

# An Introduction to Christian Meditation



# What is Christian Meditation?

**“Christian Meditation is a prayer of the heart. It involves the silent repetition of a single word or phrase (the mantra). The continual gentle repetition of the mantra leads to an experience of silence, stillness, and simplicity.”**

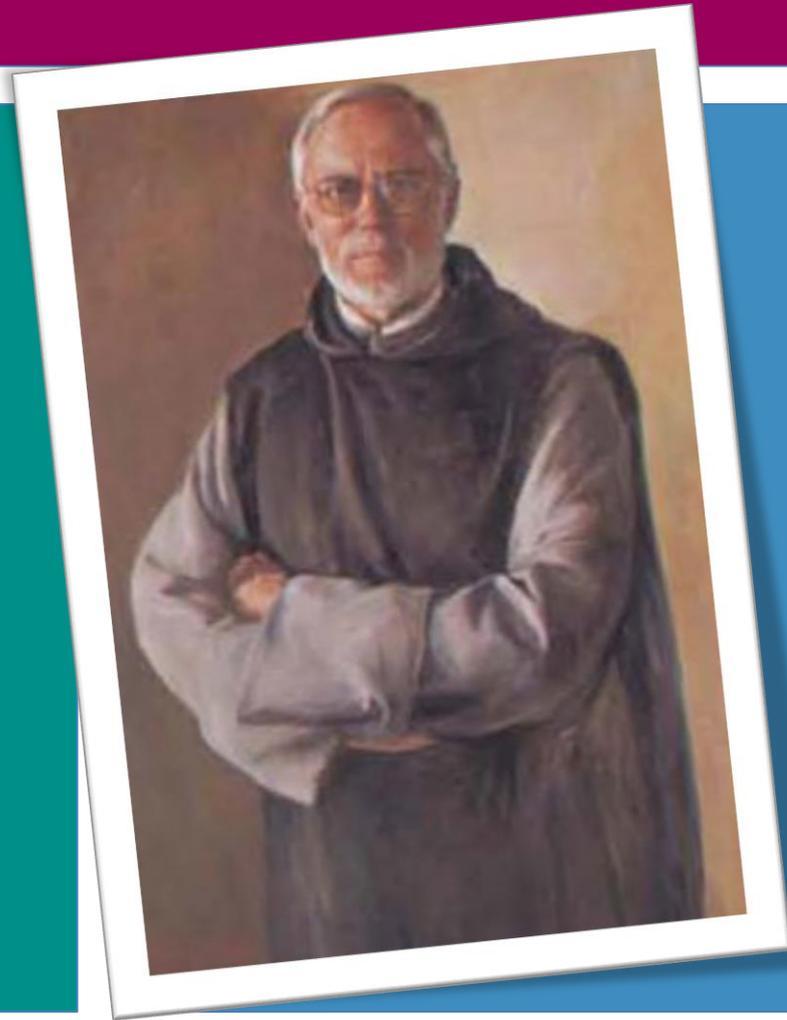
**<http://www.wccm-canada.ca/christian-meditation>**



# History of Christian Meditation

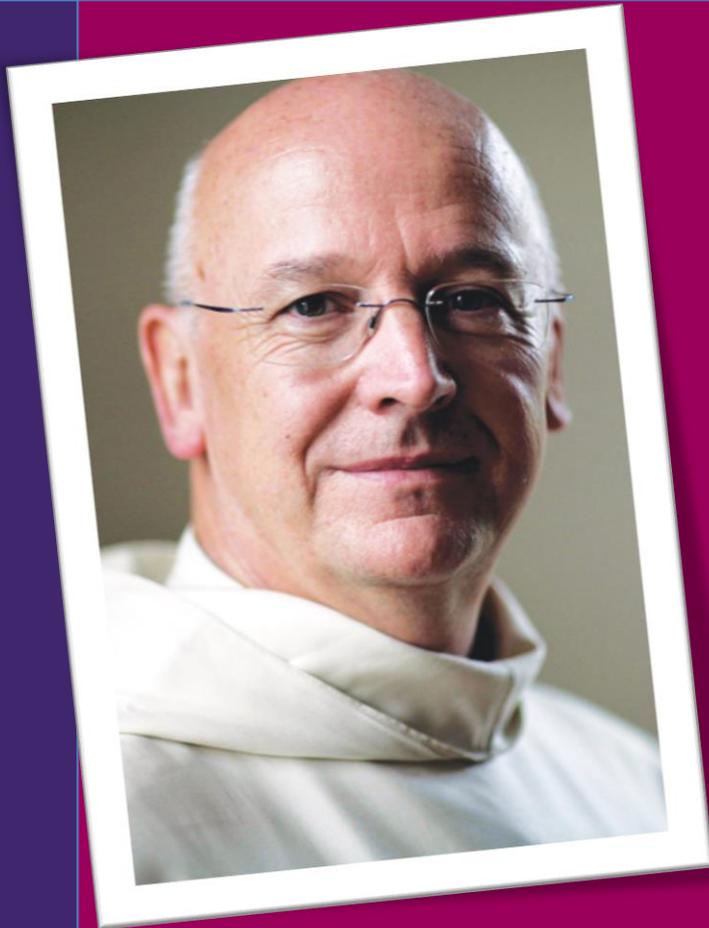
Christian meditation dates back to The Desert Fathers and Mothers of the church in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and was practiced in the following centuries.





**Fr. John Main, OSB**





**Fr. Laurence Freeman, OSB  
and The World Community  
for Christian Meditation**



## Why Meditation with Students?

“The all-important aim in Christian Meditation is to allow God’s mysterious and silent presence within us to become more and more not only a reality, but the reality in our lives; to let it become that reality which gives meaning, shape and purpose to everything we do, to everything we are.”

*Fr. John Maine, OSB*

# How to Meditate

The following steps are adapted from the Canadian Christian Meditation Community website:

<http://www.wccm-canada.ca/>

When you enter into meditation time:

- 1) Sit still and upright with your back straight.
- 2) Place both your feet flat on the floor or legs crossed if sitting on the floor.
- 3) Place your hands in your lap facing either upwards or downwards.
- 4) Gently close your eyes.
- 5) Be aware of your normal breathing pattern for a minute or two as you clear your mind.
- 6) Silently, interiorly, begin to say your sacred prayer word or mantra “ma-ra-na-tha” in four equal syllables.
- 7) Listen to the sound of your sacred word as you say it, slowly, intently and continuously.
- 8) If thoughts come, keep returning to simply saying the word.
- 9) Maintain this stillness for the entire period of the meditation.

# Christian Meditation is Prayer, it is not Mindfulness!

Mindfulness	Christian Meditation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rooted in Buddhist practice</li> <li>• Technique</li> <li>• Mind activity</li> <li>• Attention is on self (time limited)</li> <li>• Focus on the present</li> <li>• Measurable results focus (self-regulation, calming)</li> <li>• Way of preparing for meditation by calming the mind and harmonizing mind and body</li> <li>• Benefits include reducing stress, self-regulation, increased self knowledge and acceptance, increases sense of well-being and harmony, increases the desire to build community with others, calmness, enhances learning</li> <li>• Transactional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rooted in our Christian Tradition</li> <li>• Surrender - contemplation is not the result of a well-honed technique but of grace.</li> <li>• “Pure prayer” of the heart</li> <li>• Attention is coming off yourself (leaving the self behind)</li> <li>• Focus on the present</li> <li>• Faithfulness and trust focus</li> <li>• Produces mindfulness – makes you more aware, mindful</li> <li>• Benefits include reducing stress, self-regulation, increased self knowledge and acceptance, increases sense of well-being and harmony, increases the desire to build community with others, calmness, enhances learning</li> <li>• Fruits – “But the <b>fruit of the Spirit</b> is love, joy, peace, patient endurance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5: 22)</li> <li>• Transformational</li> </ul>

# The Fruits of Christian Meditation

- Love
- Joy
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Fidelity
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Calmness
- Relaxation
- Enhances Learning
- Reduce and Manage Stress and Anxiety
- Stronger Sense of Emotional, Social and Spiritual Well-Being



# Teachers report that Christian Meditation enables children to be:

- More considerate and loving
- Caring for and thoughtful of others
- Kind to friends
- Still and silent and experience God in the silence
- In anticipation of their meditation times
- Calm and relaxed
- Sitting still for longer periods

# The Benefits of Christian Meditation

- Meditation deepens the children's personal relationship with God
- Meditation leads to increased self-knowledge and self-acceptance
- Meditation increases the desire to build community with others
- Meditation reduces stress and increases children's sense of well-being and harmony

# Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

A Discerning Believer		I am a believer
An Effective Communicator		I have a voice
A Reflective, Creative And Holistic Thinker		I have ideas
A Self-Directed, Responsible, Lifelong Learner		I am a learner for life
A Collaborative Contributor		I am a team player
A Caring Family Member		I care
A Responsible Citizen		I have responsibilities



# Some Web Resources

- Christian Meditation for Children and Young People  
<http://www.cominghome.org.au/>
- World Community for Christian Meditation  
<http://www.wccm.org/>
- Canadian Christian Meditation Community  
<http://www.wccm-canada.ca/>