
6. The Spread

1980s – Library

From the very early days of the late **1980s**, a library of books, audio tapes and video tapes have been held and made available to meditators. Avis Ridley who led Orewa, the first Auckland group, made their stocks available to the new Massey group just beginning. Later books and audio tapes were also sold. The June **2003** NZCCM newsletter advertised a 50% off sale on audio tapes.

The Wellington Community also kept a library of books, audio tapes and video tapes, which they housed in the Home of Compassion, their usual venue for Community Days.

In the minutes of the National Council's December **2005** meeting, it was decided that books be bought through the London Office of WCCM. Regions would now acquire their own books from Stan Martin (Librarian) with a view to selling these books at the Community Days.

The **2007** minutes of the National Council records that the requested fee of \$5.00 for borrowing books was not always paid and that groups often kept tapes longer than the standard loan period, depending on need.

In March **2008**, the Southern Area Financial Report records that a stock of books for sale is held, to the value of \$419.00.

A Southern Area Report to the NZCCM Council meeting on 6th February **2009**, states that by mid-2008, Dunedin Meditators were able to offer a well-stocked and catalogued library of Christian Meditation books for meditators to borrow.

However at the same meeting, Fr. Peter Murphy said that the NZCCM's library was underutilized and advised the Council that Vincent Maire had offered to take on the management of the Library. It appears that Bertha Casas had been Librarian until that time. Bertha's resignation was reported in the newsletter of September/October 2009, where it says that after many years as Librarian, Bertha had asked to be relieved of her duties. Stan Martin was given the position of New Books Co-ordinator at that same meeting,

A year later, in the Council minutes of the 6th June **2010** meeting, Vincent Maire reported that only one person was using the Library and that he intended publishing an article in the next newsletter. His article read:

NZCCM LIBRARY:

The Library comprises a collection of books, CDs, tapes, videos and DVDs. There are over 90 titles of which half are books. The collection is held by Vincent Maire. Books are lent only to current financial members of NZCCM.

The list can be downloaded from the website www.christianmeditationnz.org.nz and it is on the Bookshop page as a PDF file.

It costs \$5 to hire a book, CD, DVD, video or set of tapes. This can be sent when returning the item. Funds will be used to pay for postage and help build the collection. Before the book is dispatched Vincent will check to see if the borrower is a current financial member of NZCCM. If not, borrowers will have to become a financial member. The loan period is one month.

While it is our intention to expand the library with current titles on meditation and spirituality, this costs money. Please feel free to donate books or other media that you believe would be useful additions to the collection. We are especially seeking the following titles for the NZCCM Library:

By John Main: The Present Christ, The Way of Unknowing, Door to Silence, Word into Silence, The Heart of Creation.

By Laurence Freeman: Jesus the Teacher Within, The Pearl of Great Price, The Good Heart.

Any titles by or about Thomas Merton, Meister Eckhart, Richard Rohr, Fr. Thomas Keating, Joan Chittister, Evelyn Underhill, the Dalai Lama, Henri Nouwen, Anthony de Mello, Bede Griffiths, Archbishop Rowan Williams, Simone Weil, Henri Le Saux, Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena, John of the Cross, Hildegard of Bingen, Jean Vanier, Julian of Norwich, John Cassian, St Benedict, The Cloud of Unknowing, Practice of the Presence of God, writings of the Desert Fathers & Mothers.

Book reviews would also be appreciated. These can be included on the list and also published in the NZCCM newsletter.

By mid-**2011** the Library use had continued to diminish and this was of concern to the Librarian and the National Council. The \$5 shipment fee was changed to encourage use. Out of print John Main tapes were transferred to CDs and a sale of material was to be held at the first Auckland Community Day in 2012. Happily this resulted in sales of \$1000.

In **2013** an inventory of books was tabled at the April Council meeting. There were 56 books, 32 CDs, 5 Cassettes and 5 DVDs in stock. The following year, it was decided to try and sell all stock at the 2015 John Main Seminar. This proved to be successful and raised over \$3,000 for *Friends*. In 2016, it was decided that the remaining stock be distributed amongst Regional Co-ordinators to be sold at Community Days or given away.

2000 - Inter-Faith

From its very beginnings the WCCM saw prayer as a universal call, not confined to one religion, spirituality or faith tradition. It is fundamentally ecumenical and inter-faith, and the New Zealand Community embraced this philosophy whole-heartedly:

There is diversity, but also a common thread. Tradition is passed on, it develops, and it is this that makes it a true doctrine, a living word. (John Main)

In his article published in the 25th Anniversary WCCM magazine, January **2000** issue, Richard Clarke wrote of the inter-faith activities of the Wellington groups over the years, having visited the Buddhist monastery in Lower Hutt and attended seminars by the Dalai Lama. Richard himself had attended the John Main Seminar held in Northern Ireland where the Dalai Lama was the main speaker.

Michael Dougherty led an Auckland Day of Recollection in May **2003** with the theme *Meditation and Body Awareness*. Michael and his wife are *Shiatsu* teachers. In August 2003, the Venerable Lama Samten from the Tibetan Buddhist Monastery, Bodhisattva Road, Wainui, was the guest at another Auckland Community Day. He initially talked about his own journey from Tibet to New Zealand and of the upheaval caused by the Chinese invasion in which his whole family perished. Lama spoke about the four noble truths of Buddhism and said that in Buddhism there are many levels of meditation. Meditation means you are “in the middle”, it is “horizontal”. Ups and downs are what we do ourselves and these are distractions.

In the Autumn **2005** edition of the NZCCM newsletter, Fr. Peter Murphy expressed concern that the Community was in fact predominantly Catholic and said that many Catholics within the Community were quite self-conscious about this and would like more representation across the Christian spectrum.

The *Pure Light* Orphanage in Kuala Lumpur where John Main learned to meditate became a place of pilgrimage for Fr. Murphy in **2006**. It was there that John Main learned meditation from a Hindu swami. Meditation in the Christian Tradition was developed by the Desert Elders in the third and fourth centuries. In his report published in the NZCCM newsletter of December 2006, Fr. Murphy went on to say:

...it is just meditation, whether it is Christian, Buddhist or Hindu. The goal is to find the divine within in silence and stillness. There are no religious or sectarian boundaries to this.

During his visit to New Zealand in April **2007**, Fr. Laurence Freeman was the keynote speaker at a Day of Inter-religious Dialogue held at St. Cuthbert's School in Auckland. The responses came from members of the Jewish, Unification, Sikh, Zen Buddhist and Moslem faiths. Ahmed Zaoui

was one of the Islamic representatives that day. Ahmed Zaoui was an Algerian member of the Islamic Salvation Front who was granted refugee status in NZ in 2003 and New Zealand citizenship in 2014. Since receiving NZ Citizenship, he returned to Algeria to participate in pro-democracy activism.

In November 2007, Rehanna Ali from the Wellington Mosque, and Caroline Williams and Hugh McLaughlin from the Wellington Meditation Community, met to co-ordinate a gathering of Christian and Muslim. This was a joint session in which the Islamic and Christian concepts of meditation were outlined. A Q&A session followed then the silence of meditating together. A visit to the Wellington mosque was arranged for December 2007 where Christians were shown around the mosque.

As an Inter-Faith initiative for Christmas **2009**, members of the Wellington Muslim Community and members of the Wellington NZCCM met at the Wellington Study Group Centre in Thorndon. The theme was *The Holy Spirit in Christian/Judaic Thought*.

In June **2010**, the Wellington Christian Community were again to the fore in Inter-faith involvement. A group of Muslims and Christians met together, the theme being *Compassion*. Jasim Adam gave a short presentation from the Muslim point of view. He based his theme on the phrase repeated often during the day by devout Muslims “*In the name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful*”. Elspeth Preddey used the parable of the *Good Samaritan* as her theme of Compassion and concluded that a neighbour is one who shows mercy. Discussion and meditation followed. A guided visit to the Mosque in Kilbirnie was held in July 2010.

In a report to the Guiding Board of WCCM in February **2013**, mention was made of the Wellington Meditation Community and their ongoing inter-faith relationship and meetings with representatives from the local Muslim community.

In Christchurch, where there is no Hindu Temple, it became known that some who practice the Hindu faith in the city, used Catholic Churches as sacred places for private prayer. Local meditators intended to build on this link.

Although there has been some NZCCM activity with meditators of other faiths, in their meeting in April **2013**, the NZCCM discussed their lack of connection with other Christian churches.

In January **2019**, at a Meditatio Seminar on *Contemplative Care: Health Care and Meditation*, held at Auckland City Hospital, the seminar presented contemplative care as a dimension of healthcare practice based on the traditions of contemplative practice, including Maori and Buddhist, as well as Christian.

Exploring Sufi Meditation with Chris Braddock and Zain Ali was the theme of an Auckland Community Day held in June 2019. Chris Braddock is deeply connected with the Anglican and Islamic traditions, and Zain Ali teaches introductory courses on Islam at Auckland University.

In a report from Paddy Walker and Jane Hole on the South Island Silent Retreat *East and West*, which was published in the December 2019 issue of *Stillpoint*, retreat leader Fr. Barry Malone gave reflections of the five journeys of European Christians and their meeting with God in India. Fr. Malone particularly chose the journey of Fr. Bede Griffiths OSB to consider. Two of Fr. Bede's insights were that the West is dominated by logic, the East by intuition, and that the silence of meditation is a common thread in all religions.

In August 2020 some of the Christchurch meditators had the opportunity of spending some prayer time in the home of Jane Hole, with Hazet Adam and his wife Leila from the Wellington Sufi Moslem Community. It had been arranged that Hazet be guest speaker at the Christchurch Community Day. This day, however, was cancelled, but Hazet generously met with a few of the Christchurch group for friendship and prayer.

**Christchurch Meditators with
Hazet & Leila Adam
from the Wellington Sufi Moslem Community**



From left: Deborah Hercock, Margaret Moore, Janice Waters, Leila & Hazet Adam, Yvonne Reinheimer, Annette Reinheimer.

2000 – Prison Ministry

The first mention made of the Prison Meditation Ministry came from Fr. Peter Murphy. In the early **2000s** when he returned to priestly ministry, Fr. Murphy was invited by the chaplain of Paremoremo Prison in Auckland to meditate with prisoners. This he continued to do for about eighteen months.

Hugh McLaughlin reported that a group had begun at Mt. Crawford prison in 2008. This was led by Fr. Peter Healy. The prison later closed down for extensions, with the expectation that it would re-open in 2009.

We next hear of Prison Meditation in **2013**, from Jane Lys, when she began meditating with the women of the Women’s Correction Facility in Wiri, South Auckland. Jane began first with the women in the High Security section where those on remand awaiting trial were being held. These women were new to prison life and as Jane put it “almost craving for spiritual support.”

In an article published in *Stillpoint* in December **2015**, James Bishop, International Co-ordinator for Meditation in Prisons, commented that meditation is more sustainable for inmates if it is introduced as part of a pre-existing programme such as religious studies.

During that year, Shirley Duthie contacted James Bishop about her attempts to introduce Christian Meditation into Mangaroa Prison in Hawkes Bay. However, administration upgrades required by the prison authorities during late 2015 and into 2016 meant no chaplaincy volunteers were permitted into the prison. As they waited for entry, James Bishop corresponded with Shirley and connected her with international on-line chat rooms where she was able to communicate with people in other countries where Christian Meditation within prisons was being used. Approval was finally given during 2016.

In **2016**, Jane Hole made application to take Christian Meditation into the Christchurch Women’s Prison.

That same year, Shirley Duthie and her team made an application to the Corrections Department to take Christian Meditation to the prisoners in a Hawkes Bay Prison. Whilst awaiting approval, the volunteers were invited to a meeting in the prison chapel where they were advised that although verbal approval had been given, authorisations would not be approved that year. However, a special prisoners’ newsletter was available for distribution.

Without warning, the Chaplaincy Team were told that they could not continue Christian Meditation in the prison as it did not fit within their mandate.

12 Shirley writes:

At the end of 2016, without warning, we were told that the Chaplaincy Team could not continue Christian Meditation as it was not Bible Study or Praise & Worship so therefore did not fit within their mandate. We were referred to the General Prison Programmes Department who were under pressure with the introduction of “double bunking” and attempting to shed programmes rather than add more.

In the spirit of James Bishop’s comment that “meditation is more sustainable for inmates if it is introduced as part of a pre-existing programme” I decided to watch and pray for any such openings. Eventually I opted to work as a literacy tutor to inmates, so with the much greater professional freedom in this programme, any inmate showing interest could be offered the tools of Christian Meditation with great success. Another meditator, a prison chaplain, commented that he included Christian Meditation in the spiritual tools offered to inmates if requested. There were other non-religious programmes being presented in New Zealand prisons, including recovery sections, where the tools of Christian Meditation could be offered to inmates if they felt it would be helpful.

In her 2017 report to the National Council, Shirley Duthie said that Prison Ministry had ceased as there was no room to accommodate the group. The Chaplaincy did not renew their invitation to work with them. As a result of this, efforts were being made to approach the extensive Mary Doyle Retirement Village in Havelock North to introduce Christian Meditation there, but this did not eventuate.

The bookmark *Introduction to Meditation* was translated into Maori during 2017. This was achieved by Fr. Phil Cody SM and Piripi Walker, chaplains of Hawkes Bay Prison. By 2020 two thousand bookmarks had been printed.



Below is an anonymous report requested by James Bishop which was written for inclusion in the international newsletter for inmates:

REPORT FROM JEAN*

For 10 months we negotiated the often fraught process of gaining permission to introduce Christian Meditation into our Regional Prison. Eventually my colleague Sally* and I were the proud possessors of our electronic name tags, had done our prison safety induction and were ready to go.

We were assigned to the section of the prison housing SYN inmates. Of those expressing interest, five inmates were given permission to attend and eagerly came into the room to check us out. As they shook hands with us we began to understand the full extent of their nervousness – their hands were wet with perspiration – and the taunting they'd endured in asking to attend. They asked to close the curtains. Then as we began to explain the process of Christian Meditation a very human imitation of a dog howling came from underneath the window. To their credit the inmates ignored this last attempt at intimidation from one of the local gangs

Knowing that these men had probably been abused as children, we explained that Sally would meditate with them but Jean would be the coach, she would keep her eyes open and may even move around the room or speak softly to them during the meditation if that was necessary. They found this very reassuring and after a five minute practice were keen to experience a twenty minute meditation. All commented on how quickly the time went.

On our next visit two of the men reported that they had meditated before attending classes that they'd previously found stressful. One found he was more relaxed during his reading and writing class and the other said he found it "easier to understand" during his computer class. The fact that they could choose when and where they did their morning and evening meditation proved of real value to the men as did the fact that this was a pilot programme, the first meditation programme in the prison. This really made them feel special.

As the weeks have gone by we have all had to cope with the unexpected. On our fourth week the SYN Section was in lock-down and no one was permitted in or out. We felt for the men deprived of their group but trusted that no one could stop them meditating. Sally and Jean have changed some aspects of Christian Meditation from those practiced in their local group to enable fuller participation. In particular the use of a "coach" has solved the question of safety and is really welcomed by the men who feel especially vulnerable with their eyes closed.

For now, it's one week at a time as we become accepted as a positive force of real value within the prison".

**fictitious names*

Jane Lys

NZCCM Newsletter Winter 2015

In the two years I have been visiting the women's correction facility (words like prison and guard are not in use today), I have been impressed at the way so many of the women accept and seem to benefit from meditation. The combination of spirituality and the sense of relaxation and peace that comes over them, which we all appreciate, is always so rewarding for me.

We are ecumenical in that we never know what their faith history has been. We get all sorts and all ages. I always use the Timed Meditation discs with the intro, prayer, music and gongs, followed by 15 to 20 minutes silence. I think that is really important as it gets them into the mood after they have rushed in, often giggling or shouting about something. Some of them are like overgrown school children and I can quite see that in their circumstances that is the only way to be. Older women are different, of course, and really appreciate meditation in a more serious way.

I am dealing with those in the low security section, those heading to the end of their sentence. It can be a trying time for them. They worry about parole hearings, about how their families are coping, and about where they are going to live, as some of them are not welcome back where they came from. Others are going to go straight back to where they came from and into the same circumstances which sent them in. Accommodation can be a major problem. They are very supportive when their friends are in trouble, the worst times are when there is a death back home. I have to say they are also very supportive of us in the Chaplain's Team when our circumstances are not the best. For the most part they are busy doing various courses which are part of their sentence, or putting in time on the work force, ie all the maintenance, laundry, cookhouse, horticulture, etc., all of which is aimed at getting them ready to go out.

I have no way of telling if they meditate on their own. There are too many distractions and they are mostly double bunked with not much privacy. Of course, I explain how easy it is to be meditating when the others just think they are sleeping, or day dreaming, but I suspect they are just enjoying the experience when they come to the Spiritual Centre. I don't mind about that, I am just happy to introduce them to meditation in the hope that it helps them now and hope that they might return to it at some time later in their life.

Meditation Behind Prison Walls

Jane Lys

NZCCM Newsletter Spring 2014

These are my reflections on how visiting the women's prison has affected me.

I was recruited to join the chaplain's team specifically to teach the women how to meditate. I have about twelve years of meditation under my belt. I am well grounded in believing that the Holy Spirit is alive in me and this is what I try to impress on the women. On the High Security side they all want to have rosary beads and I explain them as prayer beads. They are receptive to the idea of saying a mantra on the small beads and the Lord's Prayer on the large beads. On the Low Security side we can call the women up to the Spiritual Space and offer Prayer and Communion, and there I run a proper meditation session with Margaret Rizza's Timed Meditation CD.

The women come from a variety of faith backgrounds and some of them, when asked, will generously lead the prayers. I mention this because I have found that I am completely unable to offer vocal prayer. All my vocal prayer seems to take place at Mass or other organised sessions. Even saying the Office is silent. I am so used to having this inner source of communication with the Lord that what I say out loud seems rather inadequate and somehow meaningless.

In the prison we know nothing about the women's crimes and not much about their background in faith, if any. Nor do we need to know. We only need to let them know that we are there to help them cope with their situation and offer them support in any way we can. One way we can do this is by sharing our cares and prayers with them. After nearly three years I have come to realise that what is important is that we are, for the most part, all Christians and that our Christianity is the most important belief that we all share. Previously I thought of myself as a Catholic. I now think of myself as a Christian and I choose to practice my Faith in the Catholic Church. This makes me more at ease in the prison situation and I owe it all to my years of the routine of meditation and my belief that the Holy Spirit is alive within me.

2002 - Essential Teaching Workshops (ETW) School of Meditation & School Retreats:

Originally called *The School for Christian Meditation*, the Essential Teaching Weekend is a workshop designed to give those who have been meditating for some time, the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the tradition and give them the confidence to share with others.

Our first such Weekend was held in **2002**, at the Stella Maris Centre in Seatoun Wellington. Fr. Laurence Freeman led that Weekend.

In **2004** a second Essential Teaching Weekend was held, led by Ruth Fowler from Melbourne. That Weekend was structured on the Australian model and was held at Vaughan Park, an Anglican Church retreat and conference centre on Auckland's North Shore. The cost was \$240 and limited to 20 participants.

The next School for Meditators (ETW) was advertised in the Autumn **2005** issue of the NZCCM Newsletter, this time to be held during Anzac Weekend in Christchurch. Ruth Fowler from Melbourne again led the weekend. An Auckland School was mooted for 2006, to be held over Labour Weekend. Ross Miller offered to organise and present this. Another Weekend was held in Wellington in October 2008, the cost this time \$250.00.

At the NZCCM Council's Annual Meeting held in February **2009**, Stan Martin tabled some questions concerning the Essential Teaching Weekend criteria:

1. Should ETW's be by invitation only?

Council resolved to continue as before. That is the Regional Co-ordinators should be approached to nominate suitable attendees. It was also noted that Auckland was the next venue. There was then a further discussion on who would conduct the next ETW and what format it should take. Several possible Conductors were mentioned but it was agreed to leave the matter in the meantime and to bring it up for discussion in a conference call.

2. Do we need ETW's to provide future leaders?

Council's response was that as an "organic" and developing organisation it is not always possible to plan methodically. It was to be left in the meantime to the Regional Co-ordinators to promote/nominate their successors, but that the Nominee must always be approved by the Council.

3. Do we need to arrange more sponsorship for attendees?

Council's response was that billeting was a possibility and several members expressed the hope that the Charitable Trust (when established) would provide a source of funds.

The next Essential Teaching Workshop, again led by Ruth Fowler, was held in the St. Francis Retreat Centre Auckland, in May **2010**. Emphasis was given to how important ETWs were for group leaders to grow in confidence sharing their experience of meditation

At the NZCCM Council Annual Meeting on 6th June 2010, Fr. Peter Murphy suggested that a Team to organise Essential Teaching Workshops be established. He also suggested that Dunedin and Nelson regions would benefit from hosting ETWs. At this Council meeting Fr. Peter was given the responsibility for Education and for Essential Teaching Workshop courses.

In August 2010, the National Council decided that ETW “graduates” be invited to attend a one day workshop in Auckland to view an Eileen O’Hea dvd *The Spiritual Journey*. The option of holding ETWs over three consecutive Saturdays was also discussed. The next ETW was planned to be held in Dunedin in 2011.

But there were no further ETW events for the twelve months ending May **2011**, so in the NZCCM newsletter of April/May 2011, Fr. Murphy published an outline of the structure in place to help people not only to grow in meditation, but also to be able to share the teaching. The following structure of the Meditation School published was:

Stage One - Introductory Course: Many come to a course or talk but really learning begins when they begin to practise it on their own.

Stage Two - Community Day: These are held throughout the year, usually led by a speaker.

Stage Three - Essential Teaching Workshop. This is designed for meditators who have been practising regularly for a period of time, preferably one to two years.

Stage Four - Roots of Meditation Course: This course lasts over a series of months and provides an in-depth study of the history of Christian spirituality as a background to meditation.

Stage Five - The School Retreat: This is an intensive six day silent retreat for those who have completed the ETW and are ready to contribute further to the life of the Community. It is by invitation.

The next ETW was organised for April **2012**, to be held in the Auckland Mercy Spirituality Centre and led by Fr. Peter Murphy, Michael Dougherty and Mary McLister. Consideration was given to perhaps following this with ETWs in Dunedin or in Nelson. Nine people attended.

A future ETW was planned for April **2013** at the Southern Star Abbey in Kopua. The March 2013 newsletter advised that the ETW retreat in Kopua was full.

In his report to the Guiding Board for NZCCM activities during 2013, Vincent Maire said of ETWs that whilst they are well attended, few graduates seem willing to then teach courses, even in their own communities. During 2013 only one six-week course was run although a number of one-day Introductory Courses had been held around the country.

An interesting report on the Kopua ETW, published in the Winter 2013 issue of the NZCCM newsletter, said:

“As part of the weekend, participants prepared a talk to give to an audience of their choice. One chose people suffering from depression, another chose a hospice group, another chose a group of people living with cancer, others chose more conventional settings such as church members. These choices showed how meditation meets many needs and is not just a form of prayer”.

Two more ETWs were planned for **2014**, one in Auckland and the other in the South Island during the latter half of the year. .

And finally South Island meditators did get the opportunity to attend an ETW when Fr. Murphy visited there in May **2014**.

The next ETW was held in the Mercy Spirituality Centre in October **2015**, the cost \$280

In March **2016**, Fr. Peter Murphy again outlined the development process for meditators in the NZCCM newsletter *Stillpoint*. The Weekly Group, Essential Teaching Weekend, Community Days, and the School Retreat were all carefully explained

The next ETW was planned for July 2016 in the Mercy Spirituality Centre, Auckland. Interestingly, at the NZCCM Council in June that year, mention was made that the ETW would be handed over to Sr. Catherine Wiles-Pickard in 2017. Fr. Peter was asked to talk with Sr. Catherine about the WCCM practice of encouraging conversation among group members before and after the actual meditation time so that members could offer mutual support.

October **2017** was the next date set for an Essential Teaching Weekend to be held in Wellington, the cost \$290.00. Nine people attended, as reported by Linda Polaschek in the December 2017 issue of *Stillpoint*:

Nine of us, from Ashburton to Napier, plus Fr. Peter from Auckland, gathered for a weekend of meditation, learning and sharing. The programme covered the essential teaching and history of Christian Meditation, skills to guide us in preparing to present CM to a group, and the spiritual journey. We had the opportunity to practice presenting CM to each other. It was reassuring to experience different styles and to realise that they were all effective, given we each had an enthusiasm for sharing the gift of meditation, and resources to enable us to explain it. This enriching weekend ended with a contemplative, inclusive Mass.

Michael Dougherty published a report on the Essential Teaching Weekend held in June **2018**. Eleven people attended – two from Northland, two from Waikato and the remaining seven from Auckland. Both Michael and Fr. Peter Murphy led that weekend.

Fourviere Retreat Centre, Leithfield, was the venue of the next ETW, held in September 2018. Leithfield is near Christchurch and *Fourviere* is the home of the Community of the Beatitudes. The weekend was led by Fr.

Peter Murphy. An unusual event for the Retreatants was joining the nuns for Byzantine Vespers, a new experience for the participants – as was the provision of wine with Sunday lunch!

In October 2018 NZCCM held the fourth National School retreat at Tyburn Monastery near Rotorua. Seven people attended the retreat which was led by Fr. Peter Murphy and Kath Houston. This was a five day silent retreat which is a follow-on from the ETW and provides a strong basis for leadership in the community.

May **2019** was the date of an ETW, again held at the Tyburn Benedictine Monastery near Rotorua. The Team, now sizeable, comprised seven people in all, representing the various regions throughout the country. The weekend format seems to have come under consideration because *Stillpoint* magazine December 2019 issue the following report:

Having a team presents us with some exciting opportunities that we can trial, especially given that there is now more flexibility in the potential ways we can offer ETWs. While the residential weekend is still preferred, and is the ideal way to get together with fellow meditators to learn about the essential teaching, it is not always possible for reasons of finance or accessibility. Where the residential weekend is not currently feasible, we are encouraged by WCCM to consider alternatives such as a series of evenings; two or more separate days, or a combination of evenings with one day.

Another development which came from the NZCCM Council AGM held at the end of July 2019, was the discussion of fees to attend the Essential Teaching Weekends. The Council developed brief guidelines to help them make fair and thoughtful decisions for those with limited amounts of finance, so that they could take advantage of the Meditation Schools available.

In **2020** the concept of the ETW being held over a weekend was re-considered and a non-residential two-day option suggested. An online Essential Teaching Workshop was also planned for October/November 2020. During 2020, ETWs were held in Wellington and Nelson, with others planned for Waipawa.

School Retreats:

The next level from an Essential Teaching Weekend is the School Retreat. The first one was held in October **2010** in Jerusalem on the Wanganui River, and led by Kath Houston from Australia. This retreat was an intensive silent retreat which included seven half-hour meditation periods and was restricted to those who have already completed an Essential Teaching Weekend, and limited to 20 participants.

The School Retreat was again mentioned during a Council Skype meeting in September **2012** when it was said that the next School Retreat would be held at Jerusalem on the Whanganui River in September **2013**. Kath Houston from Brisbane would again lead the Retreat. Fr. Peter Murphy reported to the National Council that the retreat was a very special experience, finishing the weekend with a morning contemplative walk to the grave of Hemi Baxter.

A third School Retreat was held in September **2016**, again in Jerusalem, and a fourth in October **2018**, this time held at the Tyburn Monastery, Ngakuru near Rotorua.

Of the October 2018 School Retreat, Nick Polaschek published in the December *Stillpoint*:

NZCCM recently held the fourth National School retreat at Tyburn monastery, Ngakuru, near Rotorua on 8-14 October. Tyburn monastery is located in a beautiful rural setting overlooking a lake. The monastery is inhabited by enclosed nuns from the Catholic Order of Benedictine Adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Singing the seven Offices each day in their chapel following the Rule of Benedict, they also have regular periods of silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, a distinctive form of Catholic piety. Although founded relatively recently in 1901, the Order is quite traditional in dress and outlook, very prayerfully oriented. The monastery has a modern guest house for people making retreats. The nuns are very welcoming. Retreatants who wish to can join the nuns for their Office.

Seven of us undertook this retreat which was facilitated by Fr. Peter Murphy and Australian Kath Houston from the WCCM leadership team. This five-day silent meditative retreat is available to any meditators who have undertaken the Essential Teaching Weekend and wish for a deeper meditative experience. It provides the strong basis for leadership in the community. Each day of the retreat was the same, with seven periods of meditation and three meditative walks; in mid morning a short spiritual talk from Kath followed by a short *lectio divina*, late afternoon a meditative Mass led by Fr Peter. Each of us participants had a 20 minute spiritual discussion with one of the two leaders every day. There were no shared Daily Office as in other WCCM retreats.

The prospect of spending so much time each day in meditation was a little intimidating before beginning, but the regular pattern of each day enabled one to develop a rhythm of practice. The effect of no conversation of any kind, combined with no access to any form of media (phone, net etc) was to quieten the mind. Not only was there no news to be thought about, one stopped thinking about the topics that make up everyday conversation. As a couple for over forty years on the retreat together, not speaking to Linda for days on end was a unique experience. We were discouraged from extensive reading, getting tied up in our own thoughts. This pervasive silence, deepened by the regular periods of explicit meditation during the day, and complemented by the one shared liturgy, facilitated opening one's heart to the gracious divine Presence. Although we did not talk to one another for five days, sharing the silence in meditation, and respecting the silence of others outside those times, created a certain sense of solidarity among our group, which was expressed in our last talkative evening together when the silence was finally broken. A good example of John Main's dictum that silent meditation creates community.

Some of the participants at the 2017 ETW:

left to right:
Tony Scott
Alison Kerr
Fr Peter Murphy
Lesley Cotterill
Fiona Cummings,
Anne Cave



Presenter
Michael Dougherty
with the
Eleven participants
who attended an
**Essential Teaching
Weekend in 2018**
Two from Northland,
two from the
Waikato
seven from the
Auckland area.



**National
School Retreat**
held at
Tyburn Monastery,
Ngakuru,
near Rotorua
October, 2018



2003 - Meditation in Schools

Meditation with Children

Teaching children to meditate, and meditation in schools, began in New Zealand in **2003** when Fr. Peter Murphy set the ball rolling with the children of St. Ignatius Catholic Primary School in Auckland. Later, when Fr. Peter was transferred to St. Paul's Parish in Massey, West Auckland, the parish primary school there became his next target.

In November **2005**, an Introductory Talk was given to the Year 13 pupils of Pompallier College by members in the Northland Region. A few years later, another talk was given at the Year 13 Retreat in the Hokianga.

In April **2007** at the National Council meeting, Fr. Peter Murphy reported that both he and Diana Halloran had been working to develop meditation among children in Auckland and Hamilton, and had visited these areas four times. In St. Paul's Massey they had been working with children at all levels for the past two and a half years, beginning at kindergarten, and have seen evidence of growth in prayer. Towards the end of 2007, Jane Hole taught meditation to the youngest children at Christ the King Primary School in Christchurch. Teaching meditation continued throughout the school during 2008.

Also in **2008**, Fr. Peter Murphy had received a letter from the NZ Catholic Office advising him of the Catholic Education Convention to be held in Wellington in July 2009. Fr. Peter replied indicating the Community's interest in introducing meditation to schools and referred to the work already being done in Hamilton and Auckland.

In 2008, the Bay of Plenty primary schools received a visit from Fr. Murphy who discovered that one primary school had been meditating twice a week for a year. Diana Halloran and Fr Peter had spoken to the Principals and DRS Conference in Taupo.

Hugh McLaughlin reported that he had introduced meditation to the children at Sacred Heart Primary School in Wellington where it was well received.

The teaching of meditation to children at Christ the King Primary School in Christchurch continued, firmly supported by the principal Mike Bonisch and the DRS Jacque Culling.

In March that year, a one day seminar on Children's Meditation was held in Auckland, led by Australian Ruth Fowler. Meanwhile, in Christchurch, two meditators were giving an introduction to meditation to a gathering of university students. Teaching meditation at a Christchurch primary school continued to meet with a warm response.

In July **2009**, Diana Halloran was invited to make a presentation about Children's Meditation to the Catholic Education Convention in Wellington.

Fr. Murphy, Diana plus two teachers from the Hamilton Catholic Diocese, Catherine Readman and Rosemary Garsed, held a seminar on Children's Meditation during this Convention at which over a thousand people attended. More than thirty people attended the Seminar. This was to be Diana's last seminar – she died in September 2009.

Also in September that year, a two day Teachers' Workshop was arranged to be held at the Home of Compassion in Wellington, led by Ruth Fowler. This Workshop aimed at training school teachers, both primary and secondary, who were interested in introducing meditation to children.

Ruth led another one day Seminar, this time, in May **2010**, held in the Mercy Spirituality Centre in Auckland, and although open to all, this Seminar was considered to be of special interest to school teachers.

Hugh McLaughlin reported that meditation was now part of the religious education programme at Sacred Heart Primary School. He had also visited the DRS at St Mary's Secondary College who said that she was prepared to begin meditation there. It is at this college that the children from the senior primary classes will start their secondary schooling.

In the NZCCM Council AGM minutes of June 2010, the subject of teaching children to meditate was discussed, and although some progress was being made in primary schools, it was felt that it was much harder to make inroads with secondary schools. The Council also thought that "this is a project needing a champion".

However Fr. Murphy reported that the talks given at the Catholic Education Convention were well attended, 30-40 people, and said that he was pleased that the teachers recognised the importance of this work, although they did not follow any particular method. Christian Meditation offered them a method and tradition.

The NZCCM's July 2010 newsletter reported the story of *Inform*, the publication of the Catholic Bishop of Christchurch, which carried an article and photograph about Christian Meditation being taught at Christ the King School. For two years Jane Hole had been teaching the simple discipline of prayer to all classes. In early 2009, Jane had attended a WCCM Retreat in Rome where a discussion had been held on how to teach children to meditate in schools, a subject in which there was considerable interest.

The August 2010 Council minutes makes mention of Hugh McLaughlin's extensive work in teaching meditation in primary schools in Wellington. This he said he would now hand over to the schools themselves so that he could concentrate on approaching the Wellington secondary schools to begin the practice there. The minutes reported that the teaching of meditation in Catholic primary schools in Wellington was now well established.

In a letter to meditators dated September 2010, the National Council identified its many and various activities over the previous year. Included was the work of introducing meditation in the Christian Tradition to schools, plus dialoguing with both Anglican and Catholic bishops to promote the work to a wider audience.

The NZCCM newsletter of October 2010 reported that in the Palmerston North Diocese, Br. John Pettit of the Southern Star Abbey, Kopua, encouraged his Abbot to write to the local schools to see if there was sufficient interest in Christian Meditation for him to work with the schools. However it seems that interest there was limited.

Fr. Peter Murphy and Jane Hole attended the first WCCM Asia Pacific Regional co-ordinators meeting in February 2011 which was held Malaysia. In her report to the Council, Jane said that in that international forum, although they learned much from other meditation communities, to their surprise they found that the NZCCM had much to offer from their experience here in New Zealand, particularly in the area of teaching meditation in schools. It appeared that the main priority in most countries, beyond the essential work of encouraging and looking after weekly groups, was teaching meditation to children.

In her National Co-ordinator's Report to the NZCCM Council in May that year, Jane said that the teaching of meditation in schools was flourishing in Wellington, thanks to Hugh McLaughlin's leadership, and in Christchurch one school had willingly taken it into its Religious Studies Programme. An experienced meditator in Christchurch was helping Jane take meditation to another Catholic Primary School.

Meditation continued to move forward in Auckland and Hamilton schools, and it was hoped that in other parts of New Zealand too there were meditators who had taken things into their own hands, and were sharing the gift of meditation in their own schools.

In Christchurch, May 2011, Jane Hole handed over the leadership of Meditation at Christ the King School to the teachers themselves. Meditation would continue to be a valued part of the Religious Studies programme at the school. Margaret Moore, an experienced meditator and postulant Oblate, together with Jane, approached Our Lady of Fatima School and offered to lead Christian Meditation there.

Jane also reported to the Council that in Christchurch the weekly groups continued to thrive and multiply, and the practice of meditation among children in schools was becoming strongly established in several of our cities. Meditation offers benefits deep and wide to all ages, but young adults—that energetic and influential age group—are under-represented in our Community.

How best can we introduce meditation to them in ways that are attractive, relevant ... and possible, in their tightly-packed days? Perhaps someone from the same age group can best answer those questions. In January 2010, the Canadian Christian Meditation Community appointed a National Youth Co-ordinator to promote and share Christian Meditation with youth and young adults. The Trustees would like to see this role established in New Zealand and would offer every support and encouragement to anyone who felt called to take it up

At that same meeting, Fr. Peter Murphy reported that the next Catholic Education Convention was to take place in Wellington in **2012** so some plans to participate in this should be made. Budget planning would be needed for it. Fr. Peter said that at some stage the NZ Community could host a *Meditatio* Seminar on children's meditation in schools.

In the Whangarei area north of Auckland, there has been a significant development of the Community thanks to the efforts of an experienced local meditator. Approaches have been made to local schools to offer comprehensive introductory courses.

It was considered that generally, meditation with children continues to be a major focus in the Community, with a slow but steady increase in the number of schools where it is taught and practised.

And from our "Friends" in Fiji, Sr. Denise McMahon wrote to thank the National Council for their support. Together with a priest, Fr. Denis Mahoney, Sr. Denise had been invited to talk to the staff at one of the largest Catholic primary schools in the country.

In the first term of the school year, Fr. Denis and Sr. Denise said that they were invited to another large Catholic primary school in the Suva area to speak to the teachers on contemplative prayer. A week later they were invited back to introduce meditation to the children. There are 870 children at the school and Fr. Denis and Sr. Denise spent two days going from class to class

During an Essential Teaching Workshop held in April 2012, an interesting question was asked about teaching the mantra *Maranatha* to children in the state school system. A consensus was reached that for the mantra the word *Aroha* could be used, given the antipathy to anything Christian in the public sphere. Fr. Laurence later said to Fr. Peter in a personal conversation whatever the context in which we are introducing meditation, we should always recommend *Maranatha* as the preferred mantra.

It was reported during a Skype meeting of the NZCCM Council in September 2012, that meditation in schools was going well. Margaret Moore and Jane Hole had spoken to a meeting of all the DRSs in Christchurch Catholic schools and subsequently two schools introduced Christian Meditation into their religious studies programme.

In a later Skype Council meeting, Jane advised that she had been contacted by both an Anglican School and a Catholic School to discuss meditation with children.

In May 2012, the Northland group held an "Introduction to Christian Meditation with Children" presentation to the staff of St. Francis Xavier Primary School. Margaret Chapman was then able to initiate Christian Meditation in St. Francis Xavier School, Pompallier College and Otangarei Primary School. Margaret continues to do this work in the schools and the response is very positive from both the teachers and students.

In a report to the WCCM Guiding Board in February **2013**, the NZ Council said that meditation with children continues to be a major focus in the NZ Community, with a slow but steady increase in the number of schools where it is taught and practised. An Anglican and a Catholic secondary school in Christchurch had both agreed to introduce Christian Meditation during **2013**. Approaches had also been made and contacts established with universities, but to date no groups have resulted. Also in the same report, the NZCCM Leadership said:

As teaching meditation in schools is a strong focus in our Community, we have discussed the possibility of hosting a *Meditatio* Seminar in New Zealand sometime in the future. We feel the time has not yet come for this, but will keep the possibility in mind and seek guidance from the WCCM Leadership before going any further with this.

Media Exposure was discussed at the NZCCM AGM in April 2013. Fr. Peter Murphy had had stories published in *NZ Catholic* and it was agreed that more media exposure might be achievable. Vincent Maire agreed to approach John Campbell of TV3 if Fr. Peter would first make arrangements with St. Mary's School in Papakura. Margaret Moore agreed to approach the Head of Primary Religious Studies in Christchurch to ask if she would write an article for the Bishop's newsletter about the four local Catholic primary schools participating in meditation.

It was also reported at that meeting that the teaching of meditation in schools is flourishing in Wellington under Hugh McLaughlin's guidance. Fr. Peter had also attracted valuable media publicity for his work on meditation with children in Auckland. We know of four Catholic primary schools in Christchurch where meditation has become part of the Religious Studies Programme, and there may be more. Fr. Peter Murphy and Hugh McLaughlin's presentations about meditation to the Catholic Education Convention in Wellington had been influential in attracting Christchurch teachers to the practice. The developing pattern seems to be to have the whole school meditate together for five minutes either once a week or once a day, allowing complete silence to fall on the school and the hearts of the children. An invitation had been received to discuss introducing Christian Meditation at both St Margaret's Anglican College and Villa Maria Catholic College, Christchurch.

In the April 2013 Annual Report to the NZCCM, the Wellington Co-ordinator said that two schools, St Patrick's Kilbirnie and St. Brendan's Upper Hutt, had both asked for assistance in beginning meditation. Holy Family School in Porirua had asked for assistance in introducing meditation to their classes after Easter that year.

In February **2014**, Penny Sturrock, a meditation leader in New South Wales, visited Auckland and, together with Fr. Murphy, spoke to education leaders.

In her report to the NZCCM AGM in June 2014 concerning Meditation in Schools, Jane Hole said:

Two years ago I approached the Chaplain of St Margaret's Anglican College for Girls asking for the opportunity to introduce Christian Meditation in the school. The chaplain was warmly welcoming, and enthusiastic in theory, but the promised opportunities never materialised and she proved very difficult to get in touch with. Finally, I made an appointment to discuss Christian Meditation with the Head of the Junior School at St. Margaret's. There was no guarantee that the Head Teacher would agree to introducing Christian Meditation, but this is the first time, as far as I know, that our Community has had the chance even to discuss introducing it in a large Anglican school. I'll go to the appointment in the trust that if this is the right time for this at St. Margaret's, the introduction will be allowed. If not, we'll just try again later!

Last year I introduced Christian Meditation to a small group of Senior Girls at Villa Maria College. A few weeks ago I wrote to my contact at the College, asking if I could attend the weekly group again, to renew my contact with them and meditate again with them. I've received no reply to this, but will approach another staff member and see if I can follow up on my introduction there.

Margaret Moore has followed up on our visit last year to the Directors of Religious Studies at Christchurch's nineteen Catholic Primary Schools where I spoke to the DRSs about meditation. Margaret's enquiries showed that several schools are now meditating in the John Main tradition, either because the teachers had been inspired by Fr. Peter and Hugh's presentations at the Catholic Education Conventions, or because they'd heard my introduction. We believe that Christian Meditation of some sort, perhaps not always exactly according to John Main's teaching, may also be practised in some other schools.

Last year it seemed as though the door might be opening for teaching meditation at a Catholic primary school in Nelson, but I'm not sure if there has been any more progress. I will be attending a Nelson Community Day in October and will enquire further about this.

During a Conference Call to the Council on 6th December 2014, Jane reported again on the progress of Meditation in Schools in Christchurch, as follows:

My four week slot introducing meditation to Year 6 at St. Margaret's College was very well received by staff and students. They were keen to introduce it to other classes, but haven't contacted me. At the beginning of next year, I'll remind them that they and I still have much important business to do, and ask which class I teach next.

The new DRE at Villa Maria expressed great enthusiasm about my returning there again to meditate with some senior girls, but hasn't got back to me. Again I'll get in touch at the beginning of next year, and won't let him off the phone till I get a day and time from him.

The schools are sincere in their wish to introduce meditation but are so busy doing other things that meditation gets forgotten - though we know that all those other things would get done much better and more easily if they'd only meditate!



A time of silence, stillness and simplicity.
Students at St. Peter's School in Christchurch
meditating after lunch.

In June **2015**, members of the NZCCM Council once again spoke to delegates at the NZ Catholic Education Convention in Wellington about meditation with children. This was followed by a talk by Jane Hole at Vaughan Park, Long Bay, where she addressed seven principals of Mercy High Schools during their retreat in June.

Hugh McLaughlin, in his Wellington Region Report, said that he had visited the Marist Wilton primary school to introduce meditation. St. Francis de Sales primary school in Island Bay requested that Hugh address the staff. He had also been booked by the Diocesan Education Services to talk to teachers. At this time, seven primary schools and one secondary college appear to be meditating.

In answer to an enquiry to the Religious Education Advisor for Catholic Primary Schools in Christchurch, Jane Hole was told that in December 2015, meditation was practised at 15 of the 29 primary schools.

During a teleconference meeting in March **2016**, Jane advised the Council that she and Gabriel Huria, a Christchurch meditator, had spoken at a Teachers Only day at St. Catherine's College, Wellington. There were about 28 present. Jane and Gabriel were hoping to go to more Mercy Colleges. In June, Jane led a second retreat at Vaughan Park for seven Mercy Colleges Principals. Sue Malloy continued to help with meditation in schools in Christchurch. Nine Catholic Primary Schools in Christchurch offer Christian Meditation in their RE programmes.

Also during that teleconference, Fr. Peter told the NZCCM Council that he had been appointed Director of Contemplative Prayer in the Catholic Diocese of Auckland. He felt that this ministry would give him access to schools, and so provide an opportunity to promote meditation with children.

Later that year, Fr. Peter went to the South Island where he visited and meditated with the staff and children of St. Joseph's School, Papanui, Our

Lady of Victories School, Sockburn, and St. Peter's School in Beckenham. He learned that St. Peter's is a "restorative" school. This means that when students have issues between them, teachers patiently help them to identify who has been hurt, and why, when and how, and what they can agree to do to right this. This enlightened process seems very much in the gentle, non-judgemental spirit of Christian Meditation. At St. Peter's the school falls quiet every afternoon for a few minutes straight after lunch while the whole school meditates. Fr. Peter felt there was almost certainly a relationship between the experience of peace in meditation and the way the school had chosen to resolve personal conflicts.

Fr. Peter then had discussions at the Catholic Education Office with Cushla O'Connor, Religious Education Advisor for Catholic Primary Schools in Christchurch.

The following morning after Mass, Fr. Peter and Jane Hole travelled south to the Catholic Primary School in Alexandra where meditation was being practised. Fr. Peter gave six classes a refresher course in the discipline. In Wanaka, they met with the principal and staff of the primary school, most of whom were unfamiliar with Christian Meditation. Fr. Peter explained the discipline to them.

Michael Dougherty reported in his NZCCM report of June 2016 that meditation was being taught to students at St. Francis Xavier primary school. A visit had also been made to Pompallier College and introductory lessons in Christian Meditation given to Year 11 and 12 students.

Also in 2016, Hugh McLaughlin reported that he had talked to the staff at two primary schools, St Francis de Sales, Island Bay and St. Teresa's in Plimmerton, both of which have begun meditation with children.

Hugh McLaughlin in his Wellington Area Report of June **2017**, said that he had been in contact with the Catholic Education Office in Wellington and had given two talks to small groups of teachers on the practice of meditation.

In that report, Hugh said that there are nine primary schools doing meditation on a regular basis, although secondary schools have proved more difficult to contact.

In her report to the National Council in March 2017, Shirley Duthie said that interest was being shown by primary schools as a result of visits made by both Shirley and Kathy Egan, with offers to work with their teachers to introduce Christian Meditation. Shirley also said that Fr. John Pettit was interested in making meditation in schools a priority when he returns from his Australian visit.

In a report to the National Council in May 2017, Margaret Chapman said that both she and Marion Provan visit the Catholic schools in Northland on a weekly basis to teach Christian Meditation. Most teachers meditate with their classes. Some students have started to meditate at home, sometimes alone and sometimes with parents. The feedback is always positive. Marion and Margaret have also led meditation at staff meeting prayer times.

A weekly visit is also made to Pompallier College to meditate with Year 7 and 8 classes as well as the senior classes who have RE at the time of the visit. Many students make positive comments and meditation in the schools has grown hugely.

In an article published in *Stillpoint*, June 2019 issue, Fr. Peter Murphy reported on his attendance at the biannual Directors of Religious Studies (DRS) Conference for the Auckland Catholic Diocese. He said that due to the high turnover of teachers, the practice of meditation in primary schools, if it relies primarily upon the DRS, doesn't really develop; the whole senior management team need to be behind it. Primary schools, especially faith schools, present a unique opportunity for establishing the practice in children's lives.

He described an account from the DRS of Papakura St. Mary's School of how the daily practice benefitted the School. In Papakura children meditate for five minutes after lunch. The Principal has noticed improvements in behaviour, especially since the school took on the daily practice two years before. Children naturally offload their anxieties or anger in meditation. The DRS mentioned that she has often had to deal with playground issues after the morning break when they do not meditate. One significant benefit has been among the autistic children of her class.

One teacher, a committed meditator, commented how at her school she had to spend time re-establishing "the purity of the practice". She was newly appointed but what had crept into the school were different forms of meditative practice aimed more at relaxation. For us, meditation is a form of prayer, we are in a tradition, not just taking up a new fad.

At the last Wellington Community Day held in October 2019 and led by Hugh McLaughlin, the theme was *Teaching Christian Meditation to Children*. Hugh based his talks on the book by Noel Keating *Meditation with Children: a Resource for Teachers and Parents*.

Teaching meditation in schools became very difficult during 2020. As a consequence of the world-wide pandemic *Covid 19*, children spent many weeks at home, individually linked to their schools via the internet so that schooling could continue. Consequently teachers from NZCCM did not have the access necessary to facilitate meditation in schools.

2004 - Friends

The *Friends* programme was established by WCCM in London with the aim of nurturing emerging Christian Meditation communities in third world countries. In the Winter 2004 issue of the NZ Christian Meditation Newsletter, mention is made of this WCCM development, but at that time, the outreach had not yet been promoted in New Zealand.

In 2005, Stan Martin was asked to publish a notice in the NZCCM newsletter asking for volunteers to organise a supporting group *Friends of the WCCM*. The Minutes of the NZCCM National Council in December that year said that this group would provide funds for the central administration in London. Consequently, it became a regular aspect of meditation group meetings soon after.

In April 2009 discussion was held to appoint a National Co-ordinator of *Friends* who would be responsible for the collection and transfer of funds. Barbara Welch from Pauanui agreed to accept the appointment. During the NZCCM National Retreat held in Waikato University, a collection was taken up and \$823 raised for *Friends*.

In May 2011 the balance held in the *Friends* account was \$2,700. A standard procedure was then set to transfer funds to the *Friends* account in London when the account balance reached \$2000.

Barbara Welch relinquished the position of National Co-ordinator of *Friends* in July that year. It was also reported in the August/September 2011 issue of the NZCCM newsletter that some of the *Friends* monies could be used to assist Fr. Laurence Freeman's travelling expenses to third world countries.

In mid-2012, Orewa meditator and group leader, Jackie Abraham, accepted the role of *Friends* Co-ordinator. Jackie encouraged group leaders to ensure a collection basket was made available at every meeting. Funds collected would be shared between the WCCM *Friends* programme in London, and a portion reserved for the Fijian Community which the New Zealand Community had agreed to support. .

The NZ national community had agreed to support a small community in Fiji, and monies sent there have been used to translate meditation literature into Fijian, thus making the daily practice available to a great many more people.

Donations, collections and fund raising ventures for *Friends* soon became a standard feature of meditation groups: book sales, raffles and cup-of-soup sales at Community Days, plus gold coin donations at weekly meetings, all helped. Pleroma Book Stall usually present at Community Days and Retreats, regularly gave a percentage of their sales towards the *Friends* outreach. In 2015, \$5,000 was collected from less than 20 groups.

In June **2016**, the WCCM sent a questionnaire to National Councils asking their views on establishing a New International Centre.

To the questions:

“Can your national community contribute financially to the purchase and building expenses involved? How do you foresee your contribution?”

The New Zealand National Council replied:

At our current stage of development as a small, sparsely populated nation, we do not foresee any large financial contributions other than our continuing support for *Friends*. Currently we have as a priority the support of Fiji Christian Meditation, and potentially other Pacific countries as needs are identified.

In a report to the NZCCM, Charmainne Tolich and Damian Robertson said that:

The *Friends* brochure issued at the January **2017** Retreat was inadequate. ... We are not currently confident that we can state with certainty that funds raised will be applied to the spread of the practice in poorer countries. If the monies will actually be spent on Bonnevaux, it will be a harder sell. If donations to *Friends* are to be encouraged, it may be necessary to source a new brochure which declares the ultimate use of the funds.

In 2017 Vincent Maire became the *Friends* Co-ordinator and as at 31 December 2019, has continued to serve in this role.

By August **2020**, it was reported that contributions to *Friends* were slow, donations coming from only a few of the weekly groups. It was felt that it would be helpful to provide group leaders with a job description which included enabling *Friends* donations.

However, it was also said that as a consequence of Lockdown and the rise of Zoom meetings, collections became impossible.

2013 - 11th Step Programme

Officially called *Christian Meditation as an 11th Step Practice*, this programme is an addiction and recovery outreach of the WCCM, one of the many outreach programmes the World Community offers.

In a report sent to the Guiding Board in February **2013**, no 11th Step Programme had yet been offered within the New Zealand Community. However the report did say that several individuals in Christchurch, who were following *12th Step Programmes*, had been introduced to Christian Meditation.

The following year, **2014**, the *11th Step Programme* was discussed at the NZCCM Annual General Meeting. National Co-ordinator, Jane Hole, had made efforts to acquire resources for her group in Christchurch only to find out that resources were a “work in progress” at that stage. Jane was invited to join the Team in developing this Outreach. The Team was led by Fr. Laurence Freeman and Linda Kaye of USA. The programme was developed and the Mission Statement established:

We are a group of men and women from *12th Step Programmes*, following the teachings of John Main and the World Community for Christian Meditation. We are not a replacement for, nor are we affiliated with, any 12th Step Programme of Recovery. We are here to share this ancient path of contemplative prayer as a way to practise the *11th Step*.

A group did meet in Christchurch in **2015**, and another was being planned for Auckland.

In June **2016**, the programme was indeed operational. At its annual meeting that year, the NZCCM Council endorsed a proposal from Northland Regional Co-ordinator Michael Dougherty to hold a series of *11th Step Community Days* in his Region during 2017.

In his report to the Council, Michael said that for three or four years now there has been a member of AA joining one of the weekly Meditation Groups in Whangarei. He was particularly attracted by the simplicity and gentleness of the discipline as an *11th Step Practice*:

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Michael outlined plans for inviting Linda Kaye to visit New Zealand the following year.

In **2017**, Linda Kaye visited New Zealand giving her testimony at various groups. Annette Reinheimer from Wanaka escorted her around the country.

Michael Dougherty followed up Linda’s visit with a talk themed *Christian Meditation as an 11th Step Practice* which was given in the Anglican Hall, Kamo on 7th April 2018. A group was formed from this meeting which continues to meet.

The *11th Step Programme* continued to be held within the NZ Community, the most recent *11th Step Day* being held in Whangarei, in April **2019**, the theme was *Meditation and Recovery*. This was led by two people already in a Recovery Programme who had discovered the life-giving practice of daily meditation.

The *11th Step Outreach* has resulted in several weekly groups being established in New Zealand under the banner of *Christian Meditation as a way of practising the 11th Step*. At the beginning of every meeting, the groups read the Mission Statement and also state:

All are welcome, 12th step or not, faith or none.

History of Addiction & Recovery Meditation

as an 11th step Practice in in New Zealand

Addiction & Recovery

Meditation as an 11th step Practice

MISSION STATEMENT

Addiction & Recovery outreach shares an ancient path of contemplative prayer as a way to practice the 11th step. We are not a replacement for nor are we affiliated with any 12-step programme. All are welcome, faith or none, 12th Step or not.

11th Step:

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His Will for us and the power to carry that out.

2012	Jane Hole started monthly meeting at her home in Christchurch
March 2014	Jane Hole made contact with Linda Kaye in Florida, (International Co-ordinator Outreach WCCM), enquiring about resources for 11 th step groups.
January 2015	John Main Seminar New Zealand. Annette Reinheimer met with Fr. Laurence Freeman who introduced the name Linda Kaye (Florida) to her. Linda had been involved with this Outreach in USA and the UK.
June 2016	Michael Dougherty from Whangarei was instrumental in organising Linda's visit to New Zealand to carry this Outreach message.
October 2017	Linda Kaye arrived in New Zealand and carried the message of Christian Meditation as an 11 th Step Practice in Whangarei, Auckland and Christchurch.
November 2018	Annette Reinheimer started a Christian Meditation as an 11th Step Practice Group via Zoom meeting once a week.
February 2020	Annette started a face to face Christian Meditation as an 11 th Step Practice Group at St. Joseph's in Christchurch, meeting once a week.
March 2020	The group moved to a ZOOM platform again and is currently still meeting on Zoom.

ZOOM 11th Step Meetings

It was at the pre-seminar retreat here in Hamilton in 2015 that I first met Fr. Laurence Freeman, and on that occasion he introduced me to the name Linda Kaye. There were two other people I was to meet at the seminar, Michael and Eddie, both from Whangarei. Unknown to me at the time, these people were to provide me with much love, guidance and spiritual companionship on my meditation journey.

And so began a friendship spanning from New Zealand to Florida USA, culminating in Linda Kaye joining us here in New Zealand in October 2017. Under the Health umbrella of the WCCM outreach programmes, Linda spent a week with us sharing her experience of *Addiction and Recovery and Meditation*.

Not long after this, I was introduced to the world of ZOOM! Linda had started an *Addiction and Recovery, Meditation as an 11th Step Practice* in Florida. This began my journey of remembering to mute, suddenly disappearing off the screen, and then having to lead the group, more learning and experimenting. Can you ever make the bell sound half decent on Zoom?! Has every one muted their microphones? - if not you soon find out, especially if I'm the one who has forgotten to unmute when speaking!

In November 2018 I started a Zoom meeting, *Addiction and Recovery, Meditation as an 11th Step Practice* from here in New Zealand so had some idea of what I was doing, although each time we Zoomed, I just hoped it would be ok and mostly it was. Sharing this gift of Zoom has been an important part of my journey. Offering other meditators the opportunity to discover readings that speak to them, and sharing them with the group, has provided depth and meaning for their journey as it did for me. Suddenly I found myself surrounded by a community of meditators from New Zealand and the rest of the world - literally a monastery without walls!

I am very grateful for the technical and spiritual support from both Linda Kaye (Florida USA) and Lucy Beck (Vermont USA) who guided me on my Zoom journey. Lucy has very kindly set up an exclusive link for the *Addiction and Recovery Meditation as an 11th Step Practice* meditation groups as well as the daily Evening Meditation Group at 5.30pm from here in New Zealand

Zoom has opened up so many possibilities and I am thrilled to hear that NZCCM are now offering online courses using the Zoom platform - wonderful!

Annette Reinheimer

left to right:
Annette Reinheimer
 from Wanaka,
Michael Dougherty
 from Whangarei
 and
Linda Kaye
 from Florida



2013 - Meditation with the Elderly & Disabled

Fr. Peter Murphy reported to the National Council AGM in **2013** that he had been having regular meditation gatherings with some residents and staff in a local rest home. This group is small but committed. Jacqui Driscoll had a similar group going in the Hibiscus Coast, Auckland.

It was also reported in the minutes of that meeting that a weekly group had been established for residents and staff at a hospital for the severely disabled in Christchurch.

In her report the National Council in March **2017**, Shirley Duthie said that efforts were being made to approach the extensive Mary Doyle Retirement Village in Havelock North to introduce Christian Meditation there. This came about as a result of the Prison Ministry discontinuing.

2016 - OnLine Meditation & Text to Meditate:

In the minutes of the NZCCM Council AGM held in June 2016, during discussions on Plans & Activities for 2016/2017, the topic of Online Meditation was brought up. It seems that this had previously been tried in mid-2015 when Vincent Maire made efforts to host a weekly online group, but this did not succeed. Val McKinley and Annette Reinheimer consequently offered to pursue the idea further.

The next we hear of Online Meditation was when an advertisement was published in *Stillpoint*, September 2016 issue, inviting those interested, to join in an Online Meditation Group every Sunday evening. This time the venture was successful, thanks to the initiative of the Webmistress Ingrid Bryant, who also offered a “Text to Meditate” option.

Online Meditation continued to be advertised in *Stillpoint* throughout 2017, 2018 and 2019, and is still functioning today in 2020. Ken Hutchison is the leader of the group which currently has seven regulars although many people have come and gone over the years.

Skype without video is used. Ken posts a reading in the morning for the group to read during the day. In the evening the reading is read aloud and reflected upon, then opening prayer, 20 minutes meditation, and a closing prayer said by Ken.

When the 2020 pandemic struck causing major restrictions on gatherings of people, Rosie Dell introduced a six-week *Introduction to Meditation* course. Talks were simplified and shorter versions of material used.

In June 2020, Maureen and Raymond Eberhard also initiated an Online Course, with participants joining from Christchurch, Central Hawkes Bay, Hawera and Auckland. However, this Course has evolved into a gathering of meditators as many experienced meditators joined.

It appears that online meditation introductory courses and groups have become very popular. By the end of 2020, there were seven online groups led by New Zealanders.

Text to Meditate:

Initiated by Ingrid Bryant in September 2016, Text to Meditate is an early morning meditation call, basically designed to help people be more committed to their daily morning meditation. A “*Good Morning Maranatha*” text is sent out, 25 minutes meditation, then a farewell text to close.

The *Covid 19* worldwide pandemic in 2020 also gave rise to online Zoom meditation gatherings which proved successful and supportive during such a time of uncertainty.

7. The Media

NZCCM Newsletter

From the very early days of John Main meditation in New Zealand, Bill Hodge had been producing a quarterly newsletter. Later, when Rev. Richard Clarke became National Co-ordinator, he continued to produce a quarterly newsletter which he mailed out together with the WCCM International periodical. The International newsletter cost \$15 per year but there is no record of the subscription cost of the New Zealand publication.

When Richard Clarke died in **2004**, Fr. Peter Murphy then became Editor, a job he held for two years, assisted by Stan Martin. At that time 270 copies were being mailed out and 120 circulated via email. The annual subscription was \$15.00

In **2007** Peter Butler, a meditator from Tauranga, agreed to become Editor of the New Zealand newsletter, beginning that year with the June edition. Peter reported in February 2009 that there were 119 email subscribers plus 225 on the mailing list. The subscription fee was \$20.00 pa.

In his report to the National Council AGM in **2011**, Peter wrote:

Firstly a huge thank you to all those who have written reports and articles for the newsletter this past year. I am very grateful to all of you, especially Jane Hole who laboured under difficult circumstances to let me have her National Co-ordinator's column on time, every time.

Last year as you may recall we had a concerted effort to increase the subscriber numbers for the newsletter. I can tell you that at present we have 217 postal subscribers. Of these only 69 have paid a subscription/donation. This equates to approximately 32%. Curiously, these figures were much the same this time last year. We have 151 email subscribers at present...

I have again enjoyed my year as your Editor and I look forward to another year in the hot seat unless someone else has a burning desire to take over! I wish you all a pleasant AGM.

In his Editor's Report to the Council in April **2013**, Peter said that there were a total of 351 members receiving the newsletter, 188 postal and 163 via email.

Peter continued as Editor, producing his last issue in the Winter of 2015 – an eight year stretch of diligent, productive service, whilst also filling other roles within the NZCCM Council. During that time, the subscription increased to \$25 per annum, with the option to add an additional donation!

In his final issue, Peter wrote:

I have enjoyed my time as Editor of this newsletter. It has been approximately 10 years since I offered to help Stan Martin with its production. I innocently thought then that he and I would get together from time to time to put it into envelopes. I soon found out that there was a bit more to it than that!

In the summer of **2015**, Margaret Paton then became Editor. Still a quarterly publication but the format changed and a name for the publication sought. *Stillpoint* was the title selected – suggested by Fr. Peter Murphy

In Peter Butler’s time, the UK newsletter *Meditatio* accompanied the New Zealand newsletter distribution. This continued for a few years but when the arrival of *Meditatio* went out of ‘synch’ with the NZ counterpart, it became more practical to uplift articles from *Meditatio* for re-publishing in *Stillpoint*. It was also considered that the growth of the NZ Meditation Community had resulted in high quality articles being contributed by our members to their own publication, making *Meditatio* articles less essential.

In December **2019**, subscription for *Stillpoint* was still \$25 per annum; only 70 hard copies mailed out and 720 forwarded via email. The publication was also made freely available on the New Zealand Community website.

\$25 was still the subscription rate in December **2020**; 70 copies mailed out each quarter, and 713 sent out to meditators via email. *Stillpoint* continued to be made freely available on the NZCCM website.

Newsletter Editors:

1998	Bill Hodge
1998 – 2003	Richard Clarke
2004 – 2007	Fr. Peter Murphy/Stan Martin
2007 – 2015	Peter Butler
2015 – current	Margaret Paton

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

In 1975 Don John Main OSB, opened the first Christian Meditation Centre at Ealing Monastery in London, England. He had rediscovered a simple tradition of silent, contemplative prayer in the teaching of the early Christian monks, the Desert Fathers. It became clear to him that this tradition had relevance today not only for monks - though he also saw it as a way of monastic renewal - but for all people. And so weekly meditation groups began to form at the Centre composed of men and women, young and old and of diverse backgrounds.

Meditation is simple and practical. It is about experience rather than theory, a way of being rather than merely a way of thinking. Indeed, because of the profound change meditation can work in one's life it is even more than a way of prayer: it is a way of life, a way of living from the deep centre of one's being.

The focus of meditation is Christocentric. This means that it is centred on the prayer of Christ which is continuously poured forth in the Holy Spirit in the depths of each human being. Sweeter than all ideas of God is God himself. Deeper than imagination is the reality of God. Thus, in this way of "pure prayer" we leave all thoughts, words and images behind in order to "set our minds on the kingdom of God before all else". In this way we leave our egotistical self behind to die and rise to our true self in Christ.

Meditators therefore undertake an inner Journey of silence, stillness and simplicity. They embrace poverty of spirit, a radical letting-go, as the primary benefit of the Kingdom. The way taught by the early desert monks such as John Cassian and by John Main in our day is to go beyond all distractions of thoughts, words and images. One takes a single sacred word or phrase (a "mantra") and simply and faithfully repeats it during the period of meditation. John Main recommended the ancient Christian prayer "maranatha". In Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, it means "come Lord Jesus" and should be repeated silently, interspersed, as four equally stressed syllables. Whatever thoughts, images or feelings come, simply and faithfully return to the mantra. Two periods of meditation of about 25 to 30 minutes are advisable, at the beginning and end of each day. A quiet time and place, an upright posture, fidelity and perseverance are all that is required.

Meditation is the missing contemplative dimension of such Christian life today. It does not exclude other types of prayer and indeed deepens one's need for the eucharist and one's reading of scripture.

OVER

The World Community



Dear Friends

There can be no doubt that there is a strong and growing groundswell of contemplative renewal building up in the Church throughout the world.

It is not always identified as such, nor acknowledged. Yet 'it' is alive and well in the individuals and small groups who seek to behold and do God's holy will in their day to day living.

The establishment in New Zealand of the World Community For Christian Meditation is now well under way. Likewise, its publishing arm Media Media is offering a wide range of learning resources in the field of Christian Meditation. Existing new developments are occurring as Media Media Ltd broadens its international operations. You can keep abreast of what is happening around the world by obtaining your quarterly edition of the W.C.C.M. Newsletter (if you do not already do so) using the enclosed order form. This form lists several branches for those who receive our Newsletters.

We have a particular reason for contacting you at this time. We are currently preparing an international directory of groups (to enter how useful) who gather for meditation and who would like to be listed. This informal association with the W.C.C.M. does not cost anything to groups. The International Centre in London will include a New Zealand list along with all the other countries who are linked to this unique network.

If you would like to be listed as a group, and/or as a contact person, please complete the brief details on the enclosed form and return it to us. A spare form is enclosed for the same should for any group you know of who would like to be similarly listed.

Yours sincerely

Bill Hodge
W.C.C.M. - New Zealand Centre

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE - 21 Kensington Square, London W8 5PG, UK. Tel: 0171 9374671 Fax: 0171 9376270
WCCM NZCCM Address: 101 The Terrace, Wellington 6142 / <http://www.nzccm.org.nz> / info@nzccm.org.nz

The New Zealand Community for Christian Meditation

NEWS LETTER

October 2019

From Jane Hulse our newly installed National Coordinator

Dear Friends

A few months ago I took over from Fr Peter Murphy the role of National Coordinator of our Christian Meditation Community, leaving Fr Peter free to take up the position of School Coordinator, overseeing our teaching programmes.

In 2004, Fr Peter took over the reins from Dick Clarke, who had dedicated much skill and talent to establishing a sound basic system for our Community. It was still a small body barely led by a few passionately committed individuals who guided it through its growth. Notable among them were Hugh MacLaggan and Stan Martin, with Ross Miller making an invaluable contribution as a teacher of our tradition. Under Fr Peter's leadership the community established a National Council, with regional representatives, and began to establish rich centres throughout the country of gathering together and sharing and celebrating the meditative tradition.

The generous support of the Australian Community, especially in establishing teaching programmes, has been vital in this process. More recently the Community has been established as a Charitable Trust, giving us a legal identity appropriate to our calling and suitable to our needs. We have launched an attractive website that is both informative and inspiring. We owe very largely to Fr Peter for the sound foundation on which our Community now stands, and offer him our loving thanks.

We have grown, but always our attention is on the spirit in which we grow rather than our numbers. It is an honour to be called to serve the Community. My hope is that during the time when I share with your National Council in leading the Community, we will safeguard the precious tradition of prayer embedded in us, teach it faithfully, and encourage and cherish our New Zealand community.

Having suffered a life of our past, it would be good if I could now let you know our National Council's vision for our future—now we would like to see our Community develop and flourish. But I believe that for a future revolution, because it is from Christendom, and Christendom people have to let their own stones at present. So please bear with me.

The violence of the big quake hit not so much as an expression as totally indifferent to any of our human concerns. It's been a humbling experience, and that—well—has to be good. For all our technical skills and resources, we can't control the balance of our very dear city; they're part of an invasion that couldn't be beyond our sight. The weeks of aftermath, some of them long, are a surprise, and we become weary from lack of sleep—and nervous. How long will this shock last and how big will it get? We're told we're likely to get a quake 6 before we're finished. None of us thinks we could cope with that, but we would. We're stronger than we think.

It's difficult to find the healthy balance between business as usual—which we need—and being as well prepared as we can be, wherever. We know it's ridiculous that there has been no loss of life, and we're deeply grateful for that, but still... We at thought we could trust the ground under Christchurch but, now we know we can't. A pillar of our basic sense of security has fallen, and we're fearful and bewildered, but beloved children. But this has simply been an awesome sign to all that we share a common vulnerability with the rest of our beloved country, and it's better to know. We'll just have to place our spiritual trust somewhere else—perhaps in being sensibly prepared and in trusting our Civil Defence and emergency teams. And how magnificent they've been—acting, calmly, apparently relaxed in our town way, but alert and efficient. The girls in the checklist of my neighbourhood supermarket seem even kinder than usual—or are I just noticing it more? One way or another Love is much in evidence in our city.



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A Great Honour for the New Zealand Community

from Francis White

In early May 2019, I was invited to the middle of Auckland, I received an email suggesting me to meet with Dr Lawrence Freeman via Zoom. No explanation was given so my first instinctive reaction was something of an understatement.

WCCM events promoting a series of talks, a *Contemplative Path* through the Crisis, had caught my attention. I wondered if I was to be interviewed about my work as a holistic spiritual care. I had already viewed some of these talks and most interesting they are too. An invitation over I was right on that point. So, on June 10th, I started with Dr Lawrence the first Christian meditation talk in Auckland, on Zoom, to support people in my care.

The idea view has just to appear on the WCCM website. However, the second reason for the Zoom meeting was for me to become a member of the WCCM Global Board. This was quite unexpected and I was, as they say, gobsmacked! I had no intention in saying yes to the invitation. Firstly, I believe this is a privilege for the New Zealand Community. We have done well over a good number of years in sharing the teaching of Christian meditation nationally. We have a strong teaching team, we regularly run events and retreats, and the more than 100 groups around the country in a testament to the dedication of many people over many years. Secondly, I have long thought that New Zealand plays its part well in the international community. In 2015 we hosted a very large and successful John Main Seminar. In 2019 we hosted a Meditation Summer that attracted people from throughout the South-west. We have a very special connection to Bonaventure, via our financial support towards developing the orchard and garden. And yes, it was a huge honour for me to be asked to take up the role. But what exactly is it that I'm about to take on?

The Global Board meets twice a year in October via Zoom and in person at Bonaventure two weeks before Easter. My guess is that the 2020 Bonaventure meeting will not take place given the Covid-19 pandemic. Nonetheless I will learn more in October. The Global Board consists of 11 members plus two from Bonaventure (including Fr Lawrence). The countries are Canada, Australia (1), UK (1), China, Brazil, Argentina, Trinidad, Italy, France, USA and Indonesia. So, what exactly does the Global Board do? This is how it is described on the WCCM website:

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Stillpoint September 2019 page 1

Leaflets, Brochures, Blogs & Books

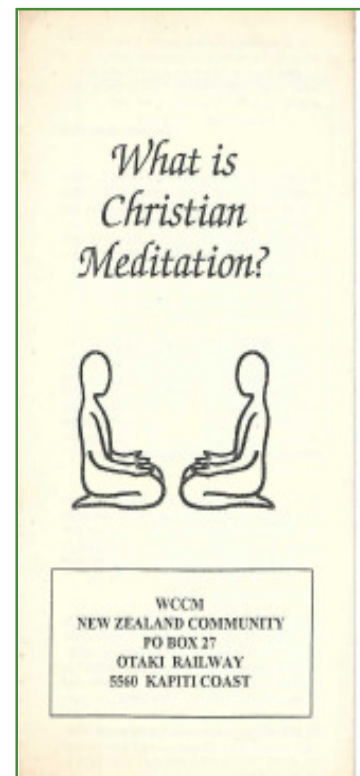
Introduction Leaflet:

Sometime in **2002-2003** Richard Clarke created an introductory leaflet *What is Meditation?* This was for general distribution and today in 2020, although slightly modified, is still in use. In 2012 steps were taken to have this leaflet translated into *Te Reo* but is still a “work in progress”.

In **2013**, it was mentioned in the Guiding Board report that the Maori translation had halted due to illness. However, translations had been received in Mandarin and Cantonese for Auckland’s growing Chinese communities.

Brochures:

In **2007**, Fr. Murphy arranged for Fr. Laurence Freeman to meet with the New Zealand Catholic Bishops’ Conference to propose a pastoral letter encouraging the practice of meditative prayer. The Bishops agreed to see Fr. Laurence so a draft leaflet was prepared and presented to the Bishops. *Prayer in the Busyness of Life* was the end result; a pastoral letter from the Bishops published in May **2009** to encourage the development of meditation groups in parishes and within the Catholic School system.



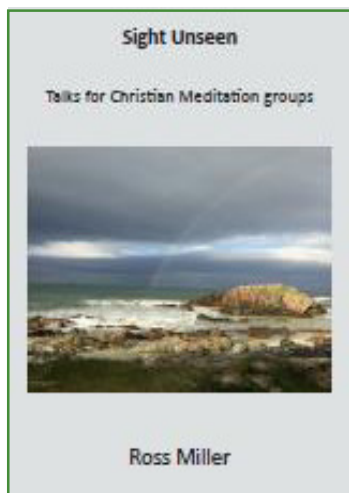
Blogs:

In the NZCCM newsletter, December **2011** issue, Vincent Maire wrote about a weekly meditation blog being produced online by Ross Miller - a blog Vincent considered well worth reading and subscribing to. In June **2016**, at the NZCCM Annual Meeting, Jane Hole tabled a proposal that a collection of Ross’ blog articles be published. The Council accepted the proposal and asked Jane to pursue the idea.

Books:

In recent times, four books have been published by NZCCM, all written by members of the Community. Three of the books comprise teachings given by Ross Miller at the weekly Christian Meditation group in Warkworth, Auckland, and subsequently posted on his blogsite: nzccmwarkworth.blogspot.com





Ross' books are:

Sharp Darts of Longing Love:

Talks for Christian Meditation Groups

Sight Unseen:

Talks for Christian Meditation Groups

A Field at Anathoth:

Talks for Christian Meditation Groups

The fourth book published by NZCCM, is *40 Days of Silence*, written by Jane Hole. The book is the insights of contemplative writers designed both as a resource for NZ meditators and as a fundraiser for the WCCM's new Centre in Bonnevaux, France. The book draws on quotations from a variety of sources, all familiar to meditators.



Bookmarks:

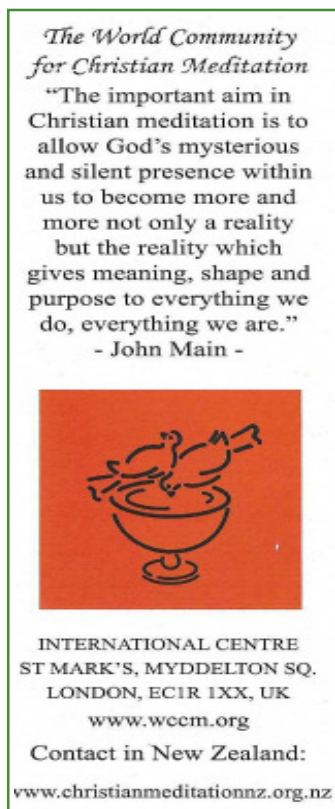
In 2015, three thousand bookmarks were re-printed of which fifteen hundred went to the Mercy Order for their secondary schools to which almost 5000 girls attend.

Also in 2015, Jane Hole was able to obtain the offer from one of the Mercy Sisters to organise the translation of the bookmarks into Maori. In mid-year, copies of the Fijian translation were received by the National Council. NZCCM had helped pay for this work.

That same year, Fr. Laurence Freeman's *Christian Meditation: Your Daily Practice* was translated into Fijian, the funds for which came directly from NZCCM, not from the *Friends* contributions.

In the minutes of the National Council Teleconference in March 2017, it is reported that the translation of both the opening and closing meditation prayers were an offshoot of the Prison work. Fr. Phil Cody SM and Piripi Walker, did the translation.

The *Te Reo* bookmarks were eventually printed, and in November 2020, Shirley Duthie reported to the NZCCM Council that a further run of *Te Reo* bookmarks had been printed.



Bi-Lingual Bookmark:

The idea of having a bi-lingual bookmark arose from a Christian Meditation Group being held in Hawkes Bay Prison. The inmates involved were keen to attempt this in their cultural group but this was not possible.

Shirley Duthie took the idea to Chaplain Fr. Phil Cody SM and sought his help. To ensure the cultural integrity of the translation, Fr. Phil, in turn, consulted *kaumatua* Piripi Walker. Thus it came into being through the translation efforts of the *Two Piripis* - Priest and *Kaumatua* - whose work is much appreciated.

The background gourd design is the work of Chris Gerretzen. Below are some of the notes he sent us that formed the background to the design:

In Maori mythology:

“The kaitiaki/guardian of the hue (gourd) is Hine-pa-te-hue. Hine-pa-te-hue is known as the atua/goddess of peace and harmony and was the daughter of Tane Mahuta and Hine-rauamoā. It is said that in the creation story, after Ranginui and Papatuanuku were separated and there was anger and fighting amongst the gods, Hine-pa-te-hue intervened and bought peace. Hence all musical instruments made from hue are like their kaitiaki and sing songs that are peaceful.

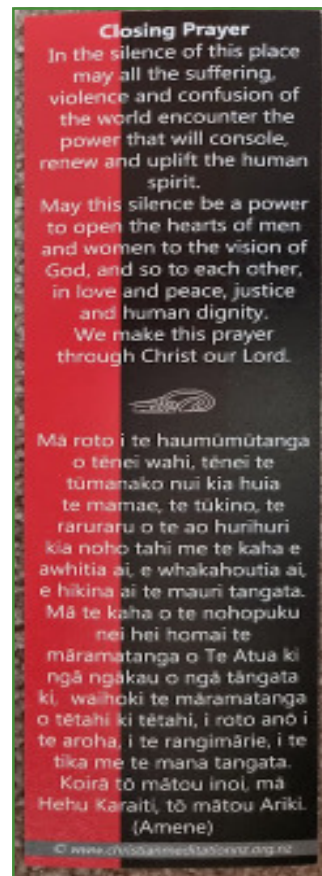
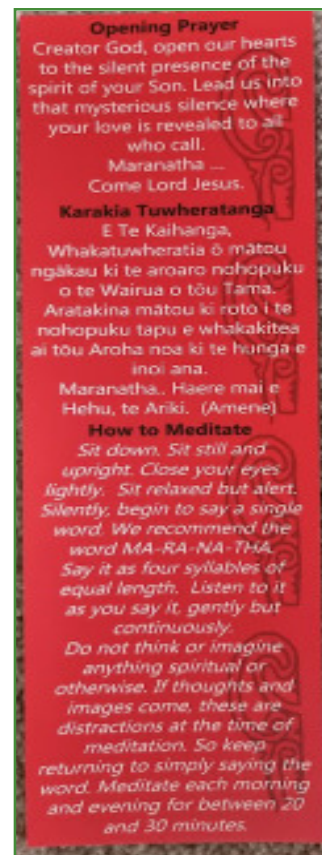
While traditionally most hue were used for storing food, some were used for the special task of storing karakia/prayers, which could be released quickly from the hue in times of need.

There are many different instruments made from the hue. To receive inner harmony is to let go of destructive patterns, to welcome the stillness of just being in the moment. Believing you are exactly where you are supposed to be, making those decisions that help you to learn from your life’s journey forward”.

Chris Gerretzen

For those wanting a guide to pronunciation there is an audio link on NZCCM website that can be downloaded and used as a guide. Groups with no *te reo* Maori speakers have found this useful to ensure oral accuracy.

Shirley Duthie



Website:

At the April **2007** National Council meeting, Stan Martin advised that a website was in preparation, with the assistance of Mr Kim van Lanteren, in Wellington. It would be a blogging interactive website, costing approximately \$70.00 to establish and thereafter about \$17.00 per month to maintain.

The next mention of a website was at the 4th Annual General Meeting of the NZCCM held in February **2009**, when Fr. Peter Murphy reported that the Community website had been set up by Mario Marzuki but was not yet active. Vincent Maire offered to manage the website once it became functional. Subsequently, the September/October 2009 issue of the NZCCM newsletter reported that the Community's website went live in August that year. Webmaster Vincent Maire said that whilst it was an interesting exercise updating information of the more than 50 groups around the country, with some new groups emerging, it also highlighted the lack of groups in certain areas: Hamilton and parts of the Waikato, parts of the Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay, Taranaki, Palmerston North, Wairarapa, the far north and some suburbs of Auckland.

In August **2010**, it was decided that the website should be transferred to a new hosting site that would include unlimited capacity and a mailing list facility. The cost, including updating the web address would be \$200. Vincent Maire and Mario Mazurki were asked to organise the transfer and to set up an email address for NZCCM.

However, in May **2011**, it was reported that the website was still struggling to function in the way required and another option was being investigated. It seemed that whilst the current system was cost free, it was not achieving NZCCM objectives. In July that year, the cost of \$240 was approved for the upgrade of the Community's website.

The National Council next held discussions about the website in May **2012**. This concerned reserving the rights of NZCCM.org as a domain name. However, because of the extra costs involved, it was decided that this move was not necessary and the proposal declined.

In September 2012, Vincent Maire relinquished his role as Webmaster and suggested that a retired IT mediator from Auckland, Sebastian Lee be asked to take over the website operation. This was agreed to by the NZCCM Council and Vincent was asked to liaise with Mario Marzuki and Sebastian Lee to accomplish the transfer of roles.

In April **2013**, Vincent continued to be involved in maintaining the website and was continuing to investigate membership software systems which would help with the NZCCM newsletter distribution. In his report on the website and library usage to the April 2013 Council meeting, Vincent

reported that there had been 1548 visits to the website during the previous 12 months, an increase of 26%, 87% of the visits being from New Zealand followed by 4% from Australia. Vincent also reported that when “Christian Meditation” is ‘googled’, the NZCCM website comes out first, followed by WCCM.org.

By May 2013, it appeared that Sebastian Lee had not become involved as Webmaster. In discussing the website as a valuable resource which gave easy access to events around the country, the National Council recorded their appreciation of Vincent Maire’s continued involvement in establishing and maintaining the site.

In July **2015**, a meditator from Hastings, Ingrid Bryant, was appointed Webmistress by the National Council and the NZCCM website re-launched. At their meeting in March 2016, the National Council recorded their appreciation of Ingrid’s work, the new design and layout greatly improving the site.

However, in the September **2017** issue of Stillpoint, the position of Webmaster/Mistress was advertised – a daunting task it is indeed, not to be undertaken lightly.

In her report to the National Council in 2017, Webmistress Ingrid Bryant reported that she was happy with the look of the website and had now established an Events Calendar which is easy to use.

Clare McGivern, a meditator from Papatoetoe, Auckland, became the new Webmistress in March 2018 and as at December **2020** continues to be active in the role of NZCCM Webmistress.

NZCCM Webmaster/Mistress Webmaster/mistress and email distributor

This role covers content management of the NZCCM website (Wordpress) and emailing out emails to members on the mailchimp (email) list.

It involves:

- * *Entering information* about upcoming Community Days, seminars, retreats.
- * *Managing the events calendar.* Information that needs to be entered on the website comes in 1-2 times per month on average and takes between 30- 60 minutes each time to be entered.
- * *Sending out mailchimp emails* 1-2 times a month on average. These emails are usually linked to the information about events on the website. Most information comes as finished flyers and just needs to be copied and pasted into the website and emails.
- * *Communicating with the web designer if needed.* The web designer is prompt in responding, easy to talk to and very helpful. Some creativity is involved if you like adding relevant pictures to the flyers and to the content on the website. The person in this role is also a member of the NZCCM Committee and communicates with the National Co-ordinator as needed. The current webmistress will offer full training and support for this role as needed.

Webmasters:

2009

Mario Mazurki
& Vincent Maire

2012

Vincent Maire
& Sebastian Lee

Webmistress:

2015 - 2017

Ingrid Bryant

2018 - current
Clare McGivern

