



World Community for Christian Meditation Malaysia

November 2024

Dear meditators and friends,

We've had a busy and adventurous year with some new ventures and changes in leadership. After the generally uneventful time of pandemic, it was exciting to have guests from overseas to hold sessions and meditate with us. Fr. Cyprian Consiglio OSB Cam. came from California via India and Singapore, during Lent to lead us in song and contemplation, to reflect on and renew our vision of God and all that we are called to do. Augustine Xiao Xiao, a Benedictine oblate from Shanghai helped us run our first ever meditation retreat in the Mandarin language. It was lovely to be able to share the gift of Christian Meditation with Mandarin speakers and to see their delight at being able to share their thoughts and feelings about all things spiritual be it scripture, spirituality or meditation, in their own language.

Our teaching team together with Fr Gerard Theraviam ran several one day workshops during the year and is currently running a six week Introduction to CM workshop at St Ignatius church which will end on 14th December 2024. The highlight of our year was the annual retreat in cool and rainy Taiping, where Fr Gerard taught us more about the Psalms and how to pray with them as a prelude to meditation. It was a truly peaceful and meditative break for all who participated.

Many thanks to our council members and teaching team for their support during this year of beginnings, learning and change. As my first year as National Coordinator comes to a close, I also need to thank all of our meditators for their patience and support. God bless you all.

Beth Rozario
National Coordinator

One Day Introduction to Christian Meditation Workshops

Cathedral of St John the Evangelist parish in Kuala Lumpur on 25 January 2024



BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.

An Introduction to CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Cathedral of St John the Evangelist (Parish House)

Thursday 25 January 2024 (Public Holiday)

8.30am Registration

9am- 4pm Sessions with Mass, lunch & breaks

Fee: RM 20

Please register with the Parish Office

For enquiries: Cheryl Lock 012-6613497

ALL ARE WELCOME but PLACES ARE LIMITED

For more information on Christian Meditation, see www.wccm-malaysia.org or www.wccm.org

Sessions facilitated by the WCCM Teaching Team & Fr Gerard Theraviam, Spiritual Adviser to the World Community for Christian Meditation, Malaysia

St Joseph's Cathedral, Kuching on 11 May 2024



The response to the workshop was encouraging with 59 participants (excluding Fr Gerard, Fr Mark Bonchol and Roland) attending. Archbishop Simon Poh (Kuching archdiocese) also graced us with his presence and said a few words to participants on discernment. Following up to the workshop, St Joseph Cathedral Parish planned to hold fortnightly group meditation meeting on 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month at 8 pm to 9pm, starting June 2024. Fr Mark Bonchol was appointed by Archbishop Simon as spiritual director of the WCCM meditation group of St Joseph Cathedral.

I feel that this is an eye opener program for me. Before that, I thought meditation is only for Buddhism. Glad I attended and I hope this will help me in my journey with God. Thanks
(Stephanie)

Thank you for organizing this Christian Meditation workshop, It was my first time attending a meditation. All the time I thought only other religions meditate. Overall, I believe practice makes perfect. Hopefully I can participate in future workshop of this kind. (Leela – representative of Catholic Nurses Guild Kuching)

I think the talk was quite good and insightful for someone curious and would like to try meditation in 'safe' Christian way. I always wanted to try meditation and almost went to try Vipassana meditation but was unsuccessful twice somehow perhaps my guardian angel was at work.

As for area of improvement. I suppose some guidelines during meditation would be useful like when there's itch in the body, sound, etc that can disrupt the flow. Food and refreshments were very nice. (Timothy)

The workshop is very good in all aspects. The talk is simple and precise especially for beginners. It's good to learn to meditate in the silence. It's unbelievable that my tears flow out from my left eye. I didn't feel sad or whatsoever. It just flowed out. I didn't use any words but kept myself in the presence of God. Thank you for organizing this programme. (Shirley)

Our Lady of Lourdes (OLL) parish in Klang on 17 August 2024



Sharing Stillness, Silence and Attention at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Klang

On 17th August 2024, our parish held the “Introduction to Christian Meditation” workshop for about 70 participants from our own parish and others who came from as far away as Ipoh, Sg Petani and as nearby as Holy Redeemer Church in Klang.

Fr Gregory Chan warmly welcomed the team from WCCM Malaysia (World Community for Christian Meditation Malaysia) led by Fr Gerard Theraviam. The workshop covered these topics :

- What is Meditation?
- The Roots and Tradition of Christian Meditation,
- Leaving Self Behind,
- The Wheel of Prayer
- Fruits of Meditation
- WCCM at home and abroad

These talks were interspersed with short periods of meditation ranging from 10 minutes to 15 minutes, where all participants practiced sitting in stillness, silence, paying attention to their sacred word.

Thus we learnt that meditation is a form of prayer, and is deeply rooted in Christian tradition. It is a prayer of the heart, where we move from the mind to the heart, through stillness, silence and attention to the sacred word. It is a prayer without words, thoughts or images; we are simply being with God. In doing so, we learn to leave self behind.

St Paul tells us that the Spirit prays within us, deeper than words (Rom 8:26). When we meditate, we allow what we think of at first as “my prayer”, to become one with the prayer of the Spirit.

The presenters from WCCM Malaysia, Fr Gerard Theraviam, Beth Rozario, Irene Low and Lucille Lopez, while teaching the various topics, also shared their own experience of meditation and answered many questions regarding meditation and its place in our Christian tradition. They also encouraged all participants to meditate for 20 minutes twice a day i.e. in the morning and in the evening.

The workshop was brought to a joyous conclusion with the birthday celebration of several participants and a rousing thank you from parish pastor Fr Gregory. Following up to the enthusiasm and inspiration generated by the workshop, the OLL parish meditation group resumed its weekly meetings on Tuesday evenings.

Julia Jase, coordinator for OLL Meditation Group

Church of Christ the King parish in Sungai Petani (Kedah) on 21 September 2024



Music, Prayer & Lenten Reflection with Fr Cyprian Consiglio, OSB Cam, 14, 16, 17 March 2024

WCCM coordinated Fr. Cyprian's visits to three parishes in the Klang Valley ie St Francis Xavier church (SFX) in Petaling Jaya, St Francis of Assisi Church (SFA) and Cathedral of St John the Evangelist in Kuala Lumpur. We were blessed to have Fr. Cyprian, a renowned Camaldolese Benedictine monk (and singer, musician, composer, recording artist, teacher, writer, and retreat master) to lead us in these special evenings. Here is an extract from a post of the Facebook page of St Francis of Assisi Church, Cheras :



Praise and glory be to God for an evening of soul-stirring **music, prayer and Lenten reflection with Fr. Cyprian Consiglio**. Fr. Cyprian kickstarted the session with a song, “40 Years in the Wilderness”, inviting the participants to **pray for a new vision and understanding of God** during the 40-day Lenten season.

In subsequent songs, Fr. Cyprian reminded the participants to **trust in God’s mercy, leave the past in ashes, and return to God**. Lent is a preparation for Easter, calling us to renew our own baptism and rise to new life from the tomb, which has become a font of life-giving living water.



Fr Cyprian at St Francis Xavier Church hall with Fr Alvin Ng on 14th March 2024

Fr. Cyprian then shared about the connection between the Eucharist, the Cross, and service. Explaining the song 'Are You Ready to Drink the Cup That I Drink,' he emphasized that we can **share in the ‘Cross of Jesus’ by giving our lives over in service**, being broken and poured out for the sake of the world.

The session concluded with a **silent meditation**, inviting participants to be present to the presence of God within us, as we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus! Help us to come home to ourselves, to the temple that we are, and encounter the Holy Spirit.

Introduction to Christian Meditation Retreat in Mandarin 14-16 June 2024 at Stella Maris Centre in Penang, led by Benedictine Oblate Augustine Xiao Xiao from Shanghai

For the very first time we held a three day meditation retreat for mandarin speakers, our first of its kind 3 day retreat in Mandarin with some brief teaching sessions in Mandarin in Penang and Perak. As preparation for this retreat our Mandarin Teaching team headed by Nicholas Choong, had been hosting monthly online

meditation sessions in Mandarin, with the help of Augustin Xiao, a Benedictine oblate from Shanghai.



The team invited Augustin, to run the 3 day retreat for 24 participants. The response from the retreatants was appreciative and excited, particularly for those who had previously been participating in our WCCM events in English but were more comfortable questioning, discussing and sharing in mandarin.

After the retreat , Augustin then carried out brief teaching sessions in Mandarin at the Holy Spirit Cathedral in Penang, Minor Basilica of St Anne in Bukit Mertajam and finally in St Michael Church in Ipoh.

Since June, the Mandarin teaching team has done its best to hold monthly online meditation sessions in Mandarin to support all our meditators who are mandarin speaking. We hope their continued efforts will encourage the practice of Christian meditation within the mandarin speaking community.



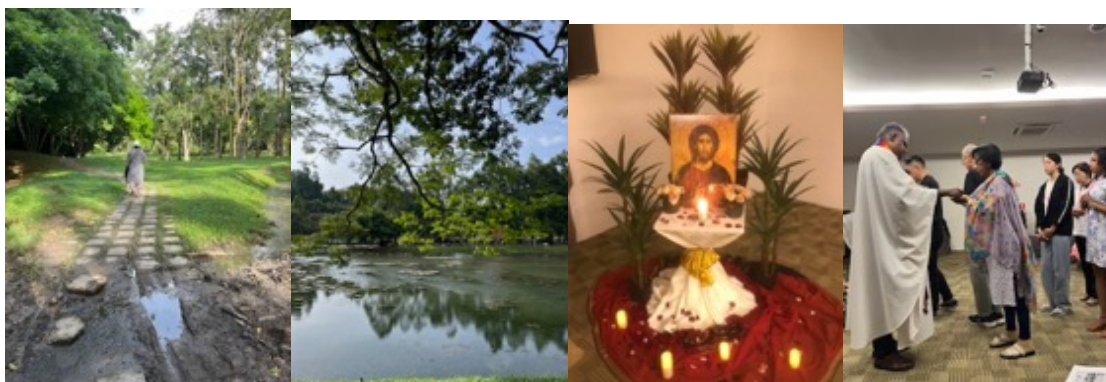
Christian Mediation Retreat at Stella Maris, Penang 14-16 June 2024

National Retreat 11-14 October 2024, Taiping Perak.

The Psalms: An invitation to Encounter God in Silence, Stillness, Simplicity and Solitude

How fitting that we had our retreat in a town called Taiping, a name meaning “Everlasting Peace” in Chinese. In its lovely Lake Gardens, we spent a few afternoons of our peaceful meditation/reflection time amidst the angsa trees and lotus ponds.

Each day we prayed twice from the “Liturgy of the Hours”, had mass, three sessions of meditation and walks in the nearby gardens. During our learning sessions our retreat master Fr. Gerard Theraviam taught us about the Psalms and how to pray with the psalms, giving us a deeper appreciation of the richness of the psalms when related to our daily trials and interactions with God and our fellow human beings. Our last learning session touched on the various stages of the spiritual journey, helping us to realise that in our life journey, there are patterns which are helpful to recognise and reassure us that there will be times of darkness and difficulty amidst other times of joy and consolation, and more often than not the journey is not linear.



Views of the gardens in Taiping, sacred space and anointing of participants

Some highlights of the retreat as expressed by retreatants (lightly edited) :

I'm deeply grateful for the weekend prayer retreat. It gave me the space for solitude and communal silence to connect with God. The retreat allowed me to experience unceasing prayer through meditation, lectio divina, the Psalms, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and the Eucharist, both with fellow meditators and on my own.

A heartfelt thank you to Father Gerard for his guidance in learning how to pray. I also want to thank the WCCM organizing team for their hard work in offering us this opportunity to deepen the experience of bringing the mind to the heart.

This retreat has been a true blessing, providing a much-needed break from the busyness of life and leading me to a peaceful time in Taiping.

... Thank you again everyone for the experience.

Basil Surin, Sg Petani

The retreat helped me to view the Psalms in new eyes, to better interpret its meaning and the varied ways of applying it personally. The talks imbued hope...of God's unfaltering love for us and his unceasing presence despite our dark nights of senses & soul. A reminder to see God not in our likeness and to be kind to ourselves in moments of strife and helplessness. Thank you to everyone for making this a special grace-filled retreat.

Melisa Tan, Kuala Lumpur

.....The psalms: To learn from the psalmist how to speak frankly with God. To enter the emotions of the psalmist, recognise the feelings and seek the healing. Also to realise that dryness in prayer, unanswered prayers, absence of God's Presence are part of my "Dark night of the soul" and I just need to hang in there. Last but not least, Fr Gerard surprised us all, firstly by making the Blessed Sacrament available for all of us to gaze at Him and secondly he had a healing session with the anointing of the sick. A Truly Blessed Retreat.

Bernard Capel, Penang



Group photos taken in Grand Baron Hotel, Taiping where the retreat was held

ONGOING & COMING EVENTS

October 26th to December 14th 2024 Introduction to Christian Meditation in 6 weekly sessions at St Ignatius Church, Petaling Jaya

December 7th 2024 Advent Reflection and Fellowship to be held in different regions for meditation groups near each other to meet in person, reflect, meditate and *makan-makan* together.

December 30th 2024 Commemorating Fr John Main 42nd Death Anniversary (Reflection, Meditation) 10am at Pure Life Society, Batu 6, Jalan Puchong, Kuala Lumpur. Followed by lunch at in Petaling Jaya.

ONGOING MEDITATION ONLINE No online meditation 16th December 2024 to 5th January 2025. Online Meditation resumes on 6th January 2025 (Don't forget to keep practising on your own)

MESSAGE FROM OUR COUNCIL



Wishing a very Blessed and Happy Christmas to all our meditators and friends from WCCM Malaysia Council

*from left to right -Judith, Fr Gerard, Alexandra, Beth, Mike, Jenny, Nicholas, Roland
(missing from photos are council members Dr Pat and Fabian)*

WCCM MALAYSIA COUNCIL MEMBERS

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<https://www.wccmmalaysia.org/>

<https://wccm.org/>

<https://bonnevauxwccm.org/>