

Christian Meditation

NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN CHRISTIAN MEDITATION COMMUNITY



SUMMER 2025

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Poverty of Spirit

...we are all brought up to be materialists. We are all brought up to be such controllers... and to sit down and voluntarily make ourselves poor – is a real challenge for us. – John Main

What is poverty of spirit? I experience my spiritual poverty as a sense of powerlessness. When I meditate, I am inundated with uncontrollable, distracting thoughts. I realize how powerless I am in the face of my own inner turmoil. What's more, my inner turmoil matches the turmoil of my outer life. No matter how hard I try, I can't really control either my inner or my outer world. Control is an illusion. In one way, we are very small, weak creatures in a vast universe subject to forces beyond our control. This is the poverty of powerlessness.

Meditation also helps me realize another aspect of my spiritual poverty. This aspect is my own human weakness, which traditionally is called "sin." My wounds, my failures, my self-criticism, and my self-doubt, indeed make me feel poor and powerless. I try to compensate for these weaknesses in many ways. But I always fall short. I have come to realize there is absolutely nothing I can do to change my "sinful" human condition. This also is a poverty of spirit.

Another aspect of my poverty is my penchant for self-delusion. I delude myself into thinking I can wrestle control from harsh reality. I think I can mitigate my powerlessness and weakness with more effort, more Promethean willpower. I try to gain more attention, more status, more security, and more money. Or I try to be more religious. That should work, shouldn't it? I can read spiritual books, attend church more often, go on innumerable retreats, and be more spiritual. Surely these are good things. But I'm deluding myself if I am not honest and neglect the reality of my spiritual poverty. It's all very humbling. This is why it's so important to keep meditating daily. It keeps reminding me of how poor and powerless I am. Meditation keeps me honest. It keeps me humble.

John Main also teaches us not to evaluate our meditation practice. We don't look for any so-called progress. If I start to think I'm making progress, even my meditation practice will become an empty ritual, or another ego trip. We don't meditate with the goal of becoming more spiritual. This is why John Main repeats the importance of true spiritual poverty.

John Main says any visions, theological insights, or profound revelations are mere distractions. He

emphasizes the ordinariness of meditation. When we meditate, he says, "nothing happens." And he admonishes us not to measure any self-perceived progress.

We do not set goals or try to accomplish anything. We must be on guard against any "spiritual materialism." What is spiritual materialism? It is judging, measuring, evaluating, and comparing. We must maintain a "beginner's mind." We are to stay poor and stay humble.

To further explain the principle of spiritual poverty, I borrow a concept from Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). A term they use is "hitting bottom," a dark place addicts and alcoholics

describe when they hit an all-time low, having lost everything and are in crisis.

They face a turning point. If another drink is consumed, or another drug taken, they are likely to die. The sense of spiritual poverty is painful, poignant and compelling.

Now here's the good news. Whenever we hit bottom, whenever we suffer a significant loss, spiritual death or disappointment, whenever we are truly poor and powerless, that is when we have a great opportunity to turn things around. As they say in AA, that is the moment a user begins to connect with a

higher power and start a new life.

When meditating and letting go of all thoughts – even good ones – we surrender to our poverty. We affirm our powerlessness and embrace our human weaknesses. We hit a spiritual bottom. Our part is stillness and silence. The Spirit works in us as we delve into silence and stillness. But between meditation sessions, when life happens, is when miraculous things occur.

By faith, without the evidence of our senses, we enter into eternal life and connect with the ever-generous abundance of the Divine Source, our Eternal God, our Higher Power. Does this sound familiar? Does it sound like crucifixion, followed by resurrection and ascension? When we meditate, we are imitating this process. Every time we sit in meditation, we surrender to this pattern. We sit in silent poverty, and we go from rags to riches.

Darrell Taylor is a retired psychotherapist who facilitates a Christian Meditation group in Chilliwack, British Columbia and an on-line group based in Yellowknife, NWT.



by Darrell Taylor
Spiritual Care Counsellor –
Meditation Facilitator

Jesus Christ, though he was rich, for our sake he became poor... that through his poverty, we might become rich.
– 2 Cor 8:9

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
– Mat 5:3

On Faith, Hope and Climate Change*

What does hope mean to me? I think about hope in relation to faith and love because of 1 Corinthians.

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child.

When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.

For now, we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face.

Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

– 1 Corinthians 13:11-13

I always had difficulty discerning between hope and faith. Faith to me is the urge to dive into the unknown. John Main said, “To start a personal practice of meditation is an act of faith” because, in truth, nothing really happens when we meditate. There is no money-back guarantee of some sort of enlightenment by a specific time. We start our practice with faith, we continue, we seek companionship, and over time, a transformation happens. Eventually, we realize that this is a natural discipline we want to keep for a lifetime.

If faith makes us start something with no clear guaranteed benefits, hope is what keeps us going. With hope, there is an element of time and destination. It is not necessarily a linear process. Events often unfold beyond our own understanding. Hope is linked to better times, freedom from slavery. Hope is the absolute assurance that things will work out, that the sun will shine again. That “every little thing, gonna be all right!” as Bob Marley sang in *Three Little Birds* (could the three birds be faith, hope and love?).

Despite circumstances that might seem dire and surely painful, hope is the transition, the life transition that takes us from where we are to where God wants us to



By André Choquet
WCCM-Canada
National Coordinator

be. And along the way, there are “clothes” we need to shed, people we need to meet, relationships to let go of, and experiences we need to live.

That is what hope means to me in relation to faith. And love permeates everything. That’s why it is the greatest of the three. But faith hits you first.

From the point of view of God, hope must seem simple. God knows everything. Hebrews 13:8 says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.” We humans sometimes give up hope because we live in a time-constrained world. Unless we are fully enlightened disciples of Christ, we always feel like we are running out of time; the clock is ticking.

Take climate change, for example. When I discuss climate change with various audiences, it does not take long for the conversation to get stuck at the tension point between:

- the long-term goals of Net-Zero and a sustainable planet we want to leave behind for our children and grandchildren versus
- the short-term goals and genuine concerns about energy security, the economy, jobs, tariffs, geopolitical conflicts, maintenance of our standard of living, etc...

But there is a third level of consciousness, accessible to us all, and revealed through meditation (or attention). By learning to dedicate time to paying attention to one word during our twice-daily meditation sessions, we gradually develop awareness, empathy, conviction, which lead to right action in our ongoing work to be stewards for the environment and our planet. It invites us to be other-centered as opposed to self-centered. There really is a link between our inner ecology and outer ecology of the environment, as Fr. Laurence Freeman coined it during COP 26 in Glasgow.

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*This is an adapted version of the speech André Choquet gave on July 25, 2025, at the CCMC retreat at the Manresa retreat center in Pickering, Ontario under the theme “Renewed in Hope.”

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Ora et Labora - Prayer and Work

“Prayer and Work” is the name given this space as a regular feature devoted to sharing information and news about the **WCCM Benedictine Oblates** (<https://oblates.wccm.org/v2019/>). It comes from the balance between prayer and work (and reading) that St. Benedict stresses in his Rule and that Oblates strive to follow in everyday life. Enjoy!

If you would like more information about the Oblates, please contact **Dorothy Wood** at dorogeo50@gmail.com.

LOVE'S SILENCE

It happens most nights, in the middle of the night—expected; with no invitation. It begins with discomfort and pain, edging me into semi-consciousness. Before long, I am fully awake. Ignoring my old companion seldom succeeds. Shifting my position brings fleeting relief. I sense a triple assault: physical pain, mental deterioration, and generalized angst.

Yet slowly something shifts. Creative energy weaves into fleeting thoughts—into fragments of past days and readings. Clarity and wisdom emerge if I stay alert and relaxed enough to capture the night's message. Tonight, it is crystal clear—a simple phrase: “Love's Silence.”

These nocturnal stirrings vividly churn the recollection of a recent journey to my childhood home 7,000 kilometres away. Prompted by the sudden death of my sister's husband at 59, I found myself thrust into an arena of disbelief and heartbreak; emotions colliding in the reunion of family, relatives, and friends. Navigating my roles as both brother and priest, I was called to help plan and officiate the funeral. It felt like an endless sea of noise and raw emotion. While the ritual of the funeral liturgy offered focus and order to others, for

me it merely masked my interior restlessness.

It wasn't until the morning after that I felt grounded.

My wife and I walked to a nearby sandy beach, removed our shoes and socks, and let the cool Atlantic waters bathe our feet. Silence lapped slowly. I yielded, permitting its presence to caress my needy soul. A simple, yet profound, experience: to be in this place, at this time, because of a loss.

Meister Eckhart says, “God's ground is the soul. It is the deepest, most intimate part of our being.” Silence helps us re-establish

within a connection with that ever-present source. It is where I feel love's silence. The clear blue sky, the gentle Atlantic breeze, and the lapping waves washed over my soul. Detached from the transient concerns of recent days, it brought me back to the joy of the present moment.

Though I often wish for deep and restful sleep—to greet each new day refreshed—I know there is truth and wisdom in these nightly disturbances. It seems my soul is at work—sorting, shifting, and preparing me to remain connected to God's love, silently, in the ground of my being.



Rev. Dr. G. Wayne Short
(Oblate)

THE RULE OF SAINT BENEDICT

In 529/530 C.E., when St. Benedict established his great monastery at Monte Cassino, he set himself the task of writing a rule by which the lives of the monks would be ordered. This "...little rule that we have written for beginners" went on to become the foundational rule for monastic, and even non-monastic, religious orders throughout Europe and the world, earning St. Benedict recognition as the founder of monasticism in the West.

The Rule is composed of a prologue that is followed by 73 short chapters. It deals with everything needed to live a life in community, a life that has one focus—God. Notably, the monks and nuns were laymen and women, "religious life" as we know it today was unknown then. In fact, Benedict only accepted ordained men into his monasteries with caution, and ensured that they not be treated with any favoritism. His communities were also extraordinary in an age of sharp class divides in that they welcomed, without distinction, people from the nobility as well as slaves. The only precedent was the day and time on which a person joined the community.

Other rules were already in existence when Benedict decided to write his, for example, the Rule of Basil and the Rule of the Master, and Benedict borrowed from them. So, why did his rule have a lasting impact? The key word is moderation. Many sections of the Rule include exceptions – for the weak, for the elderly, for youth, exceptions because of the summer heat, for illness, etc.

Benedict's Rule emphasized the monk's sworn vows:

- Obedience to the will of God as expressed through the abbot/prioress.
- Conversion of life, i.e. aiming for holiness daily by closely adhering to the rule.
- Stability, which meant remaining in the same monastery and living closely with the same people for life.



Dorothy Wood,
National Oblate Coordinator

Benedict also stressed the *Work of God* (Opus Dei) and prayer seven times a day (not including night-time prayer) that is prayed according to a prescribed pattern and timetable. This liturgical practice is known today as the *Liturgy of the Hours* or the *Divine Office*. The monastic daily schedule also included periods of work and study.

Much can be said about the Rule of St. Benedict – too much for one article. The principal virtues are: hope in God, first and foremost, then humility, obedience, hospitality – recognizing Christ in everyone, moderation in all things, balance and discipline, service to others and respect for everyone and everything. One thing that strikes me is Benedict's

injunction to treat all things in the same way as we treat altar vessels. With no division between the sacred and the secular; all things are holy.

An entire chapter is devoted to the virtue of humility. There is a section on silence and restraint of speech, and a part on disciplinary measures for failing to abide by the Rule. All contain language that is difficult for us to accept today. We mustn't forget that the Rule was written in the sixth century, a time when the Roman "pater familias" had absolute authority over everyone in his household, his family as well as his slaves, and could even condemn to death with impunity anyone in his household. It is recommended that we in the 21st century read the Rule and ponder it along with a good commentary that will help us understand its worth and value. I recommend two commentaries in particular: *The Rule of Benedict: A Spirituality for the Twenty-First Century* by Joan Chittister OSB, and *St. Benedict's Rule* by Judith Sutura OSB.

Thousands of people, those in monastic houses as well as lay oblates, have lived by the principles of the rule for centuries, proving its inestimable value for our spiritual lives.

THE RULE ACCORDING TO CHITTISTER

I remember well the day I received *St. Benedict's Rule for Monasteries*. A small, 100-page booklet, 73 chapters long. How eagerly I read it, day by day, chapter by chapter, until I got to Chapter 8, page 29, "On the Divine Office During the Night," where my enthusiasm ceased. I found the document utterly irrelevant and lacking practical application in my everyday secular life. It went into my "religious drawer" – safe but untouched for the next 40 years.



Lorena Claudia Vicente
(Oblate)

After a prolonged hibernation, how did it get resurrected? It was a couple years back when I was preparing for my final oblation as a WCCM Benedictine Oblate under the mentorship of Dorothy Wood. Dorothy facilitated the acquisition of OSB Joan Chittister's *The Rule of Benedict: A Spirituality for the 21st Century*.

What a difference a book can make! My little booklet came out of hibernation, finally

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COMMUNITY CORNER

Meditation Retreat at L'Abbaye Cistercienne



This was my first time at the Cistercian Abbey in Rougemont, Quebec, for their annual retreat. The abbey sits on beautiful grounds. In the spring, the new grass shimmers. Inside the monastic buildings is simplicity and elegance. The chapel's high ceiling reaches upwards to the sky. The monks' chanting of psalms is exquisite.

Throughout my stay, I was struck by the quiet steadfastness of the monks—about fifteen in attendance during the offices. They range in age from roughly thirty to over seventy years. Their commitment to the daily offices was inspiring.

Surprisingly, the days were busy with attending the offices throughout the day, ending with Compline in the evening, followed by the Grand Silence. Interspersed with the offices were music, recorded talks by Dom John Main, and followed by meditation.

Polly Schofield selected the readings—many from Father John's early newsletters to the community in its fledgling phase. "My dearest friends," is how he began each of his newsletters. The deep love and example of Christian discipline rang true in his words.

The only thing I know how to do is love," Father John once said to Polly.



Polly Schofield (left) & Lorraine Murray (right)

Through shared anecdotes with the small group of ten retreatants, we learned more about Father John. He was a man with a playful and irreverent streak, a man of the world, and a man of prayer with an urgent mission for the world. I had never met Father John, and it was special getting to know him through stories about his life. Polly also included samples of readings from Yunus Emre, a 13th-century Sufi mystic, and a man with a similar vision as Father John.

The silence we managed to achieve was restful, and yet there was a warm affection among us all.

We were at the retreat because we all loved the same thing – with the ever-present inspiration of Father John – silent prayer deepening us in love.

We were grateful for the hospitality of the monks and Sister Chantal, and also thank Magda Jass and Polly Schofield, the organizers of a beautiful retreat.



The Abbey of Notre-Dame du Lac (fr. Abbaye Notre-Dame du Lac), known as the Oka Abbey (fr. Abbaye Cistercienne d'Oka), was a Trappist Cistercian monastery located in Oka, Quebec. The main monastery building is of grey stone; it has a dozen outbuildings, all of which are situated on a 270-hectare property. With a decline in the number of monks by the early 21st century, the monastery decided to end operations there and established a non-profit centre at the abbey to preserve the site's heritage.

Photo by Serge Léonard

Canadian Martyrs Church Ottawa Retreat: Saving and Forgiving

Earlier this year I participated in setting up a retreat at the Canadian Martyrs Church in Ottawa. Twenty meditators attended "The Work of Lent: Saving and Forgiving."

Beth Smith, the new Ottawa-Area Coordinator, introduced speaker Monique De Baets, who has been associated with the Upper Room Home of Prayer for the last twenty years and a spiritual director for seven. In the course of preparing her talks, she decided now was the time to return to her practice of meditation.

One participant expressed gratitude for the in-person retreat. During COVID, it was difficult to keep up the practice. The retreat sparked a new beginning to look for an in-person weekly group. The teachings of Father John Main emphasize that when

meditation stops, we are encouraged to resume again and not abandon it entirely.

After each talk, Monique presented a question. In small groups, participants shared. The discussions led to personal reflections and even to current events with such a question as: "How does one forgive Trump?"



Theresa Ziebell

Two talks by Fr Laurence from the 2011 retreat at the Australian National Conference in Brisbane, entitled "The Process of Forgiveness," were played. His remarks are just as relevant today as they were fourteen years ago. While listening, I kept thinking about the Gospel of Luke (23:24) and Jesus' words while on the

Cross: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Manresa Retreat: Faith, Hope & Love



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

From July 25 to 27, 2025, forty-six members of our CCMC community and friends gathered for our summer retreat, themed “Renewed In Hope,” at Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre in Pickering, Ontario.

Our retreat’s theme and high-level plan emerged from prayerful reflection in January 2025 between the organizers André Choquet from Toronto, Martin Malina from Ottawa and me, Andrea Siqueira from Okotoks, Alberta. We were especially moved by Pope Francis’ declaring 2025 as a Jubilee Year for the Catholic Church, inviting us to become “Pilgrims of Hope.”

A Jubilee year is a sacred time for healing, renewal, and rediscovering God’s mercy. And truly, what better guide for spiritual renewal than our call to the Benedictine Way, whose rule teaches how to rise - again and again - in faith, humility, and trust.

Our time together on retreat was nourishing and spiritually enriching. The quiet strength of our members’ presence helped deepen the shared experience of community, silence, and grace.

We experienced this throughout our retreat: how our practice of Christian meditation not only deepened our personal prayer life but also fostered meaningful

friendships. In stillness, we met God, and in God, we found each other.

The weekend started with an informal meet and greet on Friday evening. Ecumenical in nature, our Canadian meditation community hosted friends from as far as Alberta in the west to Montreal and Ottawa in the east, and most were from Toronto and surrounding areas.

On opening night our community had the opportunity to hear (virtually) Fr. Laurence Freeman, Director of the World Community for Christian Meditation, bless our retreat with his message on our theme of “Renewed in Hope.” Laurence Freeman pointed out the difference between hope and hopes and said that hope is life-giving, everlasting, but our hopes are temporary, not long-lasting, hence placing our hope in Christ is our call each day.

Laurence also spoke of how faith, hope and love are intertwined, and how each virtue blends into the others.

Our community was grateful for his reassuring message of renewal. Thank you, Father Laurence!

Our retreat was sprinkled throughout with periods of silence, meditation sessions, learning opportunities, and fellowship celebrations.



Andrea Siqueira
Regional
Coordinator,
Alberta and
Saskatchewan



Left to right: André Choquet,
Andrea Siqueira, Martin Malina

On Saturday, Pr. Martin Malina led us in Lectio Divina reflecting on the road to Emmaus story in Luke 24:13-25. In the evening, we enjoyed soulful Taizé singing. Rev. Marilyn Metcalfe also led us with an insightful understanding of walking the labyrinth.

On Sunday, I led the session on The Rule of St. Benedict. It was a real eye-opener, not only for the retreatants but for me, as I start my journey on the Oblate Path. The Rule focuses on prayer and work and how they give glory to God.

Our last session was with our CCMC National Coordinator, André Choquet, who walked us through fascinating original poems on the theme of hope with reflections by Noel Keating, a member of the Irish WCCM community, who is working on a compilation of contemplative poetry.

One original poem was by Luci Shar, "The 'O' in Hope." Another poem was by Kabir, "The Leaf and the Tree."

One takeaway from Luci Shaw's poem was the importance of the letter "O." Its significance is in words that sum wholesomeness, as in LOVE, and the "O" that is at the centre of GOD!

We closed our retreat at Sunday Mass with a Celebration of the Eucharist officiated by Fr. Henk, the Manresa resident Jesuit pastor, accompanied by six members of our community joyfully singing in the A cappella choir under my leadership.

We are grateful for the moments of silence, reflection and renewal that came through with true Faith, Hope and LOVE, unending!

We are a people of HOPE! And, as our customized pen giveaway reads: Hold On Pain Ends!

Click on the link for a video compilation I created from our weekend: **CCMC Renewed In Hope 2025 Summer Retreat**. Or on your computer, type in a search engine the URL to view the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CctMYE7EDo>



André Choquet



The Rule According to Chittister continued from C5

revealing to me its relevance and value in today's complex world.

The rule according to Chittister makes Benedict's ancient manuscript applicable to daily living. It brings it down to earth with examples, quotations from wise sister traditions, and Joan's own spin to the chapters. Its most significant value resides in bringing alive and

making applicable the Gospels, not just offering lofty "pie in the sky" aspirations. She tells you how to do it.

There are other interpretations of the Rule, but I found Chittister's the most helpful. Providing tools, such as a list, is a good idea to assist oblates receiving for the first time St. Benedict's little booklet.

And, if you wonder, I do not receive a commission from Sr. Joan (not yet...).

WHAT THE DOGS TAUGHT ME

Not so long ago, after my morning meditation, I spent my day preparing the apartment for servicing from the pest control people. The following day was our floor's turn. What a pain in the neck removing everything from kitchen and bathroom, and wiping clean all surfaces!

In the afternoon, I took a break and walked in the neighbourhood park. Sitting on a bench facing the dog park, what a wonderful sight! Watching the dogs play in total abandonment and simplicity, I thought I might be present to a lesson in disguise.

Coming from my morning busyness with an agenda and deadline to meet, I was struck by the joy of the dogs as they played. They were "being" what God made them, wholly and fully present in the moment. They had no thoughts of the past, no worries about the future, or what anyone might think if she didn't get her apartment prepared in time for the pest control people. The dogs reminded me of God's call to simply "be" when we meditate.

It occurred to me the need to simplify our lives; to lose fear of truly being ourselves. Like the dogs in the park with no facades and no self-imposed pretenses, we could lighten our loads by abandoning these precepts. Rather than protecting ourselves with a "societal shield" what if we had the courage to present ourselves honestly to others just as we are?

Whether you like dogs or not, dogs are dogs. I am who I am—whether you like me or not. That's not my problem, that's yours.

Not everyone will appreciate our sense of humour or our jokes, our philosophy of life or political views, or

that we are Christian and meditate twice a day, etcetera. After a certain age, we should not waste our remaining time trying to please others at the expense of our integrity. We should be, and present, as we are, as the person we have become. And by God's grace, the person we have become is the one God intended for our creation, replete with every gift needed to make that happen.

But perhaps my words are a reflection of my age. I am a senior with no family responsibilities. My call to practice radical honesty may not be so easy for a younger person starting work or career. It also would be hard to practise radical honesty in places like Cuba, the USA, Russia, Nigeria, etcetera. In these places and stages of life, exercising sincerity and courage are litmus tests.

The dogs are free because they do not struggle with existential issues. I get it. We are spiritually "evolved" compared to our furry friends. But they have something to teach us. They don't cloak themselves with pretense like the emperor does in the children's story "The Emperor Has No Clothes." And it was Edmund Burke, a philosopher and statesman, who famously said: "All it takes for evil to win is for good men to do nothing." Or, in other words, to stay silent; to mute who we are. In today's world, can we afford to continue pretending that all is well?

The final decision remains with each one of us. True Metanoia cannot be forced, but it might be facilitated through meditation, one of its many fruits.

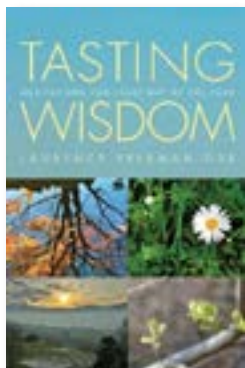
– Lorena Claudia Vicente, Oblate



Canadian Christian Meditation Community Bookstore

SERVING NORTH AMERICA

A Focus on Daily Readings



Tasting Wisdom

Every day, members of the WCCM receive a brief reflection, Daily Wisdom, from Laurence Freeman.

In this collection, recipients have helped Fr Laurence select 366 reflections that have had particular resonance.

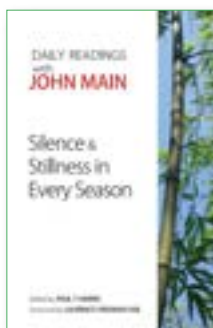
The result is book of daily meditations to last the whole year.

\$32.00

Short talks for Groups

From 2005 to 2023, The Singapore Meditation Community distributed CDs of short talks to meditation groups around the world. These talks continue to be available for download at <https://meditationtalks.wccm.org/>.

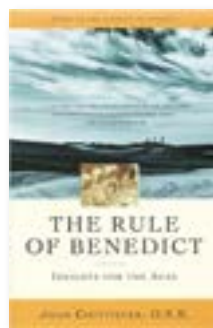
The Bookstore has many of these original CDs in stock for those who prefer physical CDs. These are available at \$10—postage included, or at \$8, plus postage, for multiple CDs. The list of titles is on the above noted website. Please send enquiries and orders to: mediomedia@wccm-canada.ca



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This collection of daily readings draws into one volume the essence of John Main's teaching in his many books and recordings. Edited by Paul T. Harris

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Joan Chittister, O.S.B.

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On Faith, Hope and Climate Change continued from C3

By learning to pay attention, we can:

- Be awestruck by the planetary systems that maintain life in equilibrium and realize that humans and our economy are part of nature, not external to it.
- Place in proper context what needs to be done in the short term and the long-term, and tackle both.
- Let go of distractions (including people) that deviate us from the end goal.

But can humans really save the planet? Is it another expression of human hubris to think that we can “fix the planet” by ourselves? Just like different parts of the body have different functions to make sure the whole body thrives, every human, plant, insect, and microbe has a role to play in the evolution of the planet.

***Humanity has wiped out 60% of animal populations since 1970, report finds – MAHB**

The science-backed facts that humans have wiped out 60% of animal populations since 1970* and that burning fossil fuel since the start of the industrial revolution has increased global temperature and greenhouse gas emissions to levels not observed for the last 120,000 years* does not mean that the planet is passively accepting the impact of our actions without consequences. Maybe a radically simple solution is to eliminate gradually pollution, keep greenhouse gas emissions as close to zero as possible, regenerate the Amazon forest and other carbon sink areas of the planet, reduce food waste, double up on humility and forgiveness, and nature will heal itself through the infinite goodness of God.

***Climate change: atmospheric carbon dioxide | NOAA Climate.gov**

The Goodness Multiplies

We had sparse attendance at our Monday Food Outreach Christian meditation group. Only three showed up out of a regular six to eight meditators. It was a rainy morning and a few regulars had stayed home to watch Fr. Laurence's Four Week Monday meditation series.

After the Closing Prayer, one of them said: "You know what, it does not really matter whether we are one, two

or three, because what we learn here makes us a better person with others we encounter, and the goodness multiplies."

I was taken aback by his insightful observation and underlying appreciation for what is being provided by Christian Meditation groups. I took his words as a message from God, one of encouragement to be shared with other meditation leaders.

– Lorena Claudia Vicente, Oblate

WCCM Events: Visit online: The World Community for Christian Meditation (<https://www.wccm.org>).

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