



# The World Community for Christian Meditation

Published on *The World Community for Christian Meditation* (<http://www.wccm.org>)

[Home](#) > [Weekly Readings Newsletter](#) > [Printer-friendly PDF](#)

---

## Weekly Readings 9/12/2012



From Laurence Freeman, OSB, "Christmas Message," email,

**2009.**

A Jewish tradition has it that when the angels saw what God had done in the work of creation they burst out with a song of praise that continues throughout time at the heart of all things.

The story of the birth of Jesus provoking another such cosmic outburst after the shepherds heard the good news reminds us of how similar and different the new creation in Christ is. The mantra similarly sings in our hearts in the epiphany of his birth in us.

The gospel story of the birth and infancy of Jesus contains a number of Canticles - the Benedictus of Zechariah, the Magnificat of Mary and the Song of Simeon - which have become part of the daily prayer of Christians. These human acts of praise were probably composed in the early Christian community as they pondered the mystery of Jesus and gradually penetrated its depths. Then they were applied retrospectively in Luke's gospel to the later accounts of his birth. This pattern shows how prayer, liturgy and scripture weave the tradition of faith and it is this density of meaning that we return to each year in the celebration of the Christmas season.

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

Christmas is a feast of meaning. Much of it is reflected in our cultural forms of celebrating at this time of year - the exchanging of gifts that remind us that human relationships are based on giving not bargaining or exploiting, the gathering of family and friends reminding us that we are not alone in the solitudes of the human journey, the eating and drinking that remind us

that celebration is natural and necessary us. But all these depend on the personal experience of what Christmas is most essentially about ? the radical poverty and simplicity, the intoxicating proximity to God that our total dependence on being reveals. The closer we come to this radical simplicity ? which our meditation keeps us moving into ? the more we have to sing about. The fuller the song, the richer the silence.

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

**After meditation: an excerpt from ?Meditation: The Heart of All Things,? Laurence Freeman OSB, The Parliament of World Religions, Melbourne, Australia, December 4, 2009-12-21**

When I first came to teach Christian meditation here in Australia a Christian aborigine came up to me after the talk. He said ?you are speaking about this 2000 year old tradition of prayer in the church. My people have been practicing it for 40,000. I asked him what meditation meant to him then as a Christian and an aborigine. His reply moved me strongly. He said ?my people have learned how to sit in a non-questioning silence, to listen. As a Christian, I understand that what we have been listening to all these millennia is the Word of God sounding at the heart of creation.?

**Carla Cooper - cmcooper@gvvc.com**

Weekly Readings Newsletter

---

**Source URL:** <http://www.wccm.org/content/weekly-readings-9122012>