

Christian Meditation in Canada

NEWSNOTES SPRING 2006 VOL. 15 NO. 1 THE WORLD COMMUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Waiting Hopefully: Ushering In Advent With Silence

Hope is one of those tricky words, isn't it? Yet, it is essential to our being human, to our ability to pull ourselves across the chasms between grief and joy, apathy and action, love and fear. Like a dynamic rope, it weaves itself invisibly through the meandering currents of our lives. It keeps us moving forward, searching, yearning, reaching out. It is the belief that things will get better, that healing will come, no matter how deep the well of suffering and loss. That, for me anyhow, is what hope is. And it was the theme of Rev. Glenda Meakin's Advent retreat at the Providence Spirituality Centre in Kingston in November, aptly titled "Waiting Hopefully".



Kahlil Gibran's words, "Beauty is not in the face; beauty is a light in the heart," come to mind when I think of the group gathered together that first evening at dusk. And oh, what light there was in that room! Not knowing anyone I felt a bit uneasy at first, but I basked in the glow of that loving light, and any shyness I experienced melted away. We began the retreat in a circle, sharing what our hopes were for the weekend; what our hopes were for the world. There was an immediate and powerful bond that ran through us, much like the hope that runs throughout our lives. Helen Keller said, "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the Heart." She, better than anyone, would have known the mysterious beauty of hope: the unknown, dark places it hides in and seeks, beckoning us

on, beyond the radar of our limited human senses. I think of Christ, the Light of all Lights, growing in the fertile darkness of Mary's womb, just as we wait for His birth in our own hearts. Meditation allows us to practice this "art" of waiting.

With consistent practice, it sharpens our inner spiritual senses, and we become more keenly able to sit in the silent darkness of our own spirits, where the Light of Christ patiently awaits our homecoming.

There is a saying, "It is not the sage on the stage, but the guide at the side." Glenda is graced with the remarkable gift of connecting people to each other: never the

guru, but rather the gentle and humble facilitator of Spirit. Hers is the kind of guidance that is the mark of a true teacher, that strengthens the heart and empowers the soul.

There was abundant time during the weekend for silence, meditation, and much needed rest and relaxation. The weather was beautiful. We got one of the first heavy snowfalls which allowed me, while out on a walk, to fall to the ground with joyful abandon and make an angel. (Of course, no one was looking, I hope!) Wonderful food, superb library chock full of hidden treasures, and a labyrinth to boot.

Thank you to Glenda, and all the participants, for a healing and rejuvenating weekend wrapped in the arms of a community of love.

– Carolyn Kennedy, Toronto

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COMMUNITY NOTES

LISTEN TO FR. LAURENCE'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

A voice recording of the quarterly letter by Fr. Laurence Freeman, Director of the World Community for Christian Meditation is available for the visually impaired. Requests may be sent to Brendan Cullen, who is recording the letter. His mailing address is 625 Placid Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie ON P6B 3M4, telephone: 705-759-8332.

IN MEMORIAM

Peter J. Watson, youngest son of group leader William (Bill) Watson and the late Sheila Watson of Ajax, Ontario, died suddenly on January 15 at his home in Winnipeg. He was 43. A psychology graduate of the University of Winnipeg,

Peter worked in the Manitoba Social Affairs Department for the last three years. He was involved with the Winnipeg "Main Street" project and also with the Louis Riel group in Transcona, serving the mentally and physically handicapped. He was part of the Ministry of Healing at St. Ignatius Church in central Winnipeg, and was active in the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) program, and a Bible Study Group.

The funeral mass for Peter was held at St. Ignatius Church on January 26. A memorial mass and interment took place Saturday February 4 in Toronto.

We offer our heartfelt sympathy and silent prayers for Bill and his family at this time.

From the School Canadian Coordinator **Sharing the Gift**

FREE OF CHARGE

Free of Charge is the title of a new book by theologian Miroslav Volf. Lest you think a book by a theologian may be too "heady", I found it easy to read and very down to earth. The book is a deeply spiritual exploration of giving and forgiving. It caused me to reflect on the generous acts of giving that regularly occur in the Christian meditation community in Canada.

"Sharing the gift" of meditation as taught by John Main can be seen across the country: in community gatherings in the Atlantic provinces; the introductory sessions held in Toronto over the past six months; the recent Essential Teaching day in Ottawa attended by 70 people; the numerous retreat days held in every province from BC to Newfoundland; the work of Meditatio, NewsNotes, the Council, and all the weekly groups that sustain us in our practice. All these offerings and many more happen because meditators give what they have received - the rich and simple gift of Christian meditation.

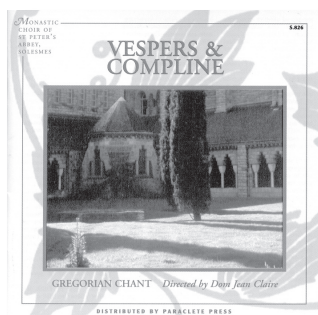
Our meditation times help us to see these acts of giving in

their proper light. That is, we are always aware that whatever we give comes from God and is given for the praise of God. We are simply a channel of the gift of meditation. As we have freely received, so do we freely give.

The School resource teams across the country exist to support you and encourage you to offer this simple way of prayer to others. If you would like to offer a seminar, give a talk, hold a School weekend, contribute an article about your experience of meditation, or share the gift in any way, please contact any member of the resource team in your area.

A gift to the meditation community this spring is the visit of Sheelah Treflé-Hidden to Ottawa and Toronto. Sheelah is a meditator and peace activist from England who will be speaking on the theme "Contemplating the Scapegoat: Reflections on Sacrificial Violence" and the role of meditation in overcoming it. I hope all meditators in the Ottawa and Toronto areas will come and bring others to Sheelah's presentation. See the calendar in this issue for dates and locations.

– Rev. Glenda Meakin



Vespers & Compline CD.

Monastic choir of St. Peter's Abbey, Solesmes.
Directed by Dom Jean Claire \$24.00



Gregorian Sampler CD.

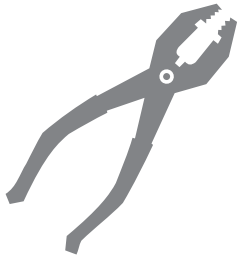
Monastic choir of
St. Peter's Abbey, Solesmes.
Directed by Dom Jean Claire \$24.00

Please see the order form page C12

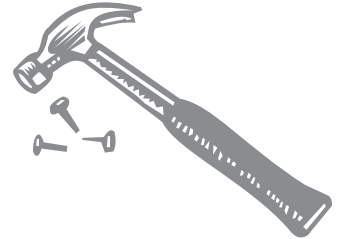
From the National Coordinator On The Path

When I walk in the Gatineau Park, the stillness of a great blue heron will often remind me of how much life there is in the necessary immobility of meditation. A false short cut while snowshoeing teaches me the importance of being faithful to the path rather than avoiding its challenges. The inescapable mosquitoes on a camping trip illustrate the futility of trying to eliminate distractions: Nature overflows with images that talk to me.

This time, the message about silent prayer came while doing renovations at our son Martin's house over the last few months. After having removed old tiles in the bathroom and the kitchen, after having plastered and then re-painted the kitchen, the living room and all the bedrooms, after having removed the linoleum on all the main floor and discovered that it was made of beautiful hardwood that we could sand, we were satisfied a few weeks ago when we pronounced that the renovations were finished. It was a joy to remember one by one all the parts of the house, inside and outside, that we had immensely improved: we were thoroughly satisfied. At some point, we realized how, in a true sense, what we had done was to "remove the junk", and bring each part of the house either to



its original state or the way it should have been. Particularly the floors! We spent so much time removing the worn down linoleum, and the old cement and then sanding and varnishing this oak hardwood floor. We were amused once again at the fact that in the kitchen the pattern of the vinyl was some kind of wood imitation... while the wood underneath was now so magnificent!



Similarly, on the spiritual path, we often cover the beautiful natural floor with something very artificial that looks great only for a while. Our pilgrimage consists of removing unnecessary layers of images. Stimulating thoughts, brilliant insights can easily cover the naked mystery as we approach it. As we all know, we need to let go of idols, of our understanding of God. The very title of the book that John Main often referred to is an apt reminder: "The Cloud of Unknowing". Buddhists convey the same message when they say in a very dramatic way: "If you see the Buddha, kill him!" Meditation allows us to simplify more and more, to remove unnecessary layers, or additions, to go beyond words and images, to contact the supreme reality that we call God.

– Michel Legault

JOHN MAIN SEMINAR 2006

The Fire of Silence: Music and Mystics with Margaret Rizza will be held in Penang, Malaysia, August 10-13. Margaret, who is known around the world for her distinctive contemplative music, will lead this exploration of the "harmonies of the soul". The seminar will be preceded by a 3-day silent retreat led by Fr. Laurence Freeman.

For further information visit <www.wccm.org> or contact Patricia Por, the Seminar coordinator at <ppor@pc.jaring.my>

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Échos du silence, a newsletter for French-speaking meditators, is available. Send inquiries to Fr. Michel Boyer, editor, 526-7400 boulevard Saint-Laurent, Montreal, QC H2R 2Y1 or e-mail <lagrottefranciscains@sympatico.ca>.

Page design: www.khatvanga.com

BOOK REVIEW

Eckert, Fr. William *The Prayer of the Priest: Christian Meditation for Priestly Ministry*
Tucson, AZ. Medio Media, 2005. 200 pages.
CDN\$18.00 ISBN 193318244X paper

Reviewed by Rev. Julia Gill

Prior to my ordination, I imagined that a parish priest spent most of the time immersed in holy matters – devoting time to prayer, studying the Bible, visiting the sick. Alas, the reality is far from this ideal. The average priest spends a significant amount of time wading through bureaucracy, fighting worship wars, and ensuring that year-end financial commitments are met. Fr. William Eckert, a parish priest himself, offers this book to “direct the prayer of the parish priest to the source of the priestly life, to Jesus Christ, the risen Lord who dwells within the depths of our hearts and is our support for all the responsibilities of our pastoral role.” (p.xvi). The prayer Eckert recommends is Christian meditation, the practice of stillness and silence re-introduced to the Christian church by John Main, and based on the teachings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers.

Through Eckert’s own words, and in the testimonies of 19 other priests from around the world, we learn how Christian meditation has transformed their lives and their priestly ministry. All have worked as parish priests and most have been practicing meditation, as taught by John Main, for many years.

Before we venture very far into the book, Eckert tells us how to meditate. He describes the very simple method of meditative prayer, even offering advice for coping with the inevitable distractions. The busy priest, who may have picked up this book from a desire for a deeper prayer life, need read no further. But the reader hopefully will continue on, because the reflections of Eckert and the other priests offer encouragement to persevere in this style of prayer – such a simple discipline, but often so difficult to maintain.

In the first of the book’s two sections, Eckert reflects on his experience of meditation, a journey he began over 17 years ago. He believes that the present painful state of the Church has much to do with the minimal amount of time spent in contemplative prayer by most parish priests. The seemingly incessant demands of parish life can make prayer feel like a waste of time. But Eckert says what seems like a waste of time is exactly what is needed. Stopping ‘the doing’ is the way to begin renewal in the Church. In the “twice-daily ritual of meditation one enters into the deepest part of ourselves” (p.2) where we encounter the living Christ.

One of the givens of the spiritual journey is that God is always drawing us deeper into relationship. The downside is that precious, familiar styles of prayer may one day begin

to leave us dissatisfied. Our prayer feels dry, even boring. Eckert describes what may be the root of such dryness:

“If our good intentions have faltered and our prayer turned to ashes, perhaps it is because we are holding too tightly to forms of prayer that once enriched our lives but now are inadequate. Our old ways have moved us beyond where we were before. Not to more of the same, but less. A way of prayer marked by less talk, less sensible piety and devotion, less me. This way of meditation is a way of poverty. It is about being willing to give up what was once so satisfying to our senses and then we find it leads us to greater depths of prayer and to unexpected riches.” (p.10-11)

In the second section of the book, the testimonies of the other priests describe some of the unexpected riches they have received. In meditating, some have found a way to be with Jesus and, in being with him, to be very present with others. One priest realized that meditation sharpened his attention to the meanings of scripture, opening up mysteries to him that otherwise would have been closed. Others have been able to look at the activities of the institutional Church with new eyes: “I have found another offshoot of meditation has been to recognize a lot of church activity in relation to strategies and programmes as being driven by the ego and not necessarily of God or leading to God at all.” (p.129, Thomson). Almost all remarked that a fruit of meditation was the heightening awareness of Christ’s presence with them, whether they were reading scripture, celebrating a liturgy, visiting with the sick, or preaching.

This book is a must-read for any parish priest. Every parish priest, at one time or another, has despaired at the ever-increasing work load that descends on them. The words of Eckert and the other contributors lead the reader to the only solution: to be still, to stop ‘doing’, to be quiet in God’s presence. A time of silence and one word, *maranatha*, is all that is needed to bring us into the awareness of God in the midst of parish life.

Rev. Gill is an Anglican parish priest in Kitchener, Ontario, where she shares parish ministry with her husband, also a priest. She is a spiritual director, the mother of one teenage son, and has experienced the fruit of over four years of meditation.

NEWS FROM FAR AND NEAR



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND WEAVINGS

PEI's MAP committee (Meditation Action Planners) has been busy this January and February with our newest group of "beginning meditators". Fifteen people met on six Monday evenings for an hour of input, personal testimony, tapes by Fr. Laurence Freeman and John Main, meditation, and questions and answers. The participants appreciated the opportunity to spend time in silence in a group setting where unity was a strengthening factor. Most experienced a calming effect as well as more joy and happiness in their daily living, although for some the most difficult part would be in the commitment to set aside times for meditation each day. Still, some enthusiasm circled around the possibility of starting a new group in their area. Time will tell! The sessions concluded with a "happy hour" with wishes of God's blessing on each of us as we walk this contemplative path.

– Jeannette Jenkins

ONTARIO

ADVENT 2005 MEDITATION SESSION

There are five Christian meditation groups meeting regularly in Thunder Bay. On Saturday November 26, about thirty meditators from all of the groups came together at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Ridgeway Street, for a pre-Advent morning meditation session.

Alice Ward welcomed everyone. Terry Coady thanked Rev. Deborah Kraft, pastor of St. Paul's, for inviting us and asked her to address the group. Rev. Debbie, herself a meditator, spoke about "The Cloud of Unknowing". She mentioned how often clouds appear in the Bible in connection with divinity, and spoke about a journey in her own life, her first air flight. At sixteen, she left southern Ontario for Paris,

France. She climbed through cloud, which she termed her "cloud of forgetting", and after transiting sunset and night, she came through cloud again – her personal "cloud of unknowing" – to a new life of unknown blessings and wonders ahead.

The formal meditation session followed the familiar pattern: a John Main tape and a 25-minute meditation period. The question and answer period evolved into an exchange of reflections and personal experiences of meditation before the meeting closed.

Coffee and fellowship followed in the church basement. We left, going out into the cold, bright day, ready to live Advent 2005 in our daily lives.

– Mary Frost



MEDITATORS BRAVE SNOWSTORM TO ATTEND WORKSHOP

A heavy snowstorm in Ottawa on Saturday January 21, which created traffic tie-ups and caused trees to crash to the ground, did not daunt 70 newcomers and long-time meditators attending a half-day session on Christian meditation at St. Patrick's Basilica.

The workshop began with a talk by Paul Harris on the essential teaching, followed by four group leaders, Robin Lane, Denise Fidia, Marie O'Neill and Don Myrick speaking on their own personal journeys to the practice of Christian meditation and its importance in their daily lives and relationships. A meditation period and refreshments were followed by a 90-minute workshop where participants divided into groups, led by facilitators, for discussion on the role and purpose of the weekly group meeting, its ecumenical dimensions, the benefits of meeting in a group, whether numbers are important or not, and when does a group become too big.

Lively discussions followed. How to choose the best location

Continued on next page

News from Far and Near *continued*

for a group – how does one approach a pastor of a church to start a new group – the importance of a new group leader to have a personal commitment to the teaching and daily practice – how to publicize a weekly meeting – resources necessary to start a new group.

Added features of the day were a good selection of books for sale, handouts for participants, photographs of the life of John Main, and 50 panel displays of photos of meditators and meditation groups from around the world.

The Ottawa Christian Meditation coordinating committee, which oversees 32 groups in Ottawa and area, organized the day. Feedback has been very positive about this special day, and there are plans to hold this type of session each year in the area.

SHARING THE GIFT

On February 14, Paul Harris was invited to address 150 members of the Kanata Learning Society, at the local Canadian Legion hall, on the essential teaching of Christian meditation. The two and one-half hour morning session included a talk, meditation period and questions and answers.

The Kanata Learning Society, a community organization, promotes a weekly speaker for its members on subjects such as law, political life and religion, and attracts a large number of retirees to their regular meetings. Paul spoke of the importance of joining a weekly Christian meditation group. It is hoped that both Kanata groups will add new members from this Valentine day event.



RETREAT WITH DEACON DEREK G. SMITH

Friday evening, February 24, thirty-five meditators, new and experienced, gathered at La Maison Notre Dame de la Providence in Orleans, Ontario, for a weekend retreat entitled “*Meditation, Personal Transformation and Change in the Church*”. Deacon Derek led us through several thought-provoking talks based on transformation of self. He said there were many self-help books on the shelves, but they had to do with externals and not with the spiritual,

interior life. He pointed out that self-transformation was an inner journey and tied it in with our daily meditations. Self-transformation is the work of the Lord in us - not what we do. It is about grace given to those who open themselves to it.

We recited the Liturgy of the Hours and meditated as a group several times throughout the weekend. An earthquake interrupted the first period of meditation, but it was treated as just another distraction and we returned to saying our mantra!

In his final talk, Deacon Derek spoke on how great changes in the church and in society do not take place generally through official leaders, but through individual persons, citing Benedict, St. Francis, Thomas Merton, Martin Luther



Sabbath

Snow falls gently
Silently
Upon our Lady
Underneath the pines
Her hands outstretched
In full surrender
To the will of God.

Inside the House of Providence

Retreatants
Seek an outer
Inner rest
Saved from distraction
By our sacred word
Which takes us
To the place
Where we are loved
And cherished
Evermore.

Retreat
Return
Again, again
Into the Presence
To the Source
Which builds us
Like the jack-pine
In the field
Rooted and stable
Growing
Reaching out.

Ron Dicks

At a retreat with Deacon Derek G. Smith

News from Far and Near *continued*

King Jr. and John Main. What they had in common was that they shared a clear focus on spirituality and they did not back down. Although the weekend was spent in silence there was a spirit of unity and togetherness among us. We ended with a question and answer period, and when the silence was lifted we enjoyed much talk and fellowship at lunch before leaving for our various destinations.

– Marie O’Neill

MANITOBA

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AND LIVING HOPEFULLY

It was the coldest weekend this winter, yet a sense of expectation and warmth filled St. Peter’s Church on February 18, as 45 meditators gathered from across Winnipeg. From the beginning, hope had little to do with externals or circumstances, but everything to do with how we live our lives.

Rev. Glenda Meakin led us on a journey from the “starting place of hope” to the “source of hope”, then onwards to the lived reality of “how to live hopefully”. Using story, visualization and meditation, Glenda took us through awareness of the tensions of hope as we seek to expand our horizons, individually and globally. She gently guided us into our own personal time of lament, the space between our reality and our hopes. Our faith story, defined in our memories, is essentially a story of hope, yet a reminder of the necessity of lamenting as we are thrown back on the mercy of God.

“I am taking with me the permission to lament and to do the work around it. I’ve discovered my own wailing wall with new insight into what is paralyzing me,” wrote one participant. *“I am taking with me the unfolding of lament into hope,”* wrote another.

Glenda unwraps scripture like no one else. This day was no exception as we entered into the story of the losses and hopes of the paralyzed man and his friends. This is our story, and digging through the roof to reach Jesus, it intertwines hope - that which nourishes and sustains the fundamental longings of our heart - and mercy.

“I am taking away with me the realization that meditation is like that hole in the roof, a way to Jesus, a way to our center. I am taking away the specific sense that in meditation we are suspended, not judging or anticipating, but being called to persevere, trust and not know what that encounter holds,” a third participant noted.

The final talk focussed on what it means to live hopefully, to live our testimony of hope in an unjust world; the only call being to live it in our own local, small, particular way. Following a further period of meditation, we all shared in a time of “community wisdom” where many of the same sentiments were expressed.

As for me, *“I am taking away peace, renewed hope and a deeper commitment to persevere in meditation.”*

– Fenella Temmerman

Practicalities of Practice

WHEN SHOULD I MEDITATE AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY QUALITY TIME?

If we are clear on “what” we are attempting to do, this leads to the importance of “when”.

- It is about *being* versus *doing*.
- Being focused on a neutral prayer word in order to be *totally available to receive God’s love* as John Main has taught us.
- Young couples in love want to spruce up and find the best time to be available for each other. Married couples in marriage encounter speak of couple power and quality time together. We need to approach our time together with God by being ready to pray.

Quality time vs. leftover time?

- Even if you usually are not great at mornings, before breakfast is a time that you can practice paying attention to God’s love for you and get better at it. My wife Carrie

used to say she didn’t do mornings. Now after meditating for many years before her workday begins – she does do mornings. We all can pick a morning time to pray even if it means getting up slightly earlier.

- The evening is trickier with our busy-ness and the temptation to wait until just before retiring is likely, for most of us, to be giving God “our leftover time”. If we really want to be available to receive love, the time can be found because we value this so much.
- So have a quick nap, splash warm water on your face, spruce up and be ready for your late afternoon or early evening date to receive God’s love when you are alert and able to pay attention. You choose the precise quality time that works for you.

– Tom Cain

MONEY MATTERS: Your dollars at work!

*There are three ways in which you can support financially
the Canadian Community for Christian Meditation and the WCCM.*

Here is a brief description of each one:

1. As readers of *NewsNotes*, you are invited to contribute \$15 or more per year towards the cost of printing and distributing the national and international newsletter. This fundraising drive is known as LET'S KEEP CONNECTED. The main invitation is included in the spring issue, with shorter reminders in the other issues. The LET'S KEEP CONNECTED form can be found on page C11 of this issue.
2. The CCMC has an annual appeal known as the DOREEN ROMANDINI FUND to cover the costs of our National Resource Centre in Montreal and other national activities and initiatives such as the School, support to Group Leaders, and the Canadian Council. This appeal goes out in the fall issue of *NewsNotes*.
3. And lastly, there is the FRIENDS OF THE WCCM program for the support of the International Office in London, England, and to share the teaching around the world. Rosanne L'Ecuyer has taken over the role as Canadian Coordinator from Lucy Chong, who has piloted the program since its inception ten years ago – thank you Lucy. The 'Friends Program' will be featured in the next issue of the International Newsletter.

The Grace of Meditation

There is a wonderful prayer that asks God to “transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of God’s grace”. The prayer reminds me of what a grace Christian meditation is and how it transforms our impoverished ways. You will often hear meditators testify to this transforming power. When they speak about their daily practice of being attentive to God in silence, you will hear words such as “more peaceful, patient, more compassionate, more conscious of others’ feelings, more open to the presence of God in daily life.” These are all signs of God’s transforming grace working in us.

Grace is a gift from God, freely given. That is, there are no strings attached. However we come to Christian meditation,

it is through God’s initiative inviting us into union with God through Christ simply because God loves us. That we respond is also grace. That we persevere in the discipline is grace. How often we are tempted to stop meditating when we get in touch with “the poverty of our nature”! It is grace to learn humility, to know our need for God.

Grace, like every true gift, is meant to be re-gifted, passed on, given away. As meditators, we receive God’s grace in order to become a channel of God’s love, for the good of God’s world, and to the glory of God. The same prayer continues by pointing us to the need to share the gift, the grace that Christian meditation brings:

Living God, in Christ you make all things new.

Transform the poverty of our nature

By the riches of your grace,

and in the renewal of our lives,

make known your glory;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

– Rev. Glenda Meakin, Canadian School Coordinator

Calendar of Events

Note: For regular updates please refer to the Canadian website at www.meditatio.ca/news/updates.

April 2006

6 Apr., Calgary, AB. *Meditation Booster – Monthly Drop-in* led by Engeline Piet. Time: 12 noon to 12:45 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Venue: FCJ Christian Life Centre. Contact: FCJ Christian Life Centre 403-228-4215 or <fcjcentre@fchsisters.ca>.

7-9 Apr., South Rustico, PE. *Prayer of the Heart, Body and Soul: Christian Meditation with Yoga* led by Barbara Dick and Lucie Legault. Time: Begins Friday night and ends after lunch Sunday. Venue: Belcourt Centre. Contact: Teri Hall 902-687-3367 or <thall@pei.sympatico.ca>.

27 Apr., Toronto, ON. *Community and New Life* led by Rev. Glenda Meakin. Time: 7 p.m. Venue: Room #4, Knox College, 59 St. George Street, U of T (St. George Campus). Contact: Clem Sauvé 416-921-0367 or <clems@interlog.com> or Joy Gordon 416-485-9718 or <joyg@sympatico.ca>.

29 Apr., Richmond, BC. *Thy Kingdom Come: Christian Meditation and the Way of Love.* Guest Speaker: Michael Hyrniuk, Ph.D. Spiritual Transformation. Theme: We will explore the power of meditation to illumine the path of love in our lives in Christ by leading us more fully into a personal experience of spiritual communion with God, a caring community with others and the common life of a just society. Time: 9:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. Venue: St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church, 4451 Williams Road. Cost: \$20. Bring a bag lunch (restaurants in the area). Contact: Phyliss 604-274-4493 or <pctoneill@shaw.ca> or Mary 604-535-0528 or <mclord@shaw.ca>

May 2006

1 May, Edmonton, AB. Christian Meditation Groups of the Edmonton area *Annual Get-together*. Time: 7 p.m. Venue: Providence Renewal Centre. Contact: Monique 780-439-9007.

4 May, Calgary, AB. *Meditation Booster – Monthly Drop-in* led by Engeline Piet. Time: 12 noon to 12:45 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Venue and contacts – see Apr. 6, above.

6 May, Calgary, AB. Meditation Retreat Day led by Engeline Piet. Time: 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Venue and contacts – see Apr. 6, above.

18 May, Toronto, ON. Christian Meditation Twilight Retreat “*Contemplating the Scapegoat: Reflections on Sacrificial Violence*” a talk by Sheelah Treflé Hidden, René

Girard scholar of Bradford, England. Theme: The Girardian theory of the ambiguity between what is violent and what is sacred and how individual and group violence can be deflected onto others. It will look at this sacrificial violence in the Christian tradition and examine how meditation is an essential arm in overcoming it in our daily lives. Venue: Room #4 Knox College, 59 St. George Street, U of T (St. George Campus). Time: 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Cost: \$20, payable at the door. No advance registration. Contact: Clem Sauvé 416-921-0367 or <clems@interlog.com>.

25 May, Toronto, ON. *Meditation and Celtic Spirituality: Part 2* led by Lucy Magnus-Burke. Time: 7 p.m. Venue and contacts – see Apr. 27, above.

26-27 May, Charlottetown, PE. *Stepping into the Sunlight – The Twelve Steps and Meditation* led by George Zanette. Venue: Mount St. Mary’s. Contact: Sr. Kathleen Bolger 902-892-6585 or <kbolger@peimarthas.ca>.

June 2006

1 June, Calgary, AB. *Meditation Booster – Monthly Drop-in* led by Engeline Piet. Time: 12 noon to 12:45 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Venue and contacts – see Apr. 6, above.

3 June, Charlottetown, PE. *Christian Meditation – Reflection Day* including Lectio Divina. Time: 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Venue and contacts – see May 26, above.

5 June, Ottawa, ON. *Meditation and Non-Violence: Perspectives on Fundamentalism, Conflict, and the Way of Love* a talk by Sheelah Treflé Hidden, René Girard scholar of Bradford, England. Program: Two one-hour talks with opportunity for questions and answers and time out for refreshments. The evening will close with meditation. Time: 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Venue: St. Paul’s University, Auditorium and Atrium, 223 Main Street (use central door off parking lot). Cost: \$20 – pre-registration required before May 29. Contact: Flora Benoit 613-235-5440 or <florab@sympatico.ca>.

9-11 June, Toronto, ON. Christian Meditation Community of Toronto Annual Contemplative Prayer Retreat led by Derek Smith, Roman Catholic deacon, and professor of Anthropology at Carleton University, Ottawa. Theme: *Meditation in the Christian Tradition: from John Cassian to John Main*. Venue: the new St. John’s Convent, 233 Cummer Avenue (Yonge & Finch). Time: Friday evening to Sunday noon. Cost: Residential \$190 single; Commuters \$140.

Continued on next page

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

Calendar of Events continued from previous page

Contact: Joy Gordon 416-485-9718 or <joyg@sympatico.ca> or Claire Andrews 416-922-7230.

22 June, Toronto, ON. *Attention and Awareness* led by Brian Deery. Time: 7 p.m. Venue and contacts – see Apr. 27, above.

August 2006

10-13 Aug., Penang, Malaysia. John Main Seminar *The Fire of Silence: Music and Mystics* led by Margaret Rizza. Contact:

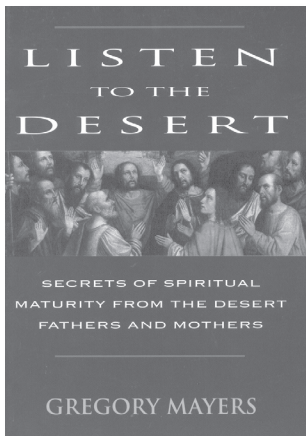
Patricia Por, Seminar coordinator, at <ppor@pc.jaring.my> or visit <www.wccm.org>

October 2006

20-22 Oct., St. John, NB. Special Retreat led by Fr. Laurence Freeman at Villa Madonna Retreat House. Contact: Sr. Kathleen Bolger 902-892-6585 or <kbolger@peimarthas.ca>.

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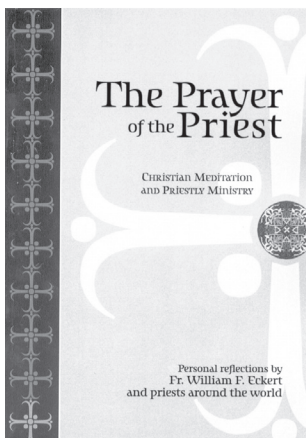
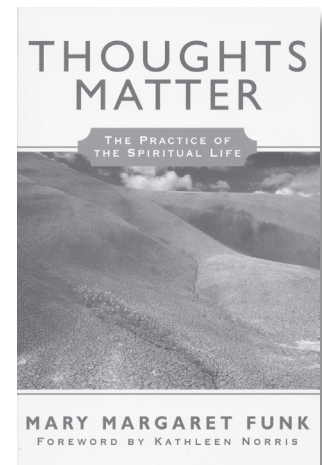


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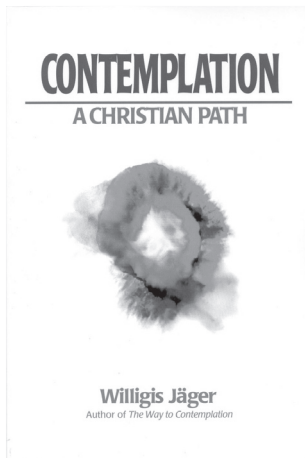


The Prayer of the Priest: Christian Meditation and Priestly Ministry
William F. Eckert

Forward by Bishop Michael Putney and Bishop Richard Chartres 200 p. \$18.00

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See book review by Rev. Julia Gill on page C4.



Contemplation: A Christian Path

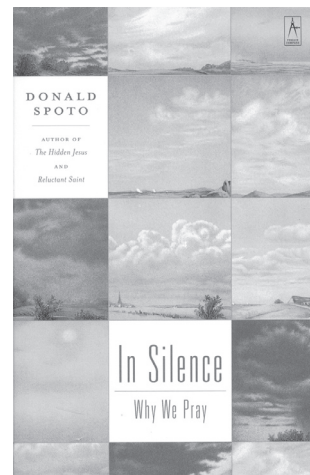
Willigis Jäger 117 p. \$16.00

The desire to explore deeper levels of consciousness has exercised a fascination over the human mind since prehistoric times. This timely book is for the growing numbers of Westerners rediscovering the Christian contemplative path and choosing to walk it.

In Silence: Why We Pray

Donald Spoto 238 p. \$21.00

The literature of prayer has a long and rich heritage. This extraordinary work of scholarship and devotion builds on that tradition and points it in a fresh direction, examining not only what prayer says about God but what it reveals about our own universal experience and inner lives.



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