

# Understanding our own mortality through meditation

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**An excerpt from John Main OSB, *Death and Resurrection*, MOMENT OF CHRIST (New York: Continuum, 1998), pp. 68-70.**

Meditation is a way of power because it is the way to understanding our own mortality. It is the way to get our own death into focus. It can do so because it is the way beyond our own mortality. It is the way beyond our own death to the resurrection, to a new and eternal life, the life that arises from our union with God. The essence of the Christian Gospel is that we are invited to this experience now, today. All of us are invited to death, to die to our own self-importance, our own selfishness, our own limitation. We are invited to die to our own exclusiveness. [ . . . ]

Every time we sit down to meditate we enter the axis of death and resurrection. We do so because in our meditation we go beyond our own life and all the limitations of our own life into the mystery of God. We discover, each of us from our own experience, that the mystery of God is the mystery of love, infinite love, love that casts out all fear. This is our resurrection, our rising to the full liberty that dawns on us once our own life and death and resurrection are in focus. Meditation is the great way of focusing our life on the eternal reality that is God, the eternal reality that is to be found in our own hearts. The discipline

of saying the mantra, the discipline of the daily return morning and evening to meditation has this one supreme aim to focus us totally on Christ with an acuity of vision that sees ourselves, all reality, as it is. Listen to St Paul writing to the Romans:

*No one of us lives, and equally no one of us dies, for himself alone. If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. Whether, therefore, we live or die, we are the Lord's.*

**After meditation: from Theodore Roethke, *The Far Field*, COLLECTED POEMS (New York: Doubleday, 1961), p. 200.**

I learned not to fear infinity.

The far field, the windy cliffs of forever,

the dying of time in the white light of tomorrow,

the wheel turning away from itself,

the sprawl of the wave,

the on-coming water.

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