

A brief introduction to the Prayer of Christian Meditation

This leaflet is just a very brief introduction to the Christian Meditation. This prayer is a prayer of stillness. The body and mind are completely silent and still. "Be silent, still, aware, for in your own heart the Spirit is at prayer." In the stillness, we bow in faith before the majesty of God who can reveal His unlimited love for us. Meditation is a simple direct method of making us present to God in love.

Christian Meditation is a prayer of Faith. It is more important to experience its power in our lives than to try to understand or explain it. It is unlike other forms of meditation with which you may be familiar. Here there are no words, no thoughts, no concepts, no images. We pray with Jesus dwelling within us. It is no longer 'our' prayer for "we do not know how to pray" (Romans 8).

The basis of the prayer is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Deep within all of us dwells the blessed Trinity. At the depth of our being the Father continually loves the Son while the Son responds to the Father in love and in prayer through the Holy Spirit. In our Prayer of Meditation, we desire to be part of the love and prayer of Jesus to the Father. Rather than think up words or aspirations or images of our own, we wish to unite ourselves with the loving prayer going on continuously within us. In this prayer we also seek to open ourselves completely to the Holy Spirit that he may bring about in us conversion, repentance and faith in the good news of Jesus Christ.

John Main's Prayer for before meditation: *'Heavenly Father, Open our hearts to the silent Presence of the Spirit of your Son. Lead us into that mysterious silence where your Love is revealed to all who call.'*

To find out more about our weekly group meditation meeting contact
_____ Phone: _____ email _____

So here is what you do in practice:

1. Sit down with both feet firmly on the ground, your hands resting on your knees and your back as straight as possible, alert but relaxed.
2. Take some deep breaths to help you to settle into the silence.
3. Close your eyes gently. Begin to say in your heart (or in your mind) your prayer-word or mantra. The word we recommend is "MARANATHA" – an Aramaic word which means "Come Lord". (This lovely phrase is the earliest known Christian prayer.)
4. Say your word slowly, reverently, and lovingly as a four distinct syllables-MAR-A-NA-THA. Say it for the whole time of your meditation without any thought as to its meaning. Say it in total faith and love-like Saint Peter walking on the water. You can also say, "Jesus" or a phrase like "Holy Spirit" or "Be merciful to me a sinner". However, when you choose one, keep to it. Do not replace it to suit a changing mood.
5. Meditate every morning and evening for 20-30 minutes.
6. Distractions will come, but don't engage with them, instead let them float past you. As soon as you become aware you have engaged with them, return gently and lovingly, not judgementally, to saying your mantra. In this way you are choosing Jesus above the distraction.
7. Your prayer-word is a silent act of love and faith. It is an expression of your desire to be united in the loving prayer of Jesus, rather than following any thoughts or ideas of your own. It is your way of leaving all doing behind, choosing to be still in God's presence, open to being changed by that mysterious encounter.