



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](#)

January 2 Readings



John Main OSB, "The Oceans of God" (December 1982), *THE*

PRESENT CHRIST (New York: Crossroad, 1991), pp. 111-112, 116-117.

Our life is a unity because it is centered in the mystery of God. But to know that unity we have to see beyond ourselves and with a perspective greater than we generally see with, when self-interest is our dominant concern. Only when we have begun to turn from self-interest and self-consciousness does this larger perspective begin to open. Another way of saying that our vision expands is to say that we come to see beyond mere appearances, into the depth and significance of things. . . .not just . . .in relation to ourselves but . . .to the whole of which we are part. This is the way of true self-knowledge and it is why true self knowledge is identical with true humility. Meditation opens up for us this precious form of knowledge, [and] this knowledge becomes wisdom . . . when we know no longer by analysis and definition but by participation in the life and spirit of Christ. [. . .]

The greatest difficulty is to begin, to take the first step, to launch out into the depth of the reality of God as revealed in Christ. Once we have left the shore of our own self we soon pick up the currents of reality that give us our direction and momentum. The more still and attentive we are, the more sensitively we respond to these currents. And so the more absolute and truly spiritual our faith becomes. By stillness in the spirit we move into the ocean of God. If we have the courage to push off from the shore we cannot fail to find this direction and energy. The further out we travel the stronger the current becomes, and the deeper our faith. For a while the depth of our faith is challenged by the paradox that the horizon of our destination is always receding. Where are we going with this deeper faith? Then, gradually we recognize the meaning of the current that guides us and see that the ocean is infinite.

Leaving the shore is the first great challenge, but it is only necessary to begin to face the challenge. Even though the challenges may become greater later, we are assured that we

shall be given everything we need to face them. We begin by saying the mantra. Saying the mantra is always to be beginning, to be returning to the first step. We learn in time that there is only one step between us and God. . . . Christ has taken it in himself. He himself is the step. . . . The only way to know Christ is to enter his personal mystery, leaving ideas and words behind. We leave them behind in order to enter the silence of full knowledge and love to which meditation is leading each of us.

Meditate for Thirty Minutes.... Remember: Sit down. Sit still and upright. Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert. Silently, interiorly, begin to say a single word. We recommend the prayer-phrase "Maranatha." Recite it as four syllables of equal length. Listen to it as you say it, gently, but continuously. Do not think or imagine anything—spiritual or otherwise. Thoughts and images will likely come, but let them pass. Just keep returning your attention—with humility and simplicity—to saying your word in faith, from the beginning to the end of your meditation.

After Meditation, an excerpt 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.

Weekly Readings Newsletter

Source URL: <http://www.wccm.org/content/january-2-readings>