here we go again... says Grania Scott of P.E.I.



My first encounter with Christian Meditation happened in the mid 1980s, when an aunt, a Sacred Heart nun in London, England, sent me a slim booklet by Fr. John Main entitled "Christian Meditation." It intrigued me because he was a Benedictine from Ealing Abbey, my parish church for many years when I lived in Ealing. I enjoyed his account of learning to meditate in Malaya, and the fact that once he entered the Monastery this way of prayer faded somewhat from his consciousness.

As with New Year resolutions, I also soon stopped meditating, finding it difficult to persevere on my own at home in Canada. I consigned the booklet to my bookcase,

where it was totally obscured. Some years passed, until in 1988 or thereabouts I attended a Cursillo weekend (a course of study in Christian living).

Cursillo impressed me, and since we were encouraged to form small groups, I approached a lady who had been on the weekend and asked if I might join her and her husband to discuss this idea. They invited me to their home the following Saturday. For a totally inexplicable reason, as I was leaving my house, I stretched out my hand and plucked John Main's booklet from the shelf. (The Spirit moves in mysterious ways!)

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## Here we go again... *continued from front page*

After a pleasant social time, the conversation turned to the “small group” plan of study. I placed the booklet on the table, only to see my hosts exchanging glances. To my amazement they had been to Montreal many times, knew John Main, and meditated daily. That was it! From then on, I joined them every Saturday morning for meditation and some yoga exercises. This made a tremendous difference to my spiritual life.

In 1995 my friends moved out west, and I began to falter in my faithfulness to daily meditation. Then another serendipitous event happened in 1998, when a friend from Prince Edward Island came to visit. My chance remark that, being originally from Holland, she must be happy to be by the sea again, prompted her invitation, “Come and see, you might like it.” Although I had felt quite settled in Ontario for some 15 years, that summer I found that PEI was not only a beautiful place but that, in comparison with our parish, the church here was vibrant and thriving. I also discovered Mount St. Mary’s – the motherhouse of the

Sisters of St. Martha of Prince Edward Island – and saw that they had Christian Meditation sessions in their Spirituality Centre program.

When I returned home, the thought that maybe, like Abram, I was being asked to uproot and relocate in a new place never left me. The following summer, again through my good friend’s hospitality, I had a second look at the situation. That winter I prayed and decided to place my house on the market. If it sold, I would move. If it didn’t, I would happily stay put. I sold my house very easily, packed up my worldly goods (plus two cats) and arrived in Charlottetown in August 2000.

Mount St. Mary’s has become a second home – my anchorage. There are wonderful programs at their Spirituality Centre, and the meditation groups meet morning and evening once a week. I would like to be able to say that I am faithful in my daily practice. That would not be true. But I know that somehow meditation has made a tremendous impact on my spiritual journey through life.

## BOOK REVIEW

**EVERYTHING BELONGS: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer** by Richard Rohr;  
Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, NY 10001 USA, (1999), 186pp.  
ISBN 0-8245-1995-7

Several years ago I had the opportunity to spend a month in Albuquerque, New Mexico at the Centre for Action and Contemplation, founded by Richard Rohr. It was an excellent experience and I appreciated the openness and creativity that I found in that environment. I have the same feeling when reading “Everything Belongs.” Rohr’s writing is like a breath of fresh air, calling us to a broader understanding of God and to a deeper relationship with God. As I write this I am aware that next Sunday we celebrate the Day of Pentecost, so the breath of fresh air is a very appropriate image. The Spirit of God breathes through the words of this book.

Rohr invites us to be open and inclusive in our journey with God. He is critical of those who try to put God in a box and who think that they have all the answers. God is mystery and we are to approach that mystery with a sense of humility and a desire to grow.

As we enter into the prayer of silence we enter into a process of transformation and healing. We come to realize that much of our motivation comes from being self-centered and is often based on fear. Fear of not succeeding, or of not being accepted, or of being hurt. However, “in contemplative prayer, we move into a different realm. It is not the arena of merit, of reward and punishment; it is the realm of pure grace and freedom”. Our wounds and our struggles are also

vehicles for that grace to flow. Rohr encourages us to look beyond ourselves and not to take ourselves so seriously. “I am in a river that is bigger than I am. Life is not about me. It is about God, and God is about love.”

Rohr has a gift for reminding us of important truths. “We cannot attain the presence of God. We’re already totally in the presence of God. What’s absent is awareness.” “If God can receive me, who am I not to receive myself – warts and all?” He also has some wonderful observations about prayer. “Prayer is receiving and returning the divine gaze.” “Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is, rather, a stance. It’s a way of living in the Presence.”

I found this to be a very encouraging and affirming book. There is much wisdom here and much to challenge us as we journey, and often stumble, along the way. But Rohr presents us with a God who is a lover, always forgiving and always inviting us into an ever-deepening relationship through “the gift of contemplative prayer.”

– review by Phil Barnett, May 2005

*Note: Richard Rohr OFM will be keynote speaker at this year’s John Main Seminar, August 11-14 at California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, CA.*

# From the National Coordinator On The Path

For many meditators in North America, Canada geese are almost automatically associated with the spiritual journey. We heard John Main or Laurence Freeman tell us that this path of silence is totally natural, that meditation is like coming home, as instinctively as the migratory birds. This was going through my mind yesterday as we saw hundreds of them while driving back from Montreal. And then, there was another layer, with a different twist.

Lucie and I were going through the small town of Plaisance, located right by the Ottawa River, about halfway between Montreal and Ottawa on the scenic route. A relatively quiet place most of the year, it comes to life more in the spring and in the fall during the migration periods. Some days, there are many thousands of these very vocal birds in the area, more than there are inhabitants and visitors.

Having a couple of hours in front of us, we decided to make a detour in the park itself that was created a number of years ago to better protect the geese. Eight-foot high panels, with round peek holes at different levels, were erected to allow visitors to look without being too intrusive. Through these holes, we could see a good number of geese in the marsh below that day, but not the amount that we had expected. Intrigued, we asked the guide on site, who told us that they counted about 1,500 in the wetland that morning. And he hastened to say that about two kilometres west, in a farmer's



field, there were more than 6,000. Most intriguing! There were actually more geese now in the non-protected areas than in this spot specifically landscaped to protect them. The guide explained that in spite of the best efforts not to disrupt their habitat, the number of cars and visitors had gradually forced the geese to choose safer fields.

In contemplative prayer something similar happens: patterns shift. As the world around us evolves, as contexts change, meditation moves in different fields. Year after year, the geese migrate, and this is the element of stability. However, they adjust. And that is the same way that contemplative prayer evolves.

John Main, Laurence Freeman and several other contemporary spiritual masters present an ancient tradition, are faithful to a path that has existed for many centuries. They remain profoundly true to this way of silence that they discovered, and at the same time they recognize that it cannot be explained exactly the same way as it was fifty or a hundred years ago. Wise teachers find this delicate balance between solidly holding the tradition on one hand, while at the same time allowing our human migration pattern to evolve in accordance with the new spiritual ecology. This is what makes them so meaningful today. And we too need to continue on that same adventure.

– Michel Legault

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## A Child's Wisdom

**“The greatest temptation of all is to complicate ourselves. ‘Unless you become like little children...’ Meditation simplifies us, simplifies us to the point where we can receive the fullness of truth and the fullness of love.”**

– John Main

An Ontario meditator shares this true story from her friend: A young mother visiting her parent's cottage with her daughter is a little concerned, as she prepares lunch, aware that her three-year old has spent some time sitting in a chair looking out the large picture window that offers a wonderful view of their lake.

She asks, “Lucy, are you OK?” “Yes.”

“What are you doing, honey?”

“Just being.”

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## The World Community for Christian Meditation

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## Yoga here, yoga there

Yoga is everywhere. It seems in every newspaper or magazine, on every lifestyle channel, a trim young thing in stretchy clothes is beaming beatifically despite holding what looks like an enormously uncomfortable position. The benefits of yoga have also penetrated mainstream health care. Doctors recommend yoga for patients with back and joint problems and hospitals are sponsoring yoga classes in post-cardiac care.

What is all the fuss about? There are probably many reasons why yoga has become so popular: aerobic fatigue, low cost of participation, the interchange of cultures (East meets West). But in my opinion, yoga has taken hold because it practises and preaches the unity of body and spirit. Despite fancy names, despite celebrity endorsements, authentic yoga insists that the inner being and the outer being are in relationship; the health of both is fostered when they are in harmony. Inner harmony, not flat abs, is really what people are after.

That is what I was after. Fifteen years ago I found myself “between opportunities” (my mother’s word for “unemployed”) with three young children, a hard-working husband, quite often feeling overwhelmed. While pondering what was next, I wandered into a local yoga studio. There, by grace, I met Denise, a wonderful teacher for beginners. She taught gentle yoga postures, with the constant encouragement to listen to our internal wisdom and to go at our own pace. In calm and friendly surroundings, I woke up to my own body. I discovered that even the simplest movements – a side stretch, a knee bend – if done with attentiveness and focussed breath, yield surprising rewards. I got stronger of course – muscles and joints did become more flexible with repetition – but that benefit came in direct relationship to the same commitment to be in the moment, and to be non-judgmental.

Such talk of “letting go” is familiar to meditators. It was why my introduction to John Main, via audio tape and at around the same time, was so resonant. Not only did he describe my longing, but he was naming the paradox of the yogic process: the practice is misunderstood; in essence it is simple; self-acceptance is mandatory; perseverance is all.

These two mentors were soon joined by a third. I attended a retreat, “Prayer of Heart and Body”, led by Tom Ryan CSP. Two abiding interests running parallel in my life were grounded then and affirmed since by Tom’s work. He put John Main’s experience in the context of the Western Monastic tradition, and he shared his own experience of travels in India and of yoga practice. I too had been to India and was exploring the interplay between East and West.

The stone as yet unturned was finding the teacher within. In that process I had another spirit guide, Jim, who encouraged me to begin theological studies in Toronto. Many people asked me, “What will you do with it?” Which bothered me until Jim’s reframing: “Really the question is, *what will it do with you?*” What it did, slowly, (thank God for length of years!) was show me the mysterious ways God calls. I began to understand that I had been given Space in order to provide Space. After completing my degree, I went for yoga teacher training and later attended The School sponsored by the Canadian Christian Meditation Community.

The first Space became available at Eglinton-St. George’s United Church in Toronto. For three years now, Rev. Deborah Hart and the Wellness Ministry there have sponsored my leadership of twice-weekly yoga and meditation groups. We begin with an hour of the physical practice and then we sit in silence for twenty-five minutes. At the outset, everyone was new to both yoga and meditation. They are an older group, comfortably “average” in their fitness and in their piety. But often now I am quite moved in the room – so intent are we all – in yoga and in silence.

The latest gift (those children grew up) was the chance to convert the top floor of my house into a yoga space. Now I am able to welcome friends and neighbours into a sun-filled quiet space under my own roof. Of the three classes I currently offer at the home studio, one has an identified meditation time built in. The others wrap up with an extended relaxation period, a time of quiet and letting go, an opportunity for refreshment and for listening; those key ingredients granted me those many years ago.

- Casey Rock,  
Christian Meditation Community Toronto

# NEWS FROM FAR AND NEAR

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

OCT. 1, 2005 - SAVE THE DATE!

The Christian Meditation Community of British Columbia is hosting a Day of Reflection based on the work of Dom John Main OSB on Saturday, October 1, 2005. Father Charles Brandt will speak on the theme "Wonder".

We all have a specific work, A GREAT WORK, which involves us all: to make a transition from a society that is having a disruptive influence on the earth, to one that will have a benign presence. We make this transition (as we undergo transformation) by experiencing Creation with a sense of wonder and delight, rather than as a commodity for our own personal benefit. Meditation nourishes our sense of wonder, and so helps join us in benign presence to the earth.

– Joyce Rogers, Area Coordinator, British Columbia

*For more on this event, see the Calendar of Events in this issue.*



*Participants in B.C. Day of Reflection*

## THE QUALITY OF MERCY AND COMPASSION

The Christian Meditation Community of British Columbia hosted a day of reflection at St. Mary's Church in Vancouver on May 14, 2005.

Rev. Glenda Meakin led a group of 41 persons on an exploration of the topic "The Quality of Mercy: Meditation and Compassion." Glenda opened with an introduction on the way of Christian meditation. Her four talks, spaced around two periods of meditation, were based on the psalms and Luke's gospel relating to mercy. Glenda described mercy as compassion and that it is experienced when we genuinely feel the suffering of a person in need.

In our twice-daily periods of meditative prayer we, in fact, make ourselves available to God. And we become aware of the need for God's mercy. Because mercy begets love we experience God as a living, loving spirit present in our

hearts. We learn to trust in that presence. We let go and let God: we encounter a healing bond with Christ.

Our meditation journey roots us in Christ's love and mercy.

– Art Missler, Area Co-coordinator – Vancouver

## ALBERTA

A WEEKEND TO REMEMBER!

Spring was in the air when 22 women and men gathered at the Star of the North Retreat Centre in St. Albert, Alberta. Our leader was Engeline Piet, a Spiritual Director and long-time member of the Calgary FCJ Christian Life Centre retreat team. The theme for the February 2005 weekend retreat was "Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

It was a weekend to remember! Engeline is gifted and gentle. She drew us together as a group and generously made time to meet with individuals who wished to see her privately. To sum up her philosophy, Engeline wrote: "Christian Meditation is not about dogma, rules or regulations; it is a personal, loving and intimate relationship with the Beloved."

We were blessed with a leader who helped us take charge of our own spiritual program. When the retreat ended, we left with the tools needed to sustain us in meditation. The silent retreat balanced meditation sessions with salient words from Engeline; we were given time to meditate, to think, to read and to walk in the Retreat Centre grounds. We were gifted with the time and quiet to make resolutions to ensure a firm place for meditation in our spiritual lives.

In this uncertain world we could leave the Retreat House with a renewed trust in God's ultimate goodness and in the life He gave us: "Those who dwell in the ends of the earth stand in awe of your signs. You make the dawn and the sunset shout for joy." Psalm 65:8.

Our thanks to Engeline Piet, to the Star of the North Retreat Centre staff, and to those who kept our home fires burning as we took part in this memorable retreat.

– Joyce O'Byrne

## SHARING THE GIFT

Ten participants from across Alberta gathered at the FCJ Christian Life Centre in Calgary on the weekend of May 6-8 to participate in The School – Sharing the Gift. This was an extraordinary opportunity for committed meditators in the province to work with four devoted and experienced teachers – Glenda Meakin, Michel Legault, Engeline Piet, and Tom Cain.

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## News from Far and Near *continued from previous page*

They structured the weekend so that meditation times followed each session. The schedule confirmed the foundation of meditation for all our actions - God flows out of the silence into each moment of our lives. I think I can speak for all the participants in acknowledgment and appreciation of the times set aside for grounding us in meditation.

There were four other components to the School - teaching sessions by the team, sessions given by us students, time to share informally, and a closing liturgy. The six teaching sessions dealt with objectives of the school, essential teaching, history of Christian meditation, overview of the Christian meditation community, stages of the journey and, finally, the "pearl of great price" - opening up of the meditator to his or her world. Each student presented two talks introducing meditation to others. The purpose was both to give expression to the gift of meditation in our own lives, and to provide an accurate picture of meditation to a potential initiate. It is difficult to overestimate the value of meeting others on the same path and relating to them in community, though it was just for the weekend.

For any experienced meditator there is a time when we are ripe to open to others with the gift of meditation. Of course, it is not ours to orchestrate, but rather God blossoms through us. Our part is the willingness to open to the possibility. The School is an opportunity to prepare, intentionally, for this service.

- **Andrew Jackson**

### LABYRINTH WALK AND CHRISTIAN MEDITATION CAN ILLUMINATE LIFE'S JOURNEY

We were some 40 meditators who met on April 26, 2005 at Providence Centre in Edmonton. Sister Mary Coswin OSB, who is a member of the Spirituality Team at Providence Centre gave a talk on the labyrinth, a walking meditation tool. There was a portable labyrinth set up in a large room downstairs and many found the meditation walk a good experience. Providence Centre will soon have a permanent labyrinth built outside on their spacious grounds.

Our "Coming Home" binder, a comprehensive essential teaching resource, which was presented to me at the School weekend, has an excellent page comparing the labyrinth to our meditation. "Making the pilgrimage of the labyrinth with devotion, like meditation, illuminates the journey of our life. All the loops and backtracks of the labyrinth help put our times of turbulence and peace in the perspective of the overall design of the journey."

We followed 20 minutes of Christian meditation in the tradition of John Main with an enjoyable social time.

- **Monique Eng, Edmonton Area Co-ordinator**

## MANITOBA

### MEDITATION AND HEALING RETREAT LED BY REV. GLENDA MEAKIN

The image of a snow plow clearing away the layers of constant sound and the "monkey chatter" of our minds set the scene for the retreat at St Peter's Anglican Church in Winnipeg on February 26, 2005. Over forty people from different churches and meditation groups participated, listening in wonder, particularly as Glenda opened the scriptures saying, "The word of the Spirit and the medicine of the Gospel."

The day started with reflections on healing and meditation. Drawing on scriptures, story, music and life experience, Glenda explored different understandings of healing, and through the day we focussed on healing as restoration. We first recognized the brokenness in our own inner lives, our relationships, and on our planet earth. "Restoration is a return to a way of being, to our true selves, to who we truly are."

We participated, entering into Psalm 131 and then into a gospel story. I found myself present to Jesus, as Jairus' 12-year old daughter, tears of healing giving rise to new awareness and fresh ways of restoration of the child within. Glenda spoke of the need to seek out those things that nourish our "child", as creativity is restored and our potential leads us to our own unique way of being.

We participated, becoming present to Jesus in the crowd, touching His garment with the woman who had hemorrhaged for 12 years, or being part of the crowd witnessing the event. Encouraging us to explore our own energy level, Glenda emphasized how self-knowledge can become part of restoring us to wholeness. In meditating on the story, on single words or on phrases, we became more aware of the place of healing in our lives.

As the day drew to a close the richness of sharing, in silence and through words, seemed to open up not a day complete in itself, but a journey of a lifetime - a journey where God invites us into healing, into the restoration of ourselves and our world.

- **Fenella Temmerman, St Peter's, Winnipeg**

## ONTARIO

### CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE 2005

An Opportunity To Explore Our Journey Together

Mother Teresa outlined "A Simple Path" of contemplation from silence to peace. She said that contemplation should be a fruitful way of life and that it should include service. Her outline was offered to ordinary people on a little yellow card that she used as a "business card." Although

## News from Far and Near *continued from previous page*

Mother Teresa has gone into the beyond that is Christ, she still comes "calling" today. She is a humbling witness that contemplation bears much fruit, not the least of which is service. Here are her own words:

I always begin my prayer in  
SILENCE...

The fruit of silence is  
PRAYER.

The fruit of prayer is  
FAITH.

The fruit of faith is  
LOVE.

The fruit of love is  
SERVICE.

The fruit of service is  
PEACE.

How do you enter into silence? How are you led to service - the cultivation of charity, justice, peace, equality and respect in society? These are two questions that the Contemplative Christian Conference 2005 will address. And perhaps we can begin to answer a third question together before the end of our conference: How can we help each other along the journey - from silence to peace?

The all-day conference will be held Saturday, August 6, 2005 at Friends' House, 60 Lowther Avenue, Toronto. It will include three talks, from the practice of Centering Prayer, a Christian Meditator (Marilyn Metcalfe) and a Quaker (Keith Maddock), and plenty of silence for prayer, meditation and worship. If you would like to attend, please pre-register as soon as possible. Space is limited!

– **Jacques Gendron, novice/Order of Ecumenical Franciscan, a friend of Contemplative Christian Conference**

*For more on this event, see the Calendar of Events in this issue.*

### CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AND THE RULE OF BENEDICT

For the past six months a group of people gathered once a month at Renison College, University of Waterloo to explore the Rule of Benedict and to meditate together. Part of the program involved discussing a series of DVDs in which Archbishop Rowan Williams, Fr. Laurence Freeman OSB, Sr. Joan Chittister OSB, and Kathleen Norris, poet and author, talked about the ways the Rule of Benedict continues to "shape holy lives."

As well as discussing the talks, we also read the Rule and considered its application to our daily life. Our meditation practice helps us move towards the simplicity and God-centred life which the Rule calls us to live. Renison College will continue this program in the fall of 2005 by offering a number of Benedictine Days which will include meditation, lectio divina, reflections on the Rule, and daily offices. Watch for program schedule in the website calendar <www.meditatio.ca> and in the Autumn issue of News Notes.

– **Rev. Glenda Meakin, Stratford**

### AN EVENING WITH PAUL HARRIS

On April 7, 2005, Paul Harris gave an excellent talk entitled "Christian Meditation: Contemplative Prayer for a New Generation" to the Christian meditation group at St. Patrick's-Fallowfield parish in Nepean, Ontario.

The talk was directed at newcomers as well as those who have been meditating for some time. Paul emphasized the importance of entering the experience of meditation, underlining the fact that: "Christian meditation is not taught but caught." He opened his presentation with a number of quotations from scriptures and spiritual writings, which were extremely powerful. Paul read slowly and paused after each reading to give us time for reflection. His brief comments on the readings gently highlighted the most important points, particularly the need for silence.

Paul spoke of how on the first Christmas Eve, Jesus came to us in the silence of the night. He reminded us that John Main taught that God still comes to us in the silence, but comes now in the silence of our meditation. Love is reflected in silence. Paul shared a touching story about an elderly couple, sitting silently for half an hour in a hospital waiting room and lovingly holding hands. He observed that "love unites with a bond that does not require words."

In closing, Paul talked about the inner transformation that takes place when we practise meditative prayer. He ended his talk with a beautiful quotation from St. Augustine, which he believes sums up what meditation is all about...

O beauty, ever ancient, ever new.

Too late have I loved you.

I was outside, and you were within me.

And I never found you until I found you within myself.

After the talk, the evening continued with a 25-minute meditation, question period and fellowship over refreshments. We left with uplifted feelings, grateful to Paul for providing us with such spiritual nourishment for our journey.

– **Eva Hegmann and Ron Dicks, Ottawa**

*Continued on next page*

## News from Far and Near *continued from previous page*

### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

#### MOUNT ST. MARY'S SPIRITUALITY CENTRE SHARES THE GIFT OF MEDITATION

Three Christian meditation introductory evenings were held, beginning February 7, 2005, at Mount St. Mary's Spirituality Centre. The 16 people in attendance included former meditators of other traditions, and others who had come out of curiosity to hear more about this form of prayer. All showed enthusiasm and interest.

Some felt called to try this "new" form of daily prayer and attend the weekly Tuesday Christian meditation morning or evening group sessions. The personal testimonies in

the video "Coming Home" not only clarified questions for some participants, but seemed to strengthen their desire to set aside time each day to encounter God in silence and simplicity. Because of so many family/work demands everyone could see how necessary silence and quiet are in our lives today. They felt the journey would not be easy, yet they believed that to commit oneself to the discipline would be to grow a little deeper into becoming the person God created us to be.

– Kathleen Bolger CMS

*Note: For more on Mount St. Mary's Spirituality Centre visit the website of the Sisters of St. Martha, Prince Edward Island <[www.csmpei.org](http://www.csmpei.org)>.*

## COMMUNITY NOTES

### OTTAWA MEDITATOR RECEIVES ORDER OF CANADA

Patricia Smart, a member of the Ottawa St. Patrick's Basilica Christian Meditation group, was awarded Canada's highest honour, the Order of Canada, March 11, 2005 by Governor General Adrienne Clarkson.

The citation at Patricia's investiture read as follows: "Chancellor's professor at Carleton University, Patricia Smart has brought new insight and understanding to the study of Quebec culture. She wrote a pioneering work which is the touchstone for those investigating the province's literature from a feminist perspective. As well she has shed important light on the women artists of the revolutionary automatiste movement of the 1940s and 50s. She has initiated important collaborations between francophone and anglophone writers and remains a steadfast promoter of the importance of women in Canada's artistic heritage."

Pat is well known for her ground-breaking book on the study of Quebec women artists, "Les Femmes du Refus Global", as well as her award-winning book, "Writing in the Father's House: The Emergence of the Feminine in the Quebec Literary Tradition."



### MEDITATIO.CA HAS NEW LOOK

The Canadian Christian Meditation Community website has a new look. Be sure to visit it at: <http://www.meditatio.ca>. There you will find short introductory talks

on Christian meditation, community news including the latest copy of News Notes, the Area Coordinators, and a list of the Christian meditation groups in Canada. This website is designed to provide you with information about Christian meditation in Canada. Please send all comments, questions and suggestions for improvement to Chris Tanner <[christopher.tanner@sympatico.ca](mailto:christopher.tanner@sympatico.ca)>.

The meditation group listing gives 'surfing seekers' an opportunity to find a supportive meditation group close to home. If you are a group leader who wants your group to be listed, we invite you to contact Chris at the above email address.

## In Memoriam

### Newfoundland's oldest meditator dies at 94

Sister Mary Angela Fowler, a nun with the Sisters of Mercy, passed away on April 20, 2005. Sr. Angela was a long time meditator who was well loved by the small group that met every week. She taught school for 45 years and then became a teacher of life to everyone she met. She was a committed volunteer all over the city of St. John's. Sr. Angela leaves behind two sisters, several nieces, nephews and cousins, as well as the Congregation of Sisters of Mercy.

A funeral mass, presided over by an archbishop and seven priests, was held at Corpus Christi Parish Church, Saturday, April 23. There were many people in attendance to say good-bye to this kind and loving soul. Sr. Angela was laid to rest at the Sisters of Mercy plot in Belvedere Cemetery. She will be ever missed and ever loved by all of us. May she be at peace in God's kingdom.

– Gordon Lake, Newfoundland



# Calendar of Events

Note: For regular updates please refer to the Meditatio website at [www.meditatio.ca/news/updates](http://www.meditatio.ca/news/updates).

## June 2005

**23 June, Toronto, Ontario.** *The Power of Intention* led by Kathleen Russell. Time: 7 p.m. Venue: Room #4, Knox College, 59 St. George Street, U of T (St. George Campus). Contact: Clem Sauvé 416-9221-0367 or <clems@interlog.com> or Joy Gordon 416-485-9718 or <joyg@sympatico.ca>.

**23-25 June, St. John's, Newfoundland.** *The Quality of Mercy: Meditation and Compassion.* A retreat for meditators and those who would like to learn about Christian meditation, led by Rev. Glenda Meakin. Contact: Barbara Dick 709-722-4561 or <bdick@avint.net>.

## July 2005

**8-10 July, St. John, New Brunswick.** Retreat led by Paul Turner Harris and Kathleen Bolger CSM. Venue: Villa Madonna House. Contact: Kathleen Bolger CSM at 902-892-6585 or <kbolger@peimarthas.ca>.

## August 2005

**6 Aug., Toronto, Ontario.** *Contemplative Christian Conference 2005* will include three talks – one on the practice of Centering Prayer, one on Christian Meditation (Marilyn Metcalfe) and the third by a Quaker (Keith Maddock), in an atmosphere of silence, meditation and worship. Venue: Friends' Meeting House, 60 Lowther Avenue. Time: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Bring bag lunch (restaurants in area). Suggested donation \$30. Registration: Jacques Gendron 905-853-0953 or <jacquesgendron@yahoo.ca>.

**8-11 Aug., Thousand Oaks, California, USA.** The John Main Pre-Seminar Silent Retreat, *Light and Dark: the Way of Unity* led by Dom Laurence Freeman OSB, director of the World Community for Christian Meditation. Venue: California Lutheran University. For more information e-mail Pat Mitchell <pmitchell@stjohnsem.edu> or visit <www.wccm.org>. Registration is available through the website or by calling 1-520-285-6809.

**11-14 Aug., Thousand Oaks, California, USA.** The John Main Seminar 2005. *A Lever and a Place to Stand* led by Richard Rohr OFM. Venue: California Lutheran University. For more information e-mail Pat Mitchell <pmitchell@stjohnsem.edu> or visit <www.wccm.org>. Registration is available through the website or by calling 1-520-285-6809.

## September 2005

**19 Sept., (26 Sept., 3 Oct., 10 Oct.),** Charlottetown, PEI. *Introduction to Christian Meditation* led by Kathleen Bolger CSM. Venue: Mount St. Mary's Spirituality Centre. Theme: Four consecutive Monday evening sessions on the Essential Teachings of Christian Meditation. Contact: Kathleen Bolger CSM at 902-892-6585 or <kbolger@peimarthas.ca>.

**24 Sept., Waterloo, Ontario.** *Autumn Quiet Day: "Letting Go"* for meditators and all those wanting to learn about Christian meditation, led by Rev. Glenda Meakin. Venue: Renison College, University of Waterloo, 240 Westmount Road North. Time: 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Registration: Marilyn Malton at 519-884-4404 X628 or <renrim@renison.uwaterloo.ca>.

## October 2005

**1 Oct., British Columbia.** *Day of Reflection: "Wonder"* led by Father Charles Brandt. Venue: To be announced. Check <www.meditatio.ca/news/updates.html> for final location. Time: 9:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cost: \$25. Bring bag lunch (restaurants in area).

**14-16 Oct., North Bay, Ontario.** *The School – Sharing the Gift* led by the School resource team. This weekend is for those seeking to gain experience in sharing the gift of meditation with others. Venue: St. Joseph's Motherhouse, 2025 Main St. West. Contact: Merilyn Parker 705-497-7783 or <mer31@viaet.ca>.

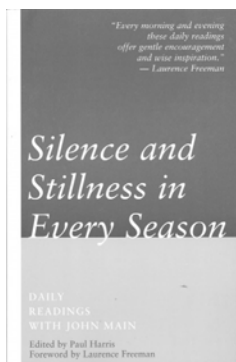
**21-22 Oct., St. John, New Brunswick.** Retreat led by Kathleen Bolger CSM. Venue: Villa Madonna Retreat House. Contact: Kathleen Bolger CSM at 902-892-6585 or <kbolger@peimarthas.ca>.

**21-23 Oct., Tweed, Ontario.** *Fully Alive: Christian Meditation and Yoga Event* led by Casey Rock, Lucie Legault and Rev. Glenda Meakin, meditators and yoga teachers. Venue: Bridgewater Retreat Centre in Tweed. Contact: Casey Rock <caseyrock@rogers.com> or Lucie Legault <legault.smeltzer@videotron.ca>.

**21-23 Oct., Montreal, Quebec.** *Silent Weekend Retreat* with Fr. Laurence Freeman. Venue: L'Ermitage Ste. Croix, Montreal. Cost: \$175 for single room with shared bathroom. Starting time 6:00 p.m. Registration/Contact: Magda Jass 514-489-0998 or <meteor.jass.heritage@qc.aibn.com>.

Want to list an event? You will find a user-friendly form to submit additions at [www.meditatio.ca/Forms/EventForm.html](http://www.meditatio.ca/Forms/EventForm.html).

# BOOKS FROM MEDITATIO BY PAUL HARRIS



## Daily Readings with John Main: Silence and Stillness in Every Season

This collection of John Main's teachings brings you the essential extracts from each of John Main's works, arranged in an attractive, inspirational and easily accessed format of daily readings. Each is an ideal length for beginning or ending your day or as lead in to a period of meditation. Available in a Flemish translation.

366 pp Book #6103 \$24.95

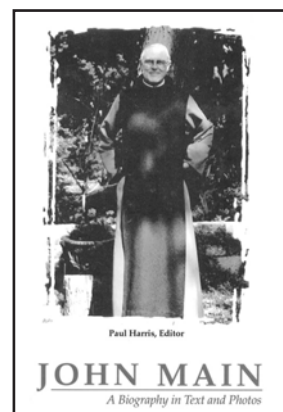
## John Main: A Biography in Text and Photos

Using text, photos and recollections from friends and family, this book traces Main's life from early years through his Eastern influences, to the monastery in Montreal and continues through what he called his inner journey of death in 1982.

This book gives readers a deeper understanding of the man, the monk and his teachings.

Available in a French translation.

63 pp Book #6015 \$11.00

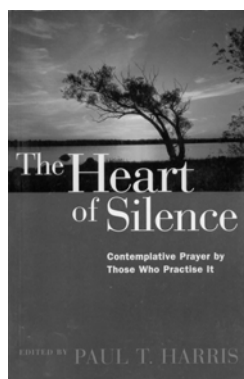
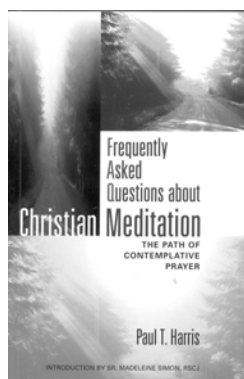


## Frequently Asked Questions about Christian Meditation

Is meditation prayer? How can I find an hour a day to meditate? What happens when I meditate? What if I fall asleep? These are a few off the 56 frequently asked questions addressed in this book.

An honest, practical guide that offers encouragement, support and information for anyone interested in meditation.

248 pp Book #7007 \$19.95

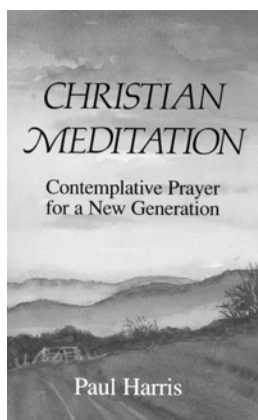


## The Heart of Silence: Contemplative Prayer by Those Who Practice It

In a world increasingly aware of the need for inner stillness, the 60 Christian Meditation contributors to this book discuss a path of prayer that is anchored in both Christian tradition and contemplative experience.

This collection of stories is a great contribution to the contemplative renewal taking place in Christianity today. Each story is unique and shows the solitary nature of the path. Yet every story illustrates how the path unites everyone who treads it within a community. This kind of story-telling renews faith and hope.

224 pp Book #6235 \$19.95



## Christian Meditation: Contemplative Prayer for a New Generation

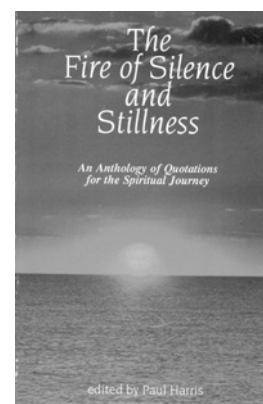
Addresses a wide spectrum of John Main's teachings about meditation. Many who today seek a deeper experience of prayer will benefit from these reflections. In acknowledging the difficulties many Christians encounter when beginning contemplative prayer, this book offers a clear, practical guide to the daily practice of meditation.

146 pp Book #6801 \$17.95

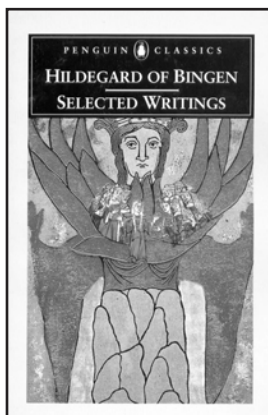
## The Fire of Silence and Stillness

An anthology of enduring quotations designed to stimulate your spiritual journey. The inspiring quotes blend wisdom from the past with present day understanding. Start each day with inspiration from John Main, Thomas Merton, Bede Griffiths, Jean Vanier, Mother Teresa, Jesus, the Prophets, the Psalmist, St. Paul and many others.

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# FROM PENGUIN CLASSICS



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After fervently praying for a greater understanding of Christ's passion, Julian of Norwich, a fourteenth-century anchorite and mystic, experienced a series of divine revelations. This edition contains both the short text, and the long text written some twenty years later.

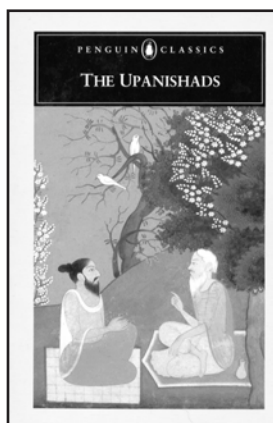
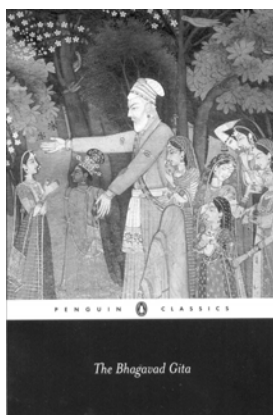
Translated by Elizabeth Spearing with introduction by A.C. Spearing. 193 pp Book #5040 \$19.50



## The Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita is an intensely spiritual work that forms the cornerstone of the Hindu faith. Juan Mascaro's translation captures the extraordinary aural qualities of the original Sanscrit. This edition features a new introduction by Simon Brodbeck.

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## The Upanishads

Translated and selected by Juan Mascaro from twelve of the Upanishads, put down in Sanscrit between 800 and 400BC. Also included is an illuminating introduction by Juan Mascaro that reveals the paradoxical variety and unity, the spiritual wisdom and romantic imagination of these 'Himalayas of the Soul'.

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# Practicalities of Practice

## Do we really trust the cosmic Christ within us to give us what we need?

If we say our prayer word and trust that what should happen will... it will happen.

It is not our call, but if you were the Loving God, the Creator of all beauty – would you not give your loved one what she/he needs if they are quiet, still and at last slowed down enough and attentive enough to receive your love?

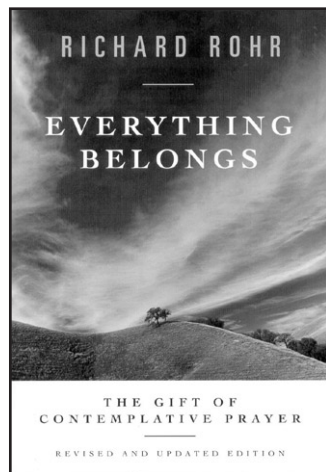
Genuine trust takes time to be built and also to be maintained. The experience of both beginners and long-time meditators is that trust does come, as we look back and notice that we indeed are loved. Often we receive energy the day we need it, outside of meditation or when we whisper our prayer

word. Looking ahead is more difficult. But, if we are still, we can, in silence, trust that we are loved.

It is hard to set aside our consumer mentality (which tempts us to ask, “What are we getting out of meditation?”) so that we can TRUST that the cosmic Christ within us is giving us exactly what we need. And, this is indeed what is happening!

What a beautiful gesture to trust and receive this cosmic love full of energy.

– Tom Cain, CCMC Meditator, Lethbridge, Alberta



### Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer

Richard Rohr

Please see the review on page C2.  
186 pp Book #5043 \$23.95

(Order form on page C11.)

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