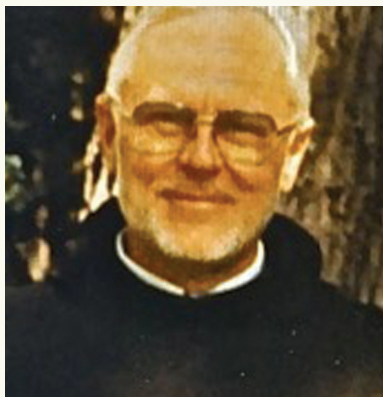




JOHN MAIN

Collected Talks



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Collected Talks

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Introduction

The Collected Talks of John Main make available to people today the unique and transforming power of his oral teaching. The best form of a spiritual teaching has always been the spoken word. These talks were the first phase of what later became The World Community for Christian Meditation, the global contemplative family that continues to grow through the inspiration of his teaching. Each of the eight sets of the Collected Talks is published as a book with the same title.

John Main has recovered for Christians a way of prayer which links with the earliest tradition of the Church and at the same time relates to the most authentic tradition of prayer and meditation in other religions. ...In my experience, he is the best spiritual guide in the Church today.

Bede Griffiths, Benedictine monk

John Main effectively put the desert tradition of prayer to work in our own day. The World Community for Christian Meditation which continues his mission is for me a taste of what a committedly contemplative church might look and feel like.

Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

John Main harmonized what he learned from the East and from the West. From every discovery there is a new creation. Main was not complicated – he was a symbol for us all. In this he was an authentic genius.

Raimon Panikkar, Theologian

John Main has meant a lot to me and I have learned a tremendous amount from him and from the movement that he re-created over the years: a movement I saw at its beginning and which has now expanded worldwide. It has been a very important part in forming my own thinking. As part of the tremendously precious legacy of John Main we can be in a conversation with people from very different eras and also bring these voices together in ways that can be very fruitful for our time. He shows how we fit into the modern world's spiritual traditions. How important it is that we carry on his work.

Charles Taylor, Philosopher

Although it is more than thirty years since he died, as I re-listen to John Main's talks, I am still amazed at the power, clarity and radical simplicity of what he taught. How luminous they are. How fresh and joyful in their directness. How unchanged by the passage of a generation is the urgency of his message. I know of no other teaching in this form that carries the spirit of the gospel, as a living Word, so directly and purely into the heart.

His voice varies over the years during which the recordings were made. In the early ones, you hear the physical vigour and passion of his full teaching authority. In the talks recorded in the last months of his life, you hear a change but there is a different kind of strength. As his health failed, his inner light burned more intensely. Even the silences between the phrases of his talks – especially these extraordinarily full empty moments – have a power that places his words deep in the mind and heart of the one listening.

Laurence Freeman OSB, Director WCCM

It was these talks of John Main that inspired me to start meditating. There was a certain power and persuasive authority in his voice. Listening to the talk time and again sustained me in the wobbly early stages and has kept me steady on the path. I have put together this collection of John Main's talks so that both beginners to meditation and ongoing meditators may be encouraged by the authoritative and yet gentle guidance of this contemporary master of prayer.

Peter Ng, Trustee WCCM

How to Meditate

Laurence Freeman OSB and John Main OSB

Open to all ways of wisdom but drawing directly from the early Christian teaching, John Main summarised the practice in this simple way:

Sit down. Sit still with your back straight. Close your eyes lightly. Then interiorly, silently begin to recite a single word – a prayer word or mantra. We recommend the ancient Christian prayer word "Maranatha". Say it as four equal syllables. Breathe normally and give your full attention to the word as you say it, silently, gently, faithfully and above all – simply. The essence of meditation is simplicity. Stay with the same word during the whole meditation and from day to day. Don't visualise, but listen to the word as you say it. Let go of all thoughts (even good thoughts), images and other words. Don't fight your distractions but let them go by saying your word faithfully, gently and attentively and returning to it immediately that you realise you have stopped saying it or when your attention is wandering.

Silence means letting go of thoughts. Stillness means letting go of desire. Simplicity means letting go of self-analysis. Meditate twice a day every day.

This daily practice may take you some time to develop. Be patient. When you give up, start again. You will find that a weekly meditation group and a connection with a community may help you develop this discipline and allow the benefits and fruits of meditation to pervade your mind and every aspect of your life in ways that will teach and delight you.

WORD INTO SILENCE (Collected Talks I)

CD 1 Introduction to Christian Meditation	72:50
1 Being Restored to Ourselves	18:14
2 Learning to be Silent	18:12
3 The Power of the Mantra	18:34
4 The Fullness of Life	17:46

Music: Margaret Rizza *Inpoured Spirit* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

CD2 Meditation: The Christian Experience	68:02
1 The Self	17:23
2 The Son	16:45
3 The Spirit	18:33
4 The Father	15:18

Music: Margaret Rizza *Inpoured Spirit* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

CD3 Twelve Talks for Meditators (Part 1)	44:27
1 Introduction	2:58
2 The Tradition of the Mantra I	6:23

3	The Tradition of the Mantra II	5:28
4	Saying the Mantra I	5:24
5	Saying the Mantra II	4:59
6	Leaving Self Behind	8:47
7	John Cassian	10:24

Music: Margaret Rizza *Take, Lord* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

CD4	Twelve Talks for Meditators (Part 2)	41:07
1	Set Your Mind on the Kingdom	6:38
2	Realizing Our Personal Harmony I	7:05
3	Realizing Our Personal Harmony II	7:19
4	A Present Reality	6:17
5	Christian Community I	7:10
6	Christian Community II	6:37

Music: Margaret Rizza *Take, Lord* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERIES: PRAYER AND SACRAMENT
(Collected Talks II)

CD1	63:13
1 Introduction	7:36
2 Baptism: Water and Spirit	19:25
3 Marriage: Mystery of Communion	18:20
4 Anointing of the Sick: Mystery of Wholeness	17:44

Music: Margaret Rizza *O Lord Listen to my Prayer* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

CD2	66:19
1 Environment for Worship: Mystery of Sacred Space	19:24
2 Eucharist: Mystery of Koinonia	21:05
3 Penance: Mystery of Poverty	20:32
4 Conclusion	4:27

Music: Margaret Rizza *O Lord, Listen to my Prayer* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

MOMENT OF CHRIST (Collected Talks III)

CD1	68:44
1 The Way of the Mantra	18:04
2 Leaving Distractions Behind	18:15
3 The Call to Fullness of Life	17:35
4 Infinite Expansion of Love	14:47
CD 2	64:33
1 Discipline and Liberty	15:40
2 Silent Communion	17:46
3 The Peace of Christ	12:55
4 Commitment to Simplicity	18:11
CD 3	73:58
1 The Way of Liberation	16:08
2 Beyond Illusion	16:35
3 We Have Meaning for God	11:32
4 The Reality that is Love	16:10
5 The Temple of Your Heart	13:32

CD 4	75:38
1 Rooted in the Centre	16:01
2 Smashing of the Mirror	14:36
3 The Way to the Eternal	12:37
4 Original Innocence	17:31
5 Simplicity is Oneness	14:52
CD 5	69:39
1 Beyond Technique	17:07
2 Death	14:37
3 Death and Resurrection	13:21
4 The Spirit of Lent	13:03
5 The Meaning of Silence	11:30
CD 6	67:08
1 The Life Source	16:19
2 The Reality of Faith	15:51
3 The Wholeness of God	13:40
4 Being Yourself	21:16

CD 7	78:37
1 Space to Be	17:31
2 The One Centre	16:55
3 Simple Enjoyment of the Truth	14:00
4 The Light of Christ	15:42
5 The Inner Christ	14:27
CD 8	33:14
1 Free to be True	17:39
2 The Generosity of Sacrifice	15:34

Music: Margaret Rizza *Prayer of St Teresa (Violin)* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

THE WAY OF UNKNOWING (Collected Talks IV)

CD1	76:02
1 In Reverence in Your Hearts	15:26
2 The Two Silences of God	16:34
3 Renunciation of Our Selves	15:08
4 The Pole	12:17
5 Potential for 'Being'	16:36
CD 2	70:32
1 God is the Centre of my Soul	18:13
2 Growth in the Presence	15:46
3 Being and Existence	17:09
4 'Isness'	19:22
CD 3	77:50
1 Distractions	15:55
2 Returning to our own Innocence	14:53
3 Child-like Simplicity	16:58
4 Beyond All Images	15:49
5 Beyond Isolation into Love	14:14

CD 4		68:39
	1 Actualization of Your Potential	21:23
	2 Freedom for Being	17:19
	3 The Discipline of Silence	14:30
	4 Emptying Out All Images	15:25
CD 5		64:57
	1 The Mind of Christ	14:57
	2 Wholly Open to the Prayer of Jesus	17:16
	3 Sense of Oneness	18:14
	4 Knowing	14:29
CD 6		70:05
	1 Mystery of Being	15:22
	2 Reverence	13:06
	3 Grounded in God	12:46
	4 The Necessity for Stillness	13:47
	5 Why is Meditation Difficult?	15:03

CD 7	65:41
1 Meditation as Conversion	15:33
2 Eternal Youth	12:55
3 Worship in Spirit and in Truth	14:06
4 Wholehearted in Christ	10:35
5 The Incarnation of God	12:31
CD 8	75:22
1 Thought, Feeling, Love	13:25
2 Questions and Responses	17:23
3 Religious Love	15:08
4 The Way that is Christ	15:12
5 Past, Future and the Present	14:11
CD 9	38:50
1 Redeemed by Love	20:21
2 Contemplation and Action	18:28

Music: Margaret Rizza *You Are the Centre* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

THE HEART OF CREATION (Collected Talks V)

CD1		66:12
	1 The Art of Unlearning	16:58
	2 A Way of Beginning	17:34
	3 The Constant Return to the Mantra	17:25
	4 Tension and Attention	14:14
CD 2		69:42
	1 Essentially Free	16:58
	2 What Jesus has Done	17:12
	3 The Unreality of Fear	17:39
	4 Surface and Depth	17:52
CD 3		72:11
	1 The Mantra and Boredom	13:35
	2 Liberty and Detachment	12:21
	3 The Supreme Reality	17:18
	4 Two Words from the Past	14:33
	5 At One with the Light	14:24

CD 4	77:39
1 Fulfillment through Dispossession	18:34
2 Beyond Motivation	17:01
3 Meditation and Work	12:22
4 Cosmic Poverty	14:16
5 Seeing through Our Selves	15:25
CD 5	65:08
1 Created to be Light	12:50
2 The Real Christian Scandal	13:44
3 All or Nothing	12:19
4 Kissing the Joy as it Flies	10:31
5 The Birth of Christ	15:43
CD 6	68:48
1 The Process of Reduction	16:33
2 Focus on the Real	15:14
3 Trying to Placate God	13:20
4 Questions and Responses	23:40

CD 7		45:34
1	The Essential Elements of Meditation	16:43
2	The Path Forgetful of Itself	13:58
3	Created for Love	14:51

Music: Margaret Rizza *Take, Lord* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

WORD MADE FLESH (Collected Talks VI)

CD1	73:06
1 Making Progress	17:15
2 The Consciousness of Jesus	12:54
3 God is at the Centre?	13:30
4 From Idea to Commitment	13:22
5 The Time is His, the Prayer is His	16:03
CD 2	76:51
1 The Universal Christ	12:40
2 Making Nothing Happen	17:44
3 The Glory of Christ	16:23
4 The Unlearning of Prayer	16:02
5 The Silence of Love	14:00
CD 3	73:37
1 Something Ordinary	16:05
2 Faith is Transcendent	12:00
3 The Uniqueness of Our Own Creation	16:21

4	I Am as I Am	11:17
5	Dropping the Anchor	17:52
CD 4		47:23
1	The Spirit of Truth	15:45
2	Beliefs and Faith	15:34
3	All You have to Do is to Begin	16:01
CD 5		33:31
1	Integrity	19:27
2	Purity of Heart	14:01

Music: Margaret Rizza *Let Your Beauty (Violin)* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

DOOR TO SILENCE (Collected Talks VII)

CD1	68:15
1 Peace	16:18
2 Purity of Heart	13:26
3 We Possess the Mind of Christ	10:42
4 Vision of Unity	11:26
5 The Experience of the Tradition	16:19
CD 2	72:40
1 Contact with the Centre	13:20
2 The Aim of Meditation	15:44
3 Unity and Union	13:29
4 Creative Energy	16:42
5 The Context of our Meditation	13:21
CD 3	76:45
1 Truth	16:22
2 Time and Eternity	12:39
3 Levels of Distraction	17:36

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 4 | The Ordinary Shot through with the
Extraordinary | 13:39 |
| 5 | Liberty of Spirit | 16:25 |

CD 4 **73:25**

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Open to the Moment of Love | 11:55 |
| 2 | Learning to Expect Nothing | 17:15 |
| 3 | Everything Is One | 14:28 |
| 4 | Wholly Present Now | 15:26 |
| 5 | Hope | 14:17 |

Music: Margaret Rizza *Let Your Beauty (Violin)* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

IN THE BEGINNING (Collected Talks VIII)

CD1		62:42
	1 Still A Beginner	15:05
	2 The Sound of the Mantra	13:38
	3 The Way of Enlightenment	17:32
	4 Total Potential	16:25
CD 2		74:32
	1 Experience and Expansion	18:29
	2 Purity of Heart	18:38
	3 Our Inner Life and our Outer Life	18:32
	4 Longing in the Heart	18:52
CD 3		76:53
	1 Questions	13:53
	2 Wholly Present	17:07
	3 The School of John Cassian	18:49
	4 That Delicate Balance	18:06
	5 Questions	08:55

CD4	66:49
1 Life as a Revelation	15:53
2 Infinite Vitality	15:36
3 Quies	13:22
4 Questions	21:56
CD 5	66:05
1 The Prodigal Son	15:59
2 The Idea of Progress	15:36
3 The Purity of Prayer	17:23
4 Secure Base	17:04
CD 6	79:33
1 Pure Action	16:48
2 Attention	16:21
3 The Way of Salvation	16:55
4 The Pilgrim	16:00
5 Questions	13:26

Music: Margaret Rizza *Prayer of St Teresa (Piano)* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

CD7	41:23
1 Beginning First Time Again	14:31
2 Fullness of Life	14:36
3 Seek after Truth	12:15
CD 8	39:28
1 Dispossession	11:24
2 Death and Resurrection	15:12
3 The Silence of Prayer	12:50

Music: Margaret Rizza *Take My Hands, Lord (Piano)* ©Kevin Mayhew Ltd

THE WORLD COMMUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN MEDITATION teaches a contemplative tradition of meditation rooted in the Gospels and revitalized by Benedictine monk, John Main (1926-1982). The heart of the community is the small weekly group welcoming people in all circumstances of life. Round the world over 2000 groups gather in homes, churches, community centres, hospitals, schools, prisons, universities and places of work.

MEDITATIO is the outreach of the World Community, bringing meditation to the wider society, particularly in the areas of Education, Mental Health, Addiction and Recovery, Business and Finance, and Inter-religious Friendship.

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