



# Friends Newsletter

The World Community for Christian Meditation

Christmas 2019

## Dear Friends

With Christmas fast approaching, we feel this year, now more than ever, the importance of the Christmas message of peace. As 2019 ends, it is our prayer that all The WCCM meditation groups across the world can renew their commitment to this peace; may we be this peace for others in the world, here and now.

The nativity scene is commonplace at Christmas, so much so that perhaps we can take it for granted. And yet, if we look anew at its simplicity and its poverty, we just might see Christ nestled in the manger of our heart. This seeing, this experience without thought, is the promise of our meditation practice.

May this Christmas be for you, your family and friends, a time of peace and a time for joy. Thank you for all your support during 2019.

With love,  
Judi and Paul



## Christmas Message From Laurence Freeman

Human beings tell stories to make the meaning that we need to discover in order to live well. The narratives of scripture, like that of the birth of Jesus, give greater returns each time we recall them, so freshly intertwined are they with the stories of our own lives. Our deepening spiritual experience, the raising and clarifying of consciousness that is the result of our meditation, is fed by the Word that is alive and active. It also leads us back to scripture with a new hunger and capacity for insight.



Laurence Freeman, Christmas 2018

Christmas is a feast of meaning. Much of it is reflected in our cultural forms of celebrating at this time of year. [ . . . ] But all these forms depend on the

*May our life as  
community increase  
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that our divided world  
is striving for...*

personal experience of what Christmas is most essentially about – the radical poverty and simplicity, the intoxicating proximity to God that our total dependence reveals.

Let us hold each other in our hearts in this joyful season.. May we be restored to the love of the earth needed if we are to repair the damage we have inflicted on it. May our life as community increase the energy of peace that our divided world is striving for as well as the justice on which peace depends – the very wisdom that the newborn Jesus embodies.

(An excerpt from Laurence Freeman, OSB, unpublished Christmas Message, 2009.)

With Love

*Laurence*

*WHAT IS A FRIEND? A Friend provides vital personal and financial support to the Community towards sharing the gift of meditation worldwide. Friends support is critical to all our activities and especially helps us develop, nurture, and assist new and emerging communities with limited resources.*

*WHAT DOES A FRIEND SUPPORT? Some work that your contributions help support include: retreats, talks, visits and presentations by teachers in our community, including Fr. Laurence and many others across the world, The School of Meditation, Meditatio (which brings the fruits of meditation to developing new kinds of leadership, better business, education, health, science, the environment and interfaith friendship), translations of key texts, and the distribution of resource materials.*

*CONTACT Judi and Paul Taylor, International Friends Coordinators, for more information: [friends@wccm.org](mailto:friends@wccm.org) or PO Box 127 North Sydney NSW Australia, 2059.*

## The Wonder of Our Christian Meditation Groups

I recently came across this quote from John Main's WORD MADE FLESH that helped me appreciate a wonderful story that a friend, a Group leader, had shared with me:

*"You do not know what is in store for you as you cross into the silence. This is why it is so important to learn to meditate in a tradition and in a group that receives, passes on and embodies that tradition. It is a tradition that says 'fear not'. Jesus is the heart of a tradition that sees the purpose of meditation as being in the presence of love, the love that casts out all fear."*

My friend told me that his wife, although a member of his group for more than 20 years, had never really embraced CM in the same way he had. He said she was more a Martha than a Mary and so the groups she was most enthusiastic about in her Parish life were the ones that were more engaged in "doing" like the ones that provided morning tea after church.

In the last few years his wife had begun to develop the early signs of dementia and found that her place within these more active groups was less and less appreciated. This was a painful experience for both her and my friend. By contrast, within the meditation group, there was an extraordinary acceptance and love. With this acceptance, my friend said, his

wife had developed a renewed enthusiasm for her practice of meditation, as well as a sharing in scripture after their morning quiet times. He was deeply moved by all this, his eyes glistening as he shared this with me.

My friend's group is a wonderful model for us all. It is a group that has obviously grown in love over the many years it has been together. I think it calls us all to reflect on the group or groups that we meditate with. When we reflect in this way we see how the people in our groups have become so important in our lives. Sharing this precious gift of meditation is such a wonderful basis for ever deepening friendship.



The WCCM International Friends Coordinators Judi and Paul (second and third from left) on pilgrimage in the Holy Land, October 2019

We see also within these groups a great concern for the world beyond the group itself: that as many people as possible can share in this great gift of meditation, through which have been graced. Our simple way of expressing this concern is by putting out our bowl and allowing each to contribute as they see fit.

May your groups, too, continue to grow in love. May they, as

John Main said, pass on and embody the great tradition from which we have been so blessed to receive, a tradition of love.

Paul Taylor.

## New: Essential Teaching Weekend Handbook

The WCCM has recently published a new handbook, one that provides guidance for organising an Essential Teaching Weekend (ETW). Participating in an ETW is a necessary part of a meditator's growth in meditation that The WCCM offers. After an ETW, someone meditating in the way of our tradition is equipped to one day present an ETW themselves.

If you would like to know more about this new handbook, go to the resources section of the School of Meditation website ([bit.ly/2DCZClh](http://bit.ly/2DCZClh)) and have a look. This new publication is part of The WCCM's resource books for groups and teaching. All these resources can found on the School of Meditation's website ([bit.ly/2Yb0VS7](http://bit.ly/2Yb0VS7)).



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