

# Peace and Joy | WCCM

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**An excerpt from Laurence Freeman OSB, “Letter One, WEB OF SILENCE (London: Darton, Longman, Todd, 1996), pp. 14-17.**

The New Testament naturally associates peace and joy as expressions of a life centered in Christ. As is the danger with all vocabularies, these words have often become mere Christian jargon. We talk of peace, love and joy and the fruits of the spirit because they are things that should characterize our life together, but rarely do. Nor can they, unless the journey to the center has passed from the external to the interior. Meditation is a way of peace because it pushes us forward, or deeper, into that inner center of the heart where all the illusions, pretence and self-deception that block us from peace are dissolved. Because we so often rationalize our desires and prejudices we need a way such as meditation that takes us to a perception deeper than reason. [. . . .]

We will never find peace in the midst of our worries and problems by thinking our way through them. Thought is a false labyrinth that always returns us to the same confused starting point. Prayer is the true labyrinth that takes us deeper than thought and leads us to the peace that passes all understanding. Letting go of our anxieties is our greatest

difficulty, which testifies to the negative resilience of the ego. Yet it is so simple. We have only to grasp the true nature of meditation: not that we are trying to think of nothing, but that we are not thinking. [. . .]

In many ancient labyrinths it was a monster that was found at the center, a thing of fear and a threat to life. The Christian labyrinths positioned Christ at the center of all the twists and turns of life. In Christ we find not fear but the dissolving of fear in the final and primal certainty of love. Meditation is the work of love and it is by love, not by thought, that God ultimately is known: the knowledge that saves is the knowledge of love.

**After meditation: Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Jane Deren in GIVE US THIS DAY (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2015) December 2015, p. 11.**

Our Lady of Guadalupe,  
O dark Madonna of the Americas,  
Come again to bring us the roses  
of compassion, justice and peace.  
In the midst of our winter,  
bestow your love on all those marginalized,  
and give us your gift to see dignity  
in the least of those among us. Amen

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