The World Community for Christian Meditation

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Greenbelt Festival 2010 | Slideshow & Listen

Over the last six days of August a team of particularly keen meditators made their way to Cheltenham for a week of camping, praying, and soaking up all that Greenbelt Festival has to offer. With a participant capacity of 21,00, and events of every kind – from comedy to music, talks to drama, meditative Mass to Goth Eucharist – this was a chance for part of the WCCM community to share in some of the diversity that makes up our Church, as well as to spread the word about meditation and the prayer of the heart.

Second in attractiveness only to the meditation itself was the impressive yurt which housed our times of prayer. Twenty-one feet in diameter, two and half hours in constructing, and lent for the week by generous friends of WCCM, we were quite the cream of the campsite crop.

We gathered three times each day to still ourselves within its beautiful structure of wooden poles and canvas, and by the end of the week it had become a space of spirit and silence.

Even at a Christian Festival like Greenbelt it is easy to be swept away by the noise and the haste that make up so much of our existence. The presence of meditative prayer amongst those already happy to identify themselves as Christian (or at least happy to affiliate themselves with a Christian Festival) is no less important than it is amongst those who have no association with religion. Both the religious and the 'non-religious', it seems, are equally liable to slip into cycles of mental overactivity.

As we gathered for morning, midday, and evening meditation, it was a pleasure to be joined by fellow seekers from around the Festival – both those for whom meditation is a familiar and regular practice, and those interested in learning what it means to seek Christ's presence

within. With music from the main stage often booming in the background (and testing our mantra to the limits!), our temporary Festival community was filled with some of the radicalness of John Main's original vision.

As a part of our daily routine there were many opportunities for both experienced and novice meditators to teach the basics of the practice. Audience numbers ranged from two to twelve hundred, but wherever and however it took place, there was a sense of subtle authority in what our team had to say. As a young meditator I have been struck on many occasions by the way received wisdom comes alive in the mouths of people of simple and honest prayer.

Those who commit themselves to a regular practice of meditation are a living witness to the need for sacrifice and self-giving in the heart of how we understand our faith. Coming away from Festival and reflecting, I am sure that each member of the Greenbelt team has been granted a sense of not only gaining from the vibrancy and freshness of the Festival events, but also of having given something to it, whether in the smallest of groups, or, in the case of Fr Laurence, from the stage in front of the grandstand.

View the slide show here.

Listen to Father Laurence's Greenbelt Talk titled "Finding the Inner Room" here. [Other GREENBELT talks coming soon.]

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News

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