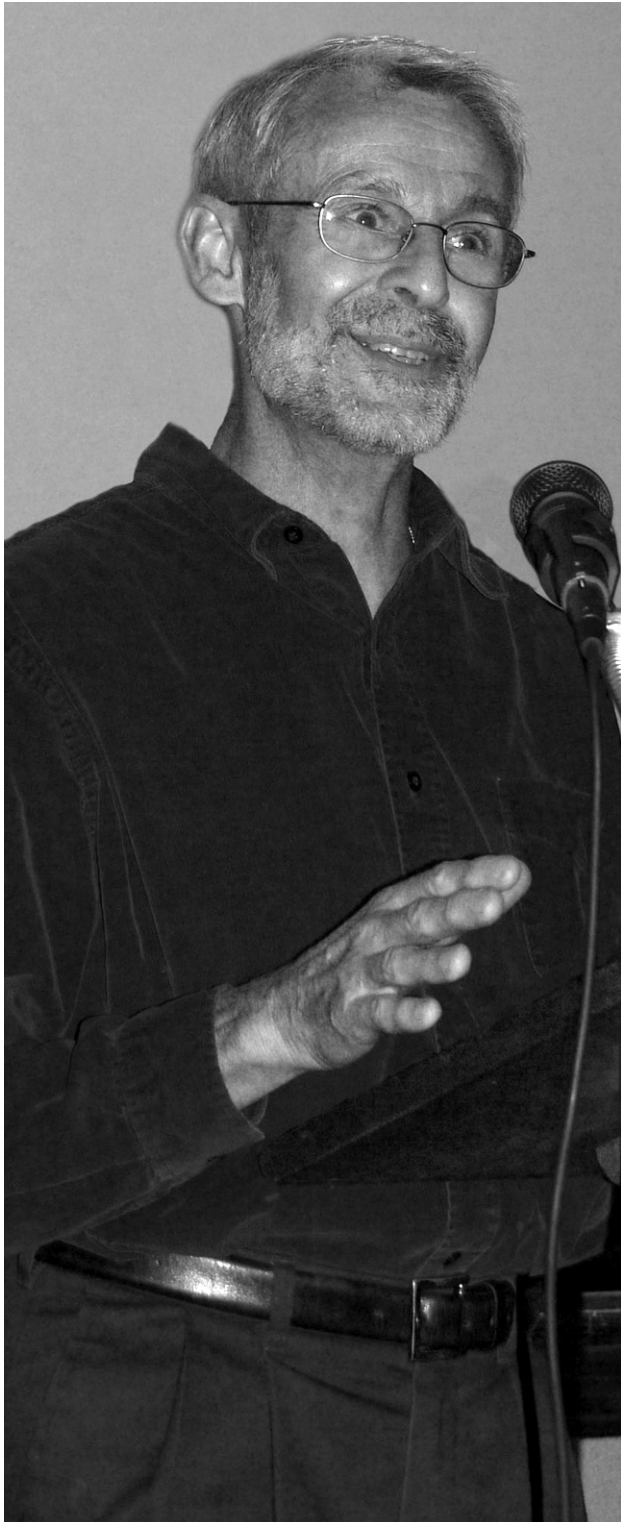


Canadian Christian Meditation Community

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2010 VOL. 19 NO. 2 THE WORLD COMMUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN MEDITATION



Yearning of the Heart Retreat Day

In the early morning on March 20, Mt. St. Mary's was abuzz with more than 60 people from three Maritime provinces registering for a silent Christian meditation retreat with Rev Phil Barnett. His theme was, "I yearn and pine for the peace and security of walking with you," based on Psalm 84.

In a rhythm of three input sessions each followed by meditation, we were invited to *be still and know*. We began with a short morning prayer *Hope in God alone*, drawn from Psalm 62, and ended the day with a prayer from Psalm 46, *In the stillness, we will hear your voice*.

Phil overviewed the practice of Christian meditation, stressing that this way of praying is not an intellectual exercise, but rather a way of transcending our self-conscious thoughts and images in order to move away from looking at God, and into God and God's will for us, in the depths of our being.

The afternoon focused on what yearning for God might entail. Compare and contrast the emphasis in present day society on money, power, luxuries with how that can change when we live in the depths of our being as meditators. In an ever deeper peace, we come to an ongoing openness to God, in a transformation of our attitudes and way of life within and without, one day at a time.

Over time, we begin to recognize that we can live the challenges of each day with more equanimity. Integral to this learning is our ability to live the *now*, the precious present, rather than the past or the future. It is what Thich Nhat Hanh calls "the miracle of mindfulness." In tandem with being fully present, we become more aware of the beauty and fragility of our planet Earth, realizing our desire and consequent action to be more compassionate.

The discipline of daily Christian meditation is our response to the yearning of our hearts for God. God's response calls us to be like a mountain – strong and silent, to be like a flower – open and stretching to the sun.

Janet Malone
Charlottetown, PE

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Calgary Meditation Weekend

Rev. Phil Barnett, CCMC National Coordinator, conducted a very successful meditation workshop at Christ Church in Calgary, March 5-6, attended by over 50 meditators and non-meditators from the parish and other churches. The weekend had a Lenten focus and was titled *Hearing the Voice of God Within*.

Phil's personal and direct style was perfectly attuned to his audience. He talked about his spiritual journey before and after discovering Christian meditation and described, in two touching stories, how the practice can bring profound changes in dealing with the challenges of life.

One story was about a trip with his grandson to the pet store, a favorite destination, usually made by car, but this day on foot. They started at a good pace until the grandson stopped to examine some rocks on the sidewalk. Then the journey was interrupted by the child noticing a flock of birds overhead, and further delays: a hill he wanted to run up and down, a curb he just had to walk on, a chain from a trailer that required further investigation. At each delay Phil became increasingly concerned about getting to the store. Then the light came on, and he realized that for the child each step of the journey was important, not just getting to the pet store. His grandson was enjoying the trip moment by moment. Phil was only thinking about getting to the destination. Perhaps the practice of Christian meditation can teach each of us to become a child again.

The second story was of a caterpillar on a leaf outside his home one spring day. Phil's wife, a naturalist at heart, brought the caterpillar and the branch indoors. Over several days, they watched as it wove a cocoon and transformed into a beautiful monarch butterfly (which they promptly let loose, back to nature). The moment the butterfly emerged was truly one of revelation of the mystery and wonder of God's universe. Again, the point was clear – the importance of taking time to be in the moment, to watch and listen. Meditation is also a time to listen – to the sound of silence within, and to allow ourselves to be gradually transformed by it.

On Sunday morning in his homily at the Eucharist, Phil spoke movingly of the importance of silence for Jesus during 40 days in the wilderness, and of His time of prayer alone in the Garden of Gethsemane, thus highlighting for us the place of silent prayer as a discipline, an important spiritual practice, especially during Lent.

The weekend event was wonderful on many levels and, hopefully, will lead to formation of a Christian meditation group at Christ Church.

Forbes Newman
Calgary, AB

Practicalities of Practice

Q. I'm a newcomer to the practice of Christian Meditation. Distractions are driving me crazy. What am I doing wrong?

A. If it's any consolation to you, this is the number one question asked by meditators all around the world. Let's seek the wisdom of spiritual teachers over the centuries about this question of distractions.

In his book *The Contemplative Life*, the Dominican priest Father Thomas Philippe writes: "When we have the impression that we have spent our time in prayer driving away distractions: when we have been left with our poverty, with nothing but this striving for God, we can be sure that God has been acting in the depths of our soul. We perceive it afterward when we resume our other activities, by a sense of peace and rejuvenation in the depths of our hearts."

St. Teresa of Avila once said: "Distractions and the wandering mind are part of the human condition and can no more be avoided than eating or sleeping."

Thomas Merton reflects on the challenge of distractions in his book *Seeds of Contemplation*: "Prayer and love are

learned in the hour when prayer has become impossible and your heart has turned to stone. If you have never had distractions you don't know how to pray. The person whose memory and imagination are crowded with thoughts and images may sometimes be forced to pray far better in the depths of their heart."

That's the great lesson about distractions. They accompany us on our lifetime practice of contemplative prayer. Gentleness and patience in handling distractions indicate that the Spirit is working within us. While we are aware of distractions we should never let them disturb us. We can even see the good in distractions: they keep us awake and on the journey. They come in one door and leave another. And as John Main once said, "keep on keeping on saying your mantra."

From the book *Frequently Asked Questions About Christian Meditation: The Path of Contemplative Prayer*, by Paul Harris (Novalis Publishers). Paul can be reached at paulturnerharris@aol.com

From the National Coordinator

Horizons

In summer I always enjoy riding my bicycle and now that I am retired I can do it more often. I have time to ride to the store and to appointments. I get some exercise while enjoying the neighbourhoods that I cycle through. There are many sections of road, though, where it is not safe to look at the surroundings. The surface is so rough that I have to keep my eyes glued on the road ahead to avoid the holes and bumps. I often think about this as being a very real experience of living in the present moment, which is what our meditation encourages us to do. Riding my bike, I have to concentrate on each moment, alert for potential pitfalls. In meditation we concentrate on saying our mantra, remaining alert and focussed to avoid potential distractions.

I must admit that I am a fair-weather cyclist. I don't mind the cold, but if it's raining I'll take the bus or the car. I've been caught out, though, when there has been a quick change in the weather and I've ended up being soaked. There have been many times when I've been a fair-weather meditator as well. I just haven't felt like it, or I've found some other pressing activity that has taken priority.

There are times in our lives when we go through rainy days, or rainy months. In some cases we find that meditation is a tremendous strength and support, a rock on which we can stand. There may be other times, however, when we are so

distracted by events that our meditation practice becomes irregular or falls by the wayside. Perhaps for a while we don't even notice that we have stopped. When we do notice, though, (and we certainly will at some point because the Spirit is still at work in our lives) then all we need to do is to begin to meditate again.

It's a bit like having a flat tire. You can't go anywhere with a flat tire, as I discovered on two occasions recently. I managed the first one with commendable calm. Unfortunately the fruits of meditation were not quite so evident the second time. I knew what the remedy was – I had to repair the tire. It wasn't as difficult as I had expected and I was soon on my way, enjoying the ride and the wind on my face. It's the same with meditation. If our meditation practice is flat, or we've ground to a halt for some reason, we know what the remedy is, and it is probably not as difficult as we might expect. We just start again. Then we can be on our way, enjoying the wind of the Spirit blowing through us once more, bringing a heightened awareness of God's presence and love.

Happy cycling/meditating!

Phil Barnett
National Coordinator

2011 National Conference

June 10-12, 2011, Ottawa, ON

Biennial National Conference presented by
the Canadian Christian Meditation Community
and hosted by the Anglican Studies Program of Saint Paul University.

Theme: John Main and 20th Century Mystics.

Keynote speakers: Fr. Laurence Freeman and Rev. Glenda Meakin.

Workshop presenters: Fabrice Blée, Joseph Clarkson,
Rev. Kevin Flynn and Sr. Janet Malone, CND.

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NEWS FROM

Three meditation groups on retreat together

Tuesday, June 1 was a perfect day in Thunder Bay for a silent meditation retreat of three groups from our city. And the Sleeping Giant, a local geological wonder, just lay there, expressing its beauty and peacefulness for the 20 of us to enjoy. We were so thankful to meditate together, to become part of God's silence, to find comfort in the Jesuit cottage along the Lake Superior shore, to walk in the abundance of the forest. It was a day to renew all forces within us. To just BE.

Alice Ward
Thunder Bay, ON

Introduction to Christian Meditation in Cornwall, ON

Trinity Anglican Church in Cornwall held a six-week Introduction to Christian Meditation series as part of their Lenten program. Rev. Jessica Worden-Bolling invited Ron Dicks and Robin Lane to be presenters at the sessions, on Thursdays from 2 to 4 p.m. The 20 participants, who came from several parishes, showed great interest in learning how to meditate and as a result a new group has been formed in Cornwall.

Ron Dicks
Ottawa, ON

Taste and See – Growing in the Practice of Prayer Christian Meditation at Anglican Prayer Conference

The Ottawa Christian Meditation community sponsored an exhibit at an Anglican Fellowship of Prayer conference, Saturday March 6, at Saint Paul University. The all-day seminar for 100 participants included workshops and other displays.

Rev. Kevin Flynn, who leads a meditation group at Saint Paul's, gave a workshop on the importance of the body in meditation and the liturgy. Paul Harris joined with Rev. Gregor Snedden (Contemplative Outreach/Centering Prayer) in a workshop entitled *Holy Longing – The Christian Contemplative Tradition*. Rev. Snedden presented an informative history of the ancient Christian tradition of contemplative prayer rooted in fourth-century desert monasticism.

Paul Harris/Flora Benoit
Ottawa, ON

Benedictine Oblates Meet in Ottawa

Twenty-one Christian meditation oblates from Ottawa, Montreal and Deep River met in a downtown location, Saturday March 20, for a get-together and pot luck lunch. With the retirement of Don Myrick as Canadian Oblate Coordinator, Polly Schofield from Montreal has taken over this responsibility and called this inter-city meeting.

Oblates of the World Community for Christian Meditation are those meditators who feel a need to integrate the Benedictine monastic and spiritual experience into their commitment to the daily practice of meditation.

The meeting included a meditation period, commentary on the rule of St. Benedict and reception of Simon Losinger of Ottawa as an oblate novice. Among out-of-towners from Montreal were Pat Murphy, Mark Schofield, Magda and Fred Jass, and from Deep River, Madelaine Mageau and Chris Tanner.

Paul Harris
Ottawa, ON

Christian Meditation in Cranbrook

The city, lying close to the Rocky Mountains, is on record as the sunniest spot in British Columbia, and on Tuesday May 18, Derek Cameron gave a talk at Christ the Servant Parish, attended by 22 people from various denominations.

Derek described the tradition of monologistic prayer (prayer of just one word) as it evolved among the Desert Fathers in Egypt, and as reported to us by John Cassian. He then described John Main's journey to the rediscovery of this contemplative discipline, after which we were given the chance to experience the practice for ourselves. Derek offered insights into the value of Christian meditation for community building, and gave suggestions on how we might establish a weekly meditation group.

The evening ended with the prayer *Make me an instrument of your peace*. Dr. Niedermayer presented Derek with a copy of William Johnston's *Mystical Theology*, and a box of Cranbrook chocolates.

Footnote: Sister Nina and Sister Denise from Marywood Retreat Centre organized the evening. For more information about Marywood visit <members.shaw.ca/marywoodretreats> or tel. 250-426-8117.

HELP WANTED

We are looking for someone to assist with the coordination of this newsletter. If you would like more information about what is involved, please contact joseph.clarkson@rogers.com

FAR AND NEAR

Rev. Glenda Meakin Leads Ottawa Silent Retreat

On the sunny weekend of March 5-7, about 50 meditators from the Ottawa area, Montreal, Brockville, Morrisburg and Kingston met at La Maison Notre-Dame-de-la Providence in Orleans for their annual silent retreat. The theme this year was *Listening to the Daily News with a Contemplative Heart*. Rev. Glenda Meakin led us through a serene and inspiring weekend of talks, meditation, prayers and quiet time.

Glenda reflected on the ways in which Christian meditation enables us to hear the daily news and respond to the needs of the world with compassion, justice and love. Rather than being overwhelmed by the news, meditation empowers us to offer our talents and resources in service. We discover the insight and grace to do our small part in the healing of God's world.

Special thanks to Mark Schofield for recording this retreat – a first for Glenda's talks. The boxed set of 3 CDs is now available from the National Resource Centre in Montreal (\$20 + shipping). To order, e-mail the Centre at <christian-meditation@bellnet.ca> or telephone 514-485-7928.

**Flora Benoit
Ottawa, ON**

G-G's Guards Chapel welcomes Ottawa Meditators

St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church, founded in Ottawa in 1866, and the Regimental Chapel of the Governor-General's Foot Guards, was the location (March 21) for talks by Paul Harris on Christian meditation at two Sunday services. This historic church is across from Rideau Hall, and a vice-regal pew is reserved for the Governor-General's use when he/she is an Anglican. The architect was Thomas Seaton Scott, designer of the West Block Tower on Parliament Hill.

The Rector of the church, Canon David Clunie, recently started a Christian meditation group in the parish, which meets Thursday mornings at eight.

Paul focused on the scriptural and historical roots of the tradition, leaving no doubts as to the veracity of this way of contemplative prayer. One of his many scriptural references was to these words of Jesus: "The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen. No one will say *Look, here it is!* or, *There it is!* because the Kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:20) Said Rev. Clunie, "Paul's talk definitely aroused interest among the congregation."

A number of parishioners and St. Bart's meditators gathered after the 10:30 service for refreshments with Paul and with meditators from other groups in the city. The Ottawa

Christian Meditation committee arranged an exhibit of handouts and books for the occasion.

For more information about the St. Bart's meditation group contact David or Ruth at 613-745-7834.

**Flora Benoit
Ottawa Area Coordinator**



Suzanne Strader (on left), Robin Lane

Seaway Area Christian Meditation Community Event – Thursday May 27

"Today, for the first time in Morrisburg, East meets West!" exclaimed Robin Lane, area coordinator, as she greeted members of the recently formed Seaway Area Meditation Community. Morrisburg is midway between the eastern meditation group (Cornwall) and the western groups (in Brockville). The theme, *All who Thirst, come to the Water*, seemed appropriate as 30 persons celebrated the occasion. Guests included Ron and Jean Murray who were instrumental in starting the first group in Morrisburg – the "source."

Rev. Doug McKay, a member of the Morrisburg group, spoke of his personal pilgrimage and the joy he has discovered from the "streams of living water" which flow from silent prayer. He quoted from John Main's book *The Way of Unknowing*: "If we search within, embracing the discipline and rigour of the journey, we find... that the spring

Continued on next page

News From Far And Near continued from previous page

that Jesus speaks of does exist. The 'spring of living water welling up to eternal life' within us is there... for all of us to drink deeply from."

Suzanne Strader, also from Morrisburg, spoke passionately about her 725 km pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago. Her outstanding talk evoked emotions in the rest of us, making us feel that we were on that same mystical path of silence, solitude and stillness. Suzanne's story, and the video by her daughter, Julie, who walked with her mother, were affecting and enriching.

Fellowship followed in the form of a potluck lunch. All agreed that this celebration proved to be an inspiring and "thirst-quenching" day.

Robin Lane
Seaway Area Coordinator

Joseph Bergeron in Peterborough

On Saturday April 16, Joseph Bergeron led a day of meditation and reflection entitled *Meditation and the Evolving Universe*. The event centered on meditation and how our practice is part of the evolution of consciousness in the parallel context of an evolving universe.

Our group was very pleased with the day for several reasons. First, to have Joe among us and to see how much meditation has been part of his evolving journey. Second, we so appreciated the beautiful sharing by each person – there were 30 in all. Third, this was our first attempt to integrate meditation with the concepts of the evolving universe and the "great story" as proclaimed by Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Berry and others. Along with books on Christian and Zen meditation, there were many on these concepts available for perusal.

In the context of the "new story," Joseph spoke of how we are part of the evolutionary process whether we know it or not. Through meditation we go deeper in this journey to find our true self. It is a very human journey, with ups and downs that have to be accepted in the process of our transformation.

We learned from this day that we took on too much. Next time we might need to promote the day for experienced meditators familiar with the "new story" and the evolving universe. For some new to both there wasn't time to introduce meditation and the "new story." Nevertheless it was a wonderful day in many ways. We all evolved.

Lorna Devan
Peterborough, ON

Sonnet: Maranatha

Ma-ra-na-tha – "the Lord is coming": say
An Aramaic mantra: meditate
Relax into the silence: thus to pray
An inner silence that we contemplate
No thought pursue, and nothing let distract
Allowing silence, nothing to expect
The silence is itself the sacred act
Here at the core, the heart of God reflect
A sacred silence wherein Heaven meet
Remains with us as go about our lives
Ma-ra-na-tha – the silent sound is sweet
The presence of the Lord within us thrives
Oh happiness, this secret we have found:
Within our being is the sacred ground.

Rosemary Lutter
Ottawa, ON
(musing on talks by Fr. Lawrence Freeman)

Canadian Christian Meditation Community is on Facebook and Wikipedia

The Canadian Christian Meditation Community's web-presence is growing! In addition to utilizing www.meditatio.ca as a reference and tool, anyone interested in Christian meditation can now go to Wikipedia and Facebook for information on our community and its activities across Canada.

More and more, when people want to learn about anything they go online and use their favourite search engine, like Yahoo! or Google, which then directs them to relevant and most viewed sites. Similarly, people are increasingly using Wikipedia as a primary destination for information on anything.

Now, if you search Wikipedia, you'll notice an article on our Canadian community; previously, only the World Community had one. The great thing about Wikipedia is that it's not stagnant, and anyone can access and update the articles. Check it out by going to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Christian_Meditation_Community

Facebook is no longer an activity reserved for youth and young adults. People of all ages and nationalities around the world are using it as a tool to communicate and stay connected with each other. Communities and organizations are using it too, and so are we.

The Canadian Christian Meditation Community now has its own Facebook page. We're using it to promote and

share the practice and discipline of Christian meditation, as passed on through the teaching of John Main, to anyone and everyone. We're posting Christian meditation events across Canada. We encourage people to post photos of their Christian meditation events or anything related to Christian meditation and our community, and we look forward to what members of our Canadian community have to say on the discussion board and to each other.

If you're on Facebook, check out Canadian Christian Meditation Community and "like" the page to keep up with what's happening. Invite your "friends" to "like" the page too. If you're not on Facebook, you can check out the page by googling *Canadian Christian Meditation Community Facebook*.

Finally, if you're organizing an event, please let me know, and I'll post the event on our Facebook page.

Krister Partel
National Youth Coordinator
krister@mac.com

Article Discussion Read Edit

Canadian Christian Meditation Community

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Canadian Christian Meditation Community (CCM) (WCCM), which was founded in 1991 to foster the spiritual practice taught by John Main, O.S.B. (1926-1982). Fr. Main taught a way of saw between the spiritual practice taught by Desert Fathers been taught by the Swami Satyanandain in Kuala Lumpur community in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, thus bringing Canadian Community's national office is located located

The current director of the WCCM is Fr. Laurence Freeman, Benedictine monk of the Olivetan Congregation. On July Canada, announced the appointment of Fr. Freeman as its The Community is a "monastery without walls", a family in over a hundred countries. The foundation of the Community weekly in homes, parishes, offices, hospitals, prisons, and work closely with many Christian denominations and other

The Canadian Community sponsors retreats, schools for other programs. A national quarterly spiritual and news members and also available online. Information on current and the location of meditation groups can be found on Medio Media is the communication and publishing arm of a wide range of books, audio and videos to support the practice of Medio Media.

Fr. Main taught the practice and discipline of Christian meditation

Sit down. Sit still and upright. Close your eyes lightly begin to say a single word. We recommend the practice of syllables of equal length. Ma-ra-na-tha. Listen to not think or imagine anything - spiritual or other distractions at the time of meditation, so keep retreat each morning and evening for twenty to thirty minutes

Calendar of Events

For regular updates go to www.meditatio.ca/News/updates.html

September 2010

17-19 September, Vancouver, B.C. *The School: Workshop on Essential Teaching.* Learn how to share the gift of meditation with others. This weekend retreat for 20 participants will be held at Westminster Abbey in Mission and led by Rev. Glenda Meakin. For more information contact: Colleen Donald at 604-985-1592.

20-23 September, Montreal QC. Retreat with Fr. Laurence Freeman Venue: Manoir d'Youville, 468 Boulevard d'Youville, Île Saint-Bernard, Chateauguay, QC. Time: 2 pm Monday Sep. 20 to 11 am Thursday Sep 23. Cost: Room with single bed, shared washroom: \$300; Room with 2 single beds, shared washroom: \$465 for 2; Room with 1 double bed, shared washroom: \$465 for 2; Room with 2 single beds, private bathroom: \$500 for 2; Room with 1 double bed, private bathroom: \$500 for 2 or \$335 for 1. To register: send \$75 made out to Christian Meditation Retreats to: Magda Jass, 4540 Wilson Ave., Montreal, QC, H4A 2V4. Contact: Magda Jass at 514-489-0998.

30 September, Toronto, ON. TBA. Regular monthly teaching meeting at Knox College, University of Toronto, 59 St. George Street. Time: 7 to 9 p.m. For more information contact: Maureen Casey Rowed at 416-733-0233, e-mail <myetmoe@hotmail.com> or Joy Gordon 416-485-9718.

October 2010

6 October-10 November, Ottawa, ON. *Coming Home: An Introduction to Christian Meditation.* Learn the practice of this ancient, silent prayer over 6 weeks on Wednesday evenings, 7-9 p.m., October 6 to November 10, 2010. Venue: The Good Shepherd Parish, Blackburn Hamlet, Ottawa, ON. Suggested donation for the 6 weeks is \$20 per person; \$30 per family; no charge for full-time students. Pre-registration is required by September 29. Contact: Charlotte Gupta at 613 841-2894 or by email at cgupta@rogers.com.

28 October, Toronto, ON. TBA. Regular monthly teaching meeting at Knox College, University of Toronto, 59 St. George Street. Time: 7 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. For more information contact: Maureen Casey Rowed at 416-733-0233, e-mail <myetmoe@hotmail.com> or Joy Gordon 416-485-9718.

November 2010

3 November, Calgary, AB. *Introduction to Meditation – Part 1* led by Engeline Piet at FCJ Christian Life Centre

219-19th Avenue. Time: 7-9 p.m. Contact: Engeline Piet at FCJ Christian Life Centre, 403-228-4215.

10 November, Calgary, AB. *Introduction to Meditation – Part 2* led by Engeline Piet at FCJ Christian Life Centre 219-19th Avenue. Time: 7-9 p.m. Contact: Engeline Piet at FCJ Christian Life Centre, 403-228-4215.

12-14 November, Kingston, ON. *Fully Alive: a Christian Meditation and Yoga Retreat.* This retreat is an annual event, sponsored by the Canadian Christian Meditation Community. Now in its sixth year, it is led by meditators and certified yoga teachers, and is open to newcomers and seasoned practitioners. Venue: Providence Spirituality Centre, Kingston, ON. Time: 6 p.m. Friday to 1 p.m. Sunday. For more information, contact Casey Rock at 647-618-2909 or check www.yogawithcasey.ca/retreats

25 November, Toronto, ON. TBA. Regular monthly teaching meeting at Knox College, University of Toronto, 59 St. George Street. Time: 7-9 p.m. For more information contact: Maureen Casey Rowed at 416-733-0233, e-mail <myetmoe@hotmail.com> or Joy Gordon 416-485-9718.

26-28 November, Kingston, ON. Christian Meditation School (The Essential Teaching). Location: Providence Spirituality Centre, 1200 Princess Street, Kingston, K7L 4W4. Registrar: Ron Dicks, rdicks.school@gmail.com Tel: 613-739-1046. Cost: \$195 (cheques made out to Meditatio and mail deposit of \$95.00 to Ron Dicks, 942 Weston Dr., Ottawa, ON K1G 1X2).

27 November, Calgary, AB. Meditation Retreat Day led by Engeline Piet at FCJ Christian Life Centre 219-19th Avenue. Registration 9 a.m. Time: 9:30-4 p.m., includes lunch. Contact: FCJ Christian Life Centre, 403-228-4215.

December 2010

4 December, Ottawa ON. *Advent: Living Between Memory and Hope* with the Rev. Professor Kevin Flynn. Venue: Main Chapel, Saint Paul University, 223 Main St. Time: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (registration 9:15-9:45 a.m.). Cost: Donation. Free for full-time students. Bring a bag lunch and drink. Register by November 28 with Jeanette Deyell: jadeyell@gmail.com or 613-733-6755.

16 December, Toronto, ON. TBA. Regular monthly teaching meeting at Knox College, University of Toronto, 59 St. George Street. Time: 7-9 p.m. For more information contact: Maureen Casey Rowed at 416-733-0233, e-mail <myetmoe@hotmail.com> or Joy Gordon 416-485-9718.

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

Lenten Journey – Twilight Retreat

Ron Dicks welcomed about 60 people to a twilight retreat in March and introduced Rev. Phil Barnett, National Coordinator of CCMC. The retreat was sponsored by the Ottawa Area Christian Meditation Community and hosted by the group at Emmanuel United Church.

Phil reminded us that our Lenten journey evokes the time Jesus spent in the wilderness in silence and prayer, and that Christian meditation encourages us to enter into silence and be in the presence of God.

He focused his talk on Psalm 84 from *Psalms/Now* by Leslie Brandt, which speaks of a yearning to be with God. Many in our society suppress that longing. We feel we need money, success, power and luxuries when, in fact, we don't need these things to satisfy us. God is always there to welcome us back through meditation, which brings meaning to life. We can sense this closeness to God by learning to live in the present moment.

Psalm 84 also speaks to “springs of healing.” Just by listening we help others. We learn to listen when we meditate and become more attentive to what God loves. The process of change and transformation happens slowly through meditation. Phil compared a caterpillar transforming into a beautiful butterfly to the subtle changes that occur when one meditates over a period of time.

God speaks to us in many ways – through reading scripture, the wisdom of others and insight during meditation. When we focus on our self-centeredness we feel empty and still have a yearning, but when we meditate we feel in the centre of God's will. Trust in a God who loves us and use this time to meditate, Phil stressed. God has given us this gift.

Joan McGuinness
Ottawa, ON

Prayer from the Heart

An ideal picture of a committed meditator would be a person of equanimity, serenity and gentle love at all times. We all know that this picture gets hazy when the pain of the world and our own personal demons reassert themselves in our psyche. One who always helps me through

times of difficulty and darkness is none other than the great St. Teresa of Avila with her “*Nada te turbe... let nothing disturb you...all things are passing...God alone suffices...*” Inspired by her, I offer my own little prayer below :

A Prayer for Difficult Moments

O Divine Mystery we call God,
today I want to thank you for reminding me
that faith is a complete handing over of myself
in trust. Faith is trust which enables me to say
that I accept and I even welcome my life
just as it is at this time. And I trust that with you,
the very Source of my true being,
my struggles and my sufferings do become a leap forward,
a leap into growth. Thus do I grow in insight, love
and creativity. Thus am I reminded that this road
we are all on is infinite:
you, O Source, are the beginning and the end. Amen!

Madelaine Mageau
Deep River, ON

THE FRUITS OF INNER PEACE



Michael Hryniuk is a Catholic theologian, author and consultant specializing in contemporary Christian spirituality, ministry development and contemplative formation. He has served as Associate Director of the John Main Center for Meditation and Interreligious Dialogue at Georgetown University, Washington D.C.

When Michael spoke on *apatheia* at WCCM-Toronto's monthly teaching meeting in May, he pointed out that the early desert mothers and fathers sought this inner equilibrium or state of inner peace. It is peace that comes from being free of compulsions and disordered desires. It is a gift from Christ: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you." (John 14:27) Again, on His resurrection appearance to the disciples, Christ's first words are "Peace be with you." (John 20:19)

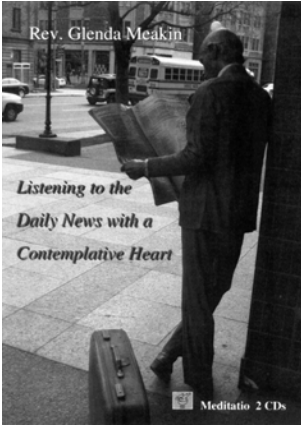
Apatheia can happen in three movements of the soul and heart. First, we begin to shift from ego awareness to self-awareness. We move beyond the fictional, outer self towards an awareness of our deeper self which is rooted in God; we begin to identify more with this self. Next, we move from self-rejection to self-acceptance, receiving God's love and experiencing ourselves as beloved, as radiant and beautiful in God's eyes. Finally, we move from self-centeredness to self-transcendence. The first of these conditions brings anxiety. The latter state brings peace.

What does *apatheia* have to do with where we live today? The answer is that inner peace is the fruit of our relationship with God. The desert fathers and mothers saw this as the grace of a disciplined life of commitment to the reality of God's presence and power within us. Awakening to our core identity, as beloved, frees us to offer God our brokenness and to surrender to His love. Inner peace is the fruit of our relationship with the Father, through Jesus, in the Holy Spirit. This is the fuller meaning of Christ's message of peace in the gospel of John.

Michael emphasized the socio-political imperatives of our contemplative practice. He recalled Archbishop Desmond Tutu once telling students preparing for ministry that unless they experienced themselves as beloved of God, they had nothing to offer to others. The peace that comes from union with God carries a tremendous positive effect in the world. Quoting St. Seraphim of Sarov, Michael contended, "If you alone find inner peace, then thousands around you will find healing."

Joseph Clarkson
Toronto, ON

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A meditator since 1985, the Rev. Glenda Meakin has served the Christian Meditation Community as a member of the Canadian Council and Coordinator of the School Program (2000-2007) as well as a retreat leader and teacher of Christian Meditation. She currently leads retreats across Canada and in the USA as well as serving as a member of the International Resource Teachers for the WCCM.

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Robert Kennedy, the author of *Zen Spirit*, *Christian Spirit* and *Zen Gifts to Christians*, is one of three Jesuits in the world called *Roshi* or Zen Master. He is also a psychotherapist and professor of theology at St Peter's College in New Jersey. He is a representative of the Institute for Spiritual Consciousness in Politics at the United Nations.

As a Christian Fr Kennedy has found meaning and deep reverence in the practice of Zen Buddhism. He conducts sesshins (Zen retreats) in the United States, Mexico and Ireland. They reflect the Jesuit statement on mission and inter-religious dialogue, which calls on Jesuits to be familiar with other religious traditions and even immersed with them in theological exchange and a dialogue of life, action and religious experience.

While still young Fr Kennedy went to Japan to teach at the Jesuit University in Tokyo. He found himself confronted by a foreign culture indifferent to Christianity and to much that was dear to him. This incited him to enter into dialogue with Zen.

In these talks given at the John Main Seminar 2009 Fr Kennedy uses the traditional Zen approach to teaching through questioning and through art. The talks are structured around twelve koans (a story, question, or statement whose meaning can't be accessed by rational thinking, yet may be understood by intuition). The koans, beautifully illustrated by Amy Yee's paintings and by Fr Kennedy's calligraphy, can be found in the elegant leaflet enclosed with the CDs.

John Main, A Biography

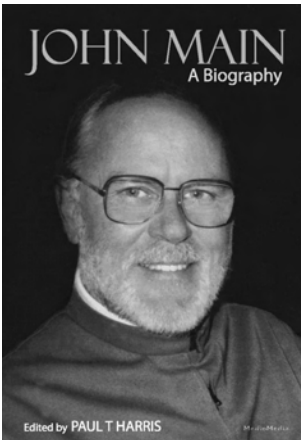
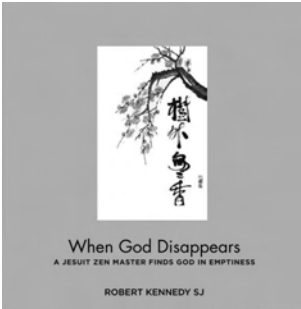
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John Main OSB (1926-1982) is recognized as one of the major spiritual teachers of the twentieth century. His teaching on contemplative prayer has transformed many lives worldwide and his influence continues to grow.

John Main taught that to be with God does not require words, thoughts or images, but the silent consciousness of a Presence. He reminds us that the spiritual pilgrimage invites us to have the courage to become more and more silent. The journey starts when we accept the discipline of silence, stillness and simplicity.

This booklet tells the story of John Main through letters, anecdotes, reminiscences by family, friends and colleagues. A collection of photographs adds a personal touch to this story. The booklet gives a new dimension to our understanding of the man, the monk, and his teaching. Fr Laurence Freeman, Fr John's spiritual successor, says: "It is important to see how John Main's pilgrimage and mission were fully inserted into his humanity. It is the authenticity of his life that in the final analysis teaches us."



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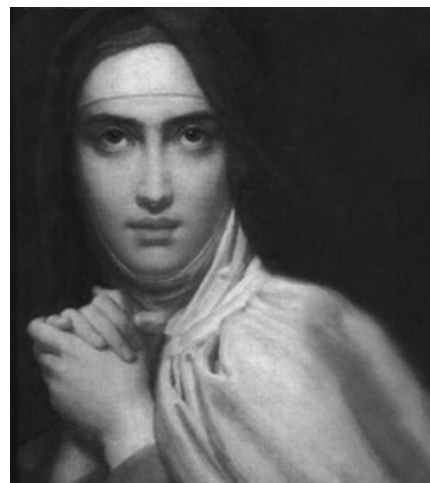
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St. Teresa of Avila Mystic and Social Critic



Until 1970, no woman had been named a Doctor of the Church, and since then three additions to the list have been female saints. In his talk for the April meeting of WCCM-Toronto, Canon Gerald Loweth made clear to his audience why St. Teresa of Avila had been so named.

St. Teresa was born in 1515 in the province of Avila, Spain. She was an attractive and flirtatious young woman whose parents enrolled her in a very strict Augustinian boarding school. Teresa sneaked out and entered a Carmelite cloister. In spite of severe illness and great personal suffering, she devoted herself to prayer and became one of the pioneers of contemplative prayer in the church.

After some 20 years, she felt called to bring about renewal and reform to bring the Order back to a life of simplicity and poverty. She founded a reformed Carmelite convent and 14 new houses. It was during this time that she met St. John of the Cross and persuaded him to join the movement. She and St. John are considered founders of the Discalced (“barefoot”) Carmelites.

St. Teresa was committed to a life of unceasing prayer and simplicity. She wrote many books, all of them still readily available today. She used the image of the interior castle, with many rooms, as her metaphor for stages of the spiritual life. Rev. Loweth described her image of moving water to explain contemplative prayer. At first, prayer is like moving buckets of water from one room to another; it is hard and seems like work of our own effort. Eventually, with persis-

tence, it begins to feel as if God is moving the water. Finally, it feels as though the buckets of water become flowing streams. Rev. Loweth offered a mild caution: “Her books, although not easy to read, are very worthwhile.” Of the many books written about her, he heartily recommended *Teresa of Avila* by Dr. Rowan Williams (2004).

Teresa overcame her physical illness while also surmounting the limitations of the religious institutions of her day. In a time when personal prayer was regarded with suspicion, she provided a wealth of resources to those seeking a life of contemplative prayer. She was one of three pioneers of her age, along with St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. John of the Cross, to give fellow pilgrims encouragement and assistance in the spiritual life.

St. Teresa challenged social and religious norms. She lived a life of holiness that led to her being canonized 40 years after her death. Her spiritual legacy, earning a second crown of recognition Doctor of the Church, remains as vibrant as ever four centuries later.

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