



# The World Community for Christian Meditation

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## November 14 Readings



**“Dearest Friends,”**

**Laurence Freeman OSB, CHRISTIAN MEDITATION NEWSLETTER, Vol. 34, No. 3, October 2010, pp. 4-5.**

The truly other is essential to the mystical and loving mind. Otherness stimulates the mind to let go of its fixed points and expand beyond itself, enlarging the view we have of the world and of ourselves within it. In the face of the other we have to give up the fame of dramatizing them. This is a little of what I understand by the term “a catholic mind” because it has faced the other that we cannot describe or control. The catholic mind intuitively seeks to include rather than reject, even when it meets an abyss of difference in the other that it recoils from and finds wrong and threatening. [. . .]

We become catholic in this full and embracing sense only by means of growth, which is a passing through the stages of healing and integration. So none of us is catholic yet, not even the pope. There is a way to go. But the alternative to the process of forgiveness is the sectarian mind that objectifies the other and, through fear and the pleasure of power, denies it its pure subjectivity, its otherness and is-ness. Socially and historically, we have done this to immigrants, to Jews, to gays and other easily targeted minorities, but also even to half the human race through the violent patriarchal exclusion of women.

By doing such things, we exclude ourselves from the whole and therefore from the holy One. God is always subject, the “great I AM,” impervious to our attempts to objectify and manipulate. We meet this pure emanation of being in our own deep silence, not in ideology or abstraction, but in diverse ways, basically in each other and in the beauty and wonder of creation, the ocean of being, of suffering and bliss, that we and even the creator have swum in.

Because forgiveness requires depth and depth needs silence, forgiveness, reconciliation, the catholic mind . . . themselves require contemplation. To think of contemplation as a kind of luxury, relaxation or spare time occupation entirely misses the meaning of human development as the only essential way we have to glorify God. How can we “glorify God” by

what we say or do? We can only reflect back to God the divine glory potentially stored in our own being. St John of the Cross says the soul is like an unopened parcel. Unwrapping it is the way we glorify God---ultimately through participating completely in God's life and vision. We meditate, John Main said, to become the person God knows us to be. Become one with the giver of the gift by returning the gift to the giver and then finding the gift it contains.

**Meditate for Thirty Minutes....** Remember: Sit down. Sit still and upright. Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert. Silently, interiorly, begin to say a single word. We recommend the prayer-phrase "Maranatha." Recite it as four syllables of equal length. Listen to it as you say it, gently, but continuously. Do not think or imagine anything—spiritual or otherwise. Thoughts and images will likely come, but let them pass. Just keep returning your attention—with humility and simplicity—to saying your word in faith, from the beginning to the end of your meditation.

### **After Meditation...**

"Cup and Ocean," THE SOUL OF RUMI: A NEW COLLECTION OF ECSTATIC POEMS (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), p. 155

These forms we seem to be are cups floating in an ocean  
of living consciousness.

They fill and sink without leaving an arc of bubbles or  
any good-bye spray. What we

*are* is that ocean, too near to see, though we swim in it  
And drink it in. Don't

be a cup with a dry rim, or someone who rides all night  
and never knows the horse

beneath his thighs, the surging that carries him along.

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