

# THE FRUITS OF MEDITATION

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We meditate to draw closer to God, to lose ourselves and be lost in Him, to give up our own desires and to dwell in his love. When meditation becomes part of our lives, there are physical and psychological benefits – we sleep better, our blood pressure is lower. There are spiritual fruits as well that lead to a deeper transformation and are much more difficult to measure and can be best described in the words of St Paul – ‘But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control’ (Gal 5:22). We learn to be more rooted and centred, to live in the present moment, to just BE because meditation teaches us to focus our whole being – mind, body and spirit – on the presence of Christ within us (see box ‘Fr John Main on The Fruits of Meditation’). What do these characteristics mean?

## 1. BECOMING MORE ROOTED, MORE CENTERED

We are steadier, more consistent in the way we approach life. We are less likely to swing between extremes in our moods and actions. We are guided by certain core values. We understand what is truly important in life, what is just passing and trivial and what truly endures.

## 2. LEARNING TO LIVE FULLY IN THE PRESENT MOMENT

In meditation we are fully present to the mantra, with no thoughts of past and future. We learn to live mindfully; to

treasure each moment and live it consciously. When you live in the present moment, the most important moment is NOW, the most important person is the person you are with NOW, the most important thing is what you are doing NOW.

## 3. LEARNING TO BE

This is all about not wearing any “masks” to hide our real feelings, not having to put on an act, not responding to people in a pre-programmed way such as from prejudice or the desire for approval but letting others be.. letting God be. Our capacity to be, our confidence in being, comes from the experience in meditation that we are loved unconditionally by God as his unique creation.

## THE TRANSFORMATION IS GRADUAL

Jesus tells us “if any man would follow me, he must deny himself.” We let go of ourselves, and align our whole being with the being of Christ. When Jesus invites us “Get on my wavelength, tune into me so that your life resonates with me, and you begin to think the way I think”, we begin to see the world with the eyes of Christ. We respond to it as He would respond. Our whole being and mind is transformed. This doesn’t happen overnight. We don’t come to these fruits one week after beginning to meditate or after one year. It’s difficult to see the progress. One day we find that we have changed. Something happens and we realize that what would have once made us very upset does not bother us so much. We no longer react the way we used to. The inner transformation is like the story of the man in the Bible who plants the seed and then

goes about his business. But when he sleeps and gets up, the seed has grown in the darkness; he does not know how. A hidden, gradual process of transformation has taken place. ■

**new edition**

**JOHN MAIN**  
A Biography

The Man  
The Monk  
The Teaching

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. This 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 is the most analytical teaching."

**CHRONOLOGY OF JOHN MAIN'S LIFE**  
THE STORY FROM LETTERS, ANECDOTES & MEMORIES  
Born of Irish Parents - Young Family Life - The Influence of Buddhism - India and Ireland - Early Scholasticism - World War II - The Catholic Priests - Studies and Teaching - The Lay School - Mission and the Sacred Monks - Washington DC and Visits to London - On Becoming a Benedictine Monk - Washington DC and St. Joseph's - Return to London - The First Meditation Centre - A New Beginning in Montreal - Beginnings of the Sacred Journey

**ON JOHN MAIN**  
THE STORY IN PICTURES

**Taste and See**  
THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD

**Not more theories...  
rather the experience of God**

When people today read most, Fr. Francis says, is "not more theories about God, but rather the experience of God - to become deeply aware of God's real presence." St. John tells us: "Anyone who cultivates has eternal life." (Jn 5:24) It is therefore our call and our destiny to own this mystery and to live in God who is love. And the way to this, Fr. Francis says, is meditation. Setting aside our preconceptions to simply repeat the mantra, we enter God's space and dwell in him. This experience of God's love liberates us from our ego and allows God to transform us in his image. Fr. Francis' simple, always approachable and encouraging newness to begin the journey of meditation. Meditations will find a deeper understanding of their practice.

CD 1	CD 2
1. How to Meditate	1. Being Friends with Prayer
2. The Our Prayer	2. Faithfully with Prayer
3. Christ is King	3. Faithfully with Prayer
4. Christ is King	4. Faithfully with Prayer
5. Christ is King	5. Faithfully with Prayer
6. Christ is King	6. Faithfully with Prayer
7. Christ is King	7. Faithfully with Prayer
8. Christ is King	8. Faithfully with Prayer
9. Christ is King	9. Faithfully with Prayer
10. Christ is King	10. Faithfully with Prayer

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This article was compiled from many sources especially the talks of Peter Ng and the writings of Laurence Freeman. Books and other resources on Christian Meditation can be obtained from the bookstore outside the Meditation Room (contact Daulet at 64697671 or email her at [daulet@pacific.net.sg](mailto:daulet@pacific.net.sg)). The book and CDs referred alongside can also be obtained from Katong Catholic Bookstore, next to Holy Family Church.

The next article in this continuing series on Christian Meditation will be "The Journey of Meditation - what kind of progress can I expect?"

## Fr John Main on 'The Fruits of Meditation'

"It is my personal conviction that meditation can add a dimension of incredible richness to your life. I wish that I had the persuasive powers or the eloquence to convince everyone that I meet of the importance of meditating. Once you begin, and it takes lots of months and years to begin, but once you begin you will find that your meditation is the great integrating power in your life, giving depth and perspective to everything you are and everything you do. And the reason for that is this: you are beginning to live out of the power of the love of God, that power that is present in our hearts in all its immensity, in all its simplicity, in the Spirit of Jesus. The integrating power of meditation affects every part of our life. All our life is, as it were, aligned on Christ. And his life and presence makes itself felt in every part of our life. And the way to that is the way of humility, the way of simplicity, the way of the mantra."

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

### Q Is meditation a form of self-hypnosis?

In fact meditation and self-hypnosis are quite the opposite. Self-hypnosis is a goal-directed experience through self-suggestion, aimed at changing one's feelings, thoughts and fantasies and general well-being. Self-hypnosis is a very self-conscious, self-pre-occupied exercise. The practice of Christian meditation on the other hand is God-centered and is meant to lead us into the mystery that is beyond thoughts, imagination and feelings. Tests of brainwaves during meditation show that they differ substantially from those that occur during sleep or any form of hypnosis.

### Q Is Meditation a call to all or just a chosen few?

In his book *What is Contemplation*, Thomas Merton, the great American Cistercian monk and writer writes, "The seeds of contemplation are planted in every Christian soul at Baptism. But seeds must grow and develop before you reap the harvest. There are thousands of Christians walking about the face of the earth bearing in their bodies the infinite God of whom they know practically nothing. The seeds of contemplation have been planted in these souls, but they merely lie dormant, they do not germinate." Excessive activity, cares and concerns of the world often drown out the voice of God calling us to this way of prayer.

### Q I want to learn to Meditate but I am not free to attend the Beginners' Group on Tuesday evenings. Can I learn with another group?

The Beginners' Group on Tuesday evenings is led by Peter Ng or James Loh, and consists mainly of people just starting to meditate. The talks may have more repetition of the basic teachings. However you can join any of the other groups at Holy Family, and you will be welcomed and taught how to meditate. There is no difference in the method of meditation. The period may be just five minutes longer. The group members may have been meditating for years, but they are not necessarily "better" or "perfect" meditators - in a sense, we are all beginning anew each time we sit down to meditate!

## MEDITATION GROUPS

GROUPS & TIME	CONTACT DETAILS	
Tuesday, 8pm (Beginners group)	Janey	<a href="mailto:janey_tan@yahoo.com.sg">janey_tan@yahoo.com.sg</a>
Wednesday, 7.30pm	Rebecca (Hp: 9835 7835) Stella (Hp: 9644 4342)	<a href="mailto:rebeccalim49@gmail.com">rebeccalim49@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:kon.stella@gmail.com">kon.stella@gmail.com</a>
Thursday, 8pm	Francis (Hp: 9368 7773)	<a href="mailto:francisteo7@gmail.com">francisteo7@gmail.com</a>
Friday, 8pm (Young Adults group)	Duane (Hp: 9748 6673)	<a href="mailto:adre1986@gmail.com">adre1986@gmail.com</a>

## YOUTH CAMP 2010 - VOYAGE 912

*Human Caterpillar*



*Together we stand*



*Working together*



*Voyage 912 - The crew*