

Teaching Christian Meditation to Children



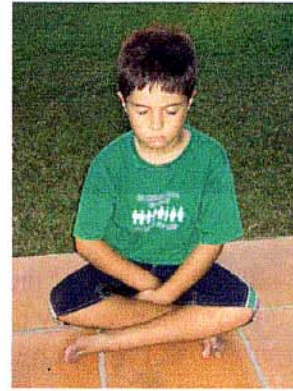
Introduction

Children and young adults are born contemplative but in our busy world we are bombarded from an early age with noises, stimulus and a message of keep busy. The aim of this teaching program is to teach children the essence of Christian Meditation which is to find God in stillness, silence and simplicity. Or as the Old Testament says. "Be still and know that I am God." (psalm 46)



Purpose of Christian Meditation

The purpose of this form of prayer is to impart knowledge about God and to provide first hand experience of God's love through the experiential process of "doing" meditation. Sister Mary Kay, SSJ, explains, "Our purpose is to help the children build a loving relationship with Jesus in the flesh and bring them to this same Jesus, present with us now in the spirit."



What is Christian Meditation?

By allowing children to experience Christian Meditation for themselves Father John Main believed they would discover their "True selves in their real participation in the reality of God."

The Meditation experiences found in this program are designed to help children enter into the mystery of the sacred, the heart of true Faith.

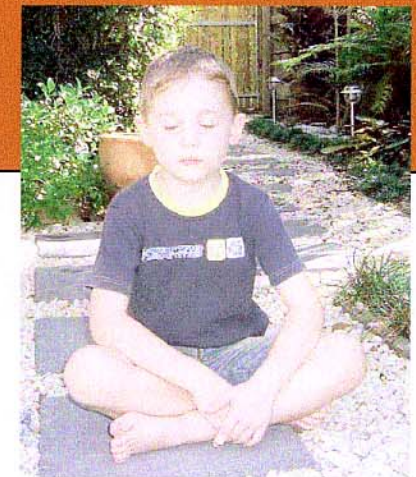
Christian Meditation is prayer.
Christian Meditation is simple.
Christian Meditation is a journey.
Christian Meditation is experiential.
Christian Meditation is supported by the World Community of Christian Meditation spread by Fr. Lawrence Freeman OSB through over one hundred countries in 2000 meditation groups around the world.



The Fruits of Meditation

Christian Meditation is proven:

- To make children calmer and more relaxed
- To help create a sense of wonder in children
- To help create a sense of God in those who meditate
- To help create a sense of community
- To allow children a chance to be silent and experience God in the silence
- To allow children a chance to enter into the present moment



What happens in Christian Meditation?

Meditation is not about getting into altered states of consciousness or seeing and experiencing anything out of the ordinary. It is about entering more fully into the ordinary and discovering thereby the absolute wonder of it, the presence of God:

Christian Meditation (contemplative prayer) is an ancient Western tradition of our Church, though all five major religions have their own meditation practices. Christian meditation focuses on Christ. "The Kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17.)

Meditation brings out change in the people who do it. The change can best be described in what St Paul called the "Harvest of the Spirit": Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22)



Christian Meditation is a form of prayer and may be practiced anywhere at any time when circumstances permit, not just in religion class. It is an ecumenical prayer, ideally prayed with the family at home.

Sr. Mary Kay McNelis SSJ has adapted the material from the Diocese of Townsville, South Australia Catholic Education Office. She is available to train teachers and parents who elect to enter this Community. She may be reached at (814) 836-4161.



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Information for
Teachers and Parents

"In prayer we do not seek to get benefits from God but to become like God. Praying itself is good. It calms the mind, reduces sin and promotes good deeds."

