

# 52 Blessings From The Centre



Rodney Marsh

## Campfire in the Heart Alice Springs

*“... meditation is simply being still at the centre of your being”*  
John Main (WU)

*“What the practice of Christian prayer teaches us is that we are summoned to the centre and we are summoned from the centre, by the centre.”*  
John Main (DS)

## Foreword



Our lives took a significant turn about four years ago when we were invited to become involved with [Campfire in the Heart](#) - a retreat centre near Alice Springs/Mparntwe that has and continues to draw people to come apart, take time out of their lives to attend to the 'more', their higher calling some might say, as they deepen their connection to this ancient land and its First People. As custodians of Campfire in this season, who live mostly in Sydney, it is always a challenge to continue from afar the wonderful work done by Sue and David Woods in setting up Campfire more than twenty years ago.

Recently there have been a number of [Meditators-In-Residence](#) (MIR) who, being firmly grounded in their daily practice of Christian contemplative prayer, have become a regular spiritual presence at Campfire offering locals and visitors alike reflection days, retreats, and sessions introducing the practice of [Christian meditation](#). Each MIR, of course, brings their unique gifts and spirit. Rodney Marsh was MIR at Campfire in June this year - his background is as a Uniting Church minister, and his prayer life has been deeply affected by the teachings of John Main OSB. Rod also, as you will discover, loves taking photos and this booklet features his compelling photographs of the remarkable landscape that is Central Australia, a glorious flourishing indeed as they combine with John Main's words which are as ever fresh and direct, a clear and confident voice we implicitly trust.

This digital book can be summarised as Rod's generous offer to those who share his interest and passions. He suggests that one way the 52 blessings could be used is as a companion text for those who practice Christian meditation, as taught by John Main. These could be used either individually or with a weekly group, as a blessing after a time of meditation. Each of the 52 blessings is linked to a Bible verse, a short extract from Fr John's writings and a beautiful photo taken whilst Rod was staying at Campfire as MIR. These photos were taken around Campfire, Alice Springs and Uluru.

A caution – such is the beauty of this book, you may be tempted to 'devour' all the blessings at one sitting, but we suggest you avoid such 'intoxication' by approaching the 'banquet', as Rod's suggests, by using the blessings after a period of 20-30 minutes meditation, so that its true value can seep in and deeply nourish you. Our hope is that as you explore this book, you will deepen your practice of contemplative prayer and perhaps may also feel drawn to visit Mparntwe and Campfire.

Our longtime meditator friend, Grahame Ellis, also a Uniting Church Minister and devotee of John Main's writings, adds his enthusiasm for these blessings:

*"... with Rodney's text and photographs, I knew immediately that the words and images proffered, offered peace. I was experiencing their vibrancy.....he has brought together the profound wisdom of John Main, the deep insights of his own contemplative discipline and the inspired use of his camera. Brilliant! We are now able to embrace our destiny afresh 'a clear, unified consciousness, abiding' ... and abiding with greater clarity and intimacy because of Campfire in the Heart."*

We thank Rod for his magnificent opus and pray that many will draw great sustenance from this offering.

Paul and Judi Taylor.

## Introduction

“... he died, but through his faith, he still speaks”(Heb 11:4).



During June 2025, I spent a delightful winter month as Meditator in Residence at Campfire in the Heart. This visit fulfilled a bucket list desire for me to visit Mparntwe and Uluru and I wrote these blessings following my visit to Australia's geographical and mythical 'centre'. Hence the title, "52 Blessings From The Centre".

The title of this booklet also emphasises that blessings are only truly real when they originate and are received from the centre or heart of both the giver and receiver. Grace is conveyed when the centre within the person saying the blessing meets the open heart of the person receiving it. As John O'Donahue, whose book of blessings<sup>1</sup> partly inspired this work, says, "Blessing is from soul to soul. And the key to who you are is your soul." Amen to that.

I owe a very great personal debt to John Main and these blessings are directly adapted from his published works<sup>2</sup>. In preparation for my role as Meditator in Residence, I read many of his books, and, since I started my near twenty year meditation journey, I have used Paul Harris' book of daily John Main readings<sup>3</sup>. I am continually in awe of the simplicity and depth John Main found to express the necessity for a lifetime devotion to pure prayer so that we may be gradually 'unformed' in silence, stillness, and humility so that 'Christ may be formed in us'. As noted above, John Main embodied and offered this tradition of prayer to our very needy age. I do not, however, claim 'ownership' of these blessings, since they rely so heavily on his words, and, of course, any errors of expression in these prayers and blessings are mine.

The blessings reinforce John Main's belief that Christian meditation creates community and were written to be used after a group meditation. These blessings may also be adapted for use as individual blessings or changed to a 'self' blessing by substituting the appropriate first-person pronouns. Perhaps the best introduction to these blessings comes from John Main himself,

*"... each of us is summoned to the heights of Christian prayer — each of us is summoned to fullness of life. What we need however is the humility to tread the way very faithfully over a period of years so that the prayer of Christ may indeed be the grounding experience of our life."*<sup>4</sup>

My prayer is that these blessings will support the mission of the WCCM, "to communicate and nurture meditation as passed on through the teaching of John Main in the Christian tradition in the spirit of serving the unity of all". Truly, John Main "died, but through his faith, he still speaks" (Heb 11:4).

My heartfelt thanks to Paul and Judi and the other Campfire Directors for the privilege to serve as MIR at Campfire and for being willing to host the download of these blessings from the Campfire website.

Rodney Marsh 2025

# “An Introduction to our Way of Meditating”

(John Main OSB)



John Main insisted that you cannot learn to meditate by reading books. You must sit still and say your word. Every day. Twice a day. Thereafter, you will only stay on the path if you forever remain a beginner who begins anew each eternal moment by sitting still and saying your word. Why then did John Main write so many books about meditation? In fact, like Jesus, John Main didn't really write any books. Rather, most of his books are transcriptions of his talks or a record of his letters. Before he died in 1982, John Main in "Moment of Christ" collected more talks he had given on meditation in preparation for publication. In the Foreword, Father John explains his motivation for giving these talks and now publishing them. He sought always, he says, to speak to give "an encouragement to those who are following the path of meditation and to help them to follow that path with greater fervour." Then, in a brief passage, Fr John, spoke of his understanding of the message of the New Testament as the foundation for the practice of prayer he was advocating. Here is his "word of introduction to our way of meditating..."

- It is our conviction that the central message of the New Testament is that there is really only one prayer and that this prayer is the prayer of Christ. It is a prayer that continues in our hearts day and night. I can describe it only as the stream of love that flows constantly between Jesus and his Father. This stream of love is the Holy Spirit.
- Again it is our conviction that it is the most important task for any fully human life that we should become as open as possible to this stream of love. We have to allow this prayer to become our prayer, we have to enter into the experience of being swept out of ourselves — beyond ourselves into this wonderful prayer of Jesus — this great cosmic river of love.
- In order for us to do this we must learn a way that is a way of silence — of stillness, and this by a discipline that is most demanding. It is as though we have to create a space within ourselves that will allow this higher consciousness — the consciousness of the prayer of Jesus — to envelop us in this powerful mystery."<sup>5</sup>

John Main's life and ministry embodied his beliefs that true prayer is always personal - our unique journey into the heart of the Trinity. To take upon ourselves this 'demanding discipline' is each one's own responsibility to fulfil the purpose of our unique 'one wild and precious life' (Mary Oliver). Fr John further believed that since the truth of meditation was always personal, it is best passed on by an embodied presence. He noted,

*"The mystery into which meditation leads us is a personal mystery, the mystery of our own personhood, which finds its completion in the person of Christ. And so, the more personal the way it is communicated, the closer it is to its source and its goal."*<sup>6</sup>

That is the reason he devoted the latter part of his life to, again like Jesus, a wide peripatetic, personal teaching ministry. Fr John, also like Jesus, embodied what he taught and Fr John taught that we can discover for ourselves, in our own experience of meditation leading to contemplation, the eternal life Jesus offers us all. John Main says, like Jesus, "Do this, and you will live" (Lk10:28).

Rodney Marsh

# Introduction to the WCCM



The WCCM exists in order to “**communicate and nurture meditation as passed on through the teaching of John Main in the Christian tradition in the spirit of serving the unity of all**”.

John Main and the community he inspired has had a major role in the contemporary renewal of the contemplative tradition. His own introduction to meditation came to him from the universal wisdom but led him to recognise and then go on to teach it as a way of prayer rooted in the Gospels and the Christian mystical tradition. Open to all ways of wisdom and drawing directly from the early Christian teaching John Main summarised the practice in this simple way:

## How to Meditate

*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 in each meditation 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: let them go by saying your word faithfully, gently and attentively and returning to it as soon as you realise you have stopped saying or it or when your attention wanders. Meditate twice a day, morning and evening, for between 20 and 30 minutes. It may take a time to develop this discipline and the support of a tradition and community is always helpful.*

John Main

(See <https://wccm.org/meditate/what-is-meditation/>)

## An Opening Prayer by John Main

*Heavenly Father, open our hearts to the silent presence of the spirit of your Son. Lead us into that mysterious silence where your love is revealed to all who call, ‘Maranatha...Come, Lord Jesus.*

## A Closing Prayer by Laurence Freeman

*May this community be a true spiritual home for the seeker, a friend for the lonely, a guide for the confused. May those who pray here be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to serve all who come, and to receive them as Christ Himself. In the silence of this community may all the suffering, violence, and confusion of the world encounter the Power that will console, renew and uplift the human spirit.*

*May this silence be a power to open the hearts of all people to the vision of God, and so to each other, in love and peace, justice and human dignity. May the beauty of the divine life, fill this group and the hearts of all who pray here, with joyful hope. May all who come here weighed down by the problems of humanity leave giving thanks for the wonder of human life. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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# 1 Faithfulness

*"Christ's message in all its richness must live in your hearts"*

(St Paul Col 3:16)



(N) In the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit:

May the daily discipline of saying your prayer word  
And your faithful, consistent attention to your word,  
Lead you to join the prayer of Jesus constantly sounding in your heart.  
May you bathe in this cleansing stream of love continually  
Flowing between Jesus and his Father at the centre of your being.  
May both your inner and outer life be transformed  
Through your immersion in this stream of love which is the Spirit.  
Amen

*"... there is really only one prayer and that this prayer is the prayer of Christ. It is a prayer that continues in our hearts day and night."*

John Main  
MC

## 2 The Prayer of Jesus

*"... you have come to fullness of life in him"*

(St Paul Col 2:10)



(N) In the name of the God whose attention is always on you:

May you, through attention to your prayer word,  
Loosen your grip on the fear which you think protects you  
May you have the courage to open your hands and your heart  
So that the trickle of love within you turns into a steady flowing creek of peace  
And thence into a gushing, bubbling, joy filled stream of life  
May your prayer open you to the experience of being swept out of yourself -  
beyond yourself into the wonder filled prayer of Jesus -  
the divine eternal cosmic river of love  
Amen

*"We have to allow this prayer to become our prayer, we have to enter into the experience of being swept out of ourselves — beyond ourselves into this wonderful prayer of Jesus — this great cosmic river of love."*

John Main  
MC

### 3 Stillness into Silence

*"I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from my Father"*

(Jesus in John 15:15)



(N) In the name of the God who befriends the lonely, Jesus our friend and the Spirit of friendship:

Through attention to your prayer word  
May you learn to move and flow into a stillness  
That is never fixed or immobile but always moving wider, higher and deeper  
May this flowing stillness lead you ever onwards into the deep silence  
Of the pure consciousness of the prayer of Jesus,  
Beyond your own self-consciousness, a place where your whole being  
Is embraced by the powerful mystery of Divine Love continually returning to itself -  
The Love from which all existence springs and to which you and all things return  
Amen

*It is as though we have to create a space within ourselves that will allow this higher consciousness  
— the consciousness of the prayer of Jesus — to envelop us in this powerful mystery."*

John Main  
MC

## 4 Incorporation

*"... the word became flesh"*

(St John Jn 1:14)



(N) In the name of the Lover, the Beloved and Love:

May you be granted this day  
The attentiveness and receptivity you need  
To harken to your prayer word  
And so enter your heart centre  
Then, in this immense inner space of silence,  
May you hear your true name spoken for the first time  
and so be given the fortitude you need  
to continue your journey home to the Source of all.

Amen

*"... the aim of meditation is just this: the realisation of our total incorporation in Jesus Christ, in the cycle of His utterance by, and return to, the Father"*

John Main  
MWW

## 5 Oneness

*“When we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God”*

(St Paul Rom 8:15,16)



(N) In the name of Primordial Being, Emergent Being and Unitive Being<sup>7</sup>:

May the triune God, bless you with oneness  
In the silence of the eternal present,  
May you enter into the unity of your own being  
May you there discover your union with all creation  
In the ever flowing stream of the Spirit of love  
Who is herself, the unity of the triune God  
Amen

*“... everyone of us is invited into this same state of simple, loving union with God”*

John Main  
MC

## 6 The Harmonic

*“God is love... and his love is perfected in us”*

(St John 1Jn 4:12)



(N) In the name of the God of sound, resonance and harmony

In every eternal moment the Lover of all is speaking love  
To you and in you, the Beloved  
May you be enabled to open your heart to this love,  
May you hear Jesus' Word of love to you,  
May his Word reverberate within you,  
And harmonise with the unique song of your own spirit  
Until your whole life resonates with Love  
Amen

*“The mantra is a tuning device, a harmonic to help us to resonate with Jesus”*

John Main  
WMF

## 7 With Your Gaze Fixed on Him

*"let us run with perseverance... with our eyes fixed on Jesus"*

(The writer to the Hebrews Heb 12:2)



(N) In the name of the God in whom we live and move and have our being:

May the God of mystery bless you  
With the humility you need  
To look beyond yourself  
To the sacred place and moment where you meet Jesus.  
Then, with your gaze fixed on Him  
May he guide you into the mystery of love  
So you may know the height and depth of love  
And realise your true self in union with all things  
Amen

*"... we are wholly incorporate in this Word, but we need to know it fully, in the height, length, depth and breadth of our spirit"*

John Main  
WS

## 8 Wake Up

*“everything that becomes visible is light... ‘Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you’”*

(St Paul Eph 5:14)



(N) In the name of the God of life death and resurrection:

Awaken O sleeper, Rise from the dead...  
May the Creator open your eyes to see the pure light in all things,  
May Jesus open your heart to his luminous presence in all things,  
May the Spirit shine with every increasing intensity upon you  
Until you become light and your whole life shines  
Amen

*“The call of deep prayer is no less than the call to be to be yourself, to be in love, in trust, in total openness to what is”*

John Main  
WU

## 9 Ordinariness

*“... look at an ant. Watch. Watch it closely; let it teach you a thing or two. Nobody has to tell it what to do.”*  
(Proverbs 6:6,7)



(N) In the name of the God who is One, Simple and Whole

May your prayer word release you from all demands others burden you with  
And release you too, from your own self-expectations, doubts and fears  
May you be blessed with the gift of inner sight  
To see a vision of your own unity and simplicity in the ordinariness  
Of the extraordinary gift of your being in Christ  
Amen

*“In terms of the mystery of our own being this, ... the boundless centre of ordinary life, is pure prayer. The great wonder and joy of knowing this is that the purity of our meditation, purity of heart, clarifies and unifies all our activity by bringing it all into true harmony, into the dynamic state of other-centredness which is loving service of others.”*

John Main  
MWW

# 10 Who You Are

"Beloved, let us love one another"

(St John 1Jn 4:7)



(N) In the name of the Lover, the Beloved and Love:

May your life may be transformed by the energy of the One  
Who, through Jesus' presence in your hearts  
Is present to you, in you and through you  
May you be enabled to live out of love's true eternal home in your own heart  
Until the Spirit of Love flows naturally and fully through you to your neighbours  
That is who you are  
Amen

*"To enter into wholeness is to enter into self-identity and this is to enter into God. In this movement of love our life finds true spiritual focus and direction. Thus it becomes love of God, love of neighbour and love of self."*

John Main  
MWW

# 11 Transformation

*“And all of us... seeing the glory of the Lord ... are being transformed into his image from one degree of glory to another.”*

(St Paul 2 Cor 3:18)



(N) in the name of the Giver, the Gift and Giving

In your daily times of stillness, silence and humility  
May you continue steadfast, immovable and faithful  
Able to empty yourself of all that is passing away  
And so enter into the enduring reality  
Where Becoming is embraced by Being  
Then, seeing this invisible and eternal Reality  
May your own being be transformed  
With your faith becoming realised in love  
Amen

*“In the silence of faith we are invited to enter into the enduring reality where Becoming is embraced by Being. What is visible passes away, what is invisible endures”*

John Main  
MWW

## 12 Your True Name

*“See, I (the Lord) have engraved your name on the palms of my hands”*

(Isaiah Is 49:16)



(N) In the name of the God of brains, bodies and hands:

May God, on whose palms your true name is engraved  
Grant you the grace to hear your precious name called  
So you can persevere on your journey of faith to become who you are  
- a one off beloved child of the One who is loving to all  
Amen

*“... silence is (important) because in it you hear your own name spoken clearly and unmistakably for the first time.”*

John Main  
WMF

## 13 Vision

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.... I heard a loud voice speaking from the throne: "Now God's home is with people! ...The old things have disappeared."*

(St John Rev 21:1-4)



(N) in the name of the God of the eternal now, each moment, and this precious moment:

May the God of the present moment  
Grant your Spirit an acuity of vision  
To enable you to focus on Jesus alone  
And in him and through him  
see yourself as you are - in Christ.  
And so know, in your inner being  
That the great circle of Being  
Includes even you  
Amen

*"By our entry into silence, by our opening of the eyes of the heart to the light of infinity, we begin to see with a new vision and we see with a sharpness and acuity of vision..."*

John Main  
DS

# 14 Humility

*“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”*

(St James Js 4:10)



(N) In the name of the God of forbearance, faithfulness and humility

May the all patient God  
Give you the patience you need  
To remain on the path  
May the God who is faithful  
Grant you the faithfulness you need  
To persevere on the journey  
And may the God who is poor  
Give you the humility necessary to become empty  
So may you may grow rich in love and wonder  
Amen

*“To be fit for the great tasks in life we must learn to be faithful in humble tasks. Meditation is a very simple and very humble pilgrimage that prepares us for this focusing of our lives on the divine centre.”*

John Main  
HC

# 15 Being Present

*"I am with you always..."*

(Jesus Mtt 28:20)



(N) In the name of the One who is always present to you, in you and through you

May God bless you this day  
And grant you the grace to be present  
To the eternal gracious Presence that lives within you  
So may you see and greet Christ in each person you meet  
in each and every present moment of this precious day  
Amen

*"Learning to meditate is learning constantly to be in this presence and constantly to live out of that presence"*

John Main  
DS

# 16 Signs and Wonders

*“Look how the wild flowers grow”*

(Jesus Lk 12:27)



(N) in the name of the God who made the gap for the river's flow

May you be empowered to hear and respond  
to the call of the Spirit: “leave the shallows and enter into the deep”  
May you be enabled to live out of a deep and direct knowledge  
of a life lived in the mystery of God  
May the divine presence in you  
Enable you to see all things as they are:  
Wondrous signs mediating the love of God  
Amen

*“... if we are on the way, ... then life is wondrous and all things are signs. Everything mediates the love of God”*

John Main  
PC

# 17 The Vision of St Benedict 1

*"Be still, and know that I am God!"*

(Psalm 46:10)



(N) In the name of the God of stillness, silence and union

In the stillness and silence of your prayer word  
May you catch a vision of what is eternally real  
May you be given the purity of heart needed  
to lift your heart and realise your own special place  
In God's new creation of all things  
Amen

*"The message that those who follow St Benedict's vision have is the message, 'Lift up your hearts. Open your eyes to what is eternally real, the new creation, and seek the purity of heart that will open your eyes.'"*

John Main  
CL

## 18 The Vision of St Benedict 2

*“... then we shall see face to face... then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known”*

(St Paul 1Cor 13:12)



(N) in the name of the God who knows and is known in the union of all knowing

May you undertake a wholehearted search for God  
With an ever increasing depth of personal commitment  
May you, from your own heart and experience,  
Know you were created for an infinite expansion of spirit  
To become who you are - a unique sign  
Of the reality of the presence of Christ in God's world  
Amen

*“What the Benedictine vision has to say above all is know from your own heart, from your own experience that you were created for infinite expansion of spirit”*

John Main  
CL

# 19 God-Centredness

*“Those who find joy in obeying the Law of the Lord... are like trees planted by a river”*

(Psalm 1:3)



(N) in the name of the God of sandy river beds, white tree trunks and a vast blue sky:

May you, through your daily commitment to the discipline of meditation  
Be enabled to step away from self-centredness into God-centredness  
And so may you discover your true self in relation to others, creation and God  
And be transformed by the uncovering of the unique gift of your own being  
And the discovery of the essential place you hold in all creation.  
Amen

*“It is perhaps the most important thing for people in our society today to discover the dignity of responding to the unique gift of our own creation”*

John Main  
WMF

## 20 Glory

*"How clearly the sky reveals God's glory!"*

(Psalm 19:1)



(N) In the name of the God of listening hearing and knowing:

May your daily work of silence  
Release the power of the glory of God's Spirit within you  
May your heart rejoice as the light that enlightens everyone  
Dawns eternally in your heart  
May this glory of God's self giving  
Attract you ever onwards, upwards and inwards  
So that the transforming energy of the great silence  
Will bring you to an ever deepening wonder and joy  
on your pilgrimage to the centre  
Amen

*"Silence is a power within us, the life of consciousness, the power of the Spirit who 'in silence is loving to all'"*

John Main  
MWW

## 21 Change

*"Open your mouth, and I will feed you."*

(Psalm 81:10)



In the name of the God of Love Wisdom and Beauty

May you be humbly content, every morning and every evening  
To sit still and upright and say your word for the entire time of your prayer  
May you be able to gently let go of all expectations  
And easily and simply attend to the silence  
May you be enabled to let go of all doubt about the power of your practice  
to change you into the person you are in Christ  
May your heart remain open to the power of the pure light of love in you  
So Christ may release in you his gifts of gentleness, forgiveness and compassion.  
Amen

*"... In the practice itself you will find the powers of gentleness, forgiveness and compassion, all revealing themselves. Do not fear their power to change you."*

John Main  
HC

## 22 Birthright

*“He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will”*

(St Paul Eph 1:5)



(N) In the Name of the Triune God:

In the silence, stillness and humility of meditation  
May your human consciousness awaken to recognise  
The presence and flow of the divine current of love within  
May you, in your personal experience, uncover  
Your unique participation in the glory, beauty and freedom  
Of your birthright as a beloved child of God  
Amen

*“... in Christ we are participating in the eternal communion of love that is God”*

John Main  
MWW

## 23 The Other

*"... they will ask me, 'What is his name?' So what can I tell them?"*

(Moses Ex 3:13)



(N) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

May you receive the gift of open-hearted receptivity to the Spirit of Jesus who dwells in your heart  
May you be able step aside from all thoughts, words and images and become silent, wholly  
attuned towards the other

May you open yourself fully and naturally to the other to hear God's living Word within you, calling  
you into being

Then, in the fullness of Being, may you know yourself eternally sustained by the height, length,  
depth, and breadth of Love (though it is beyond knowledge)

Amen

*"By renouncing self we enter the silence and focus upon the other. The truth to be revealed is the  
harmony of our self with the other."*

John Main  
MWW

## 24 Light

*"... you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light"*

(St Paul Eph 5:8)



(N) In the name of the God of Light, Illumination and reflection:

In your daily practice of stillness silence and poverty  
May you open yourself to the human consciousness of Jesus  
To experience the light of God moving towards you  
May you never try to capture, hold or possess this light  
For it is not for you, but in you and for others  
Now, united with Jesus, you are being led  
Into the infinite freedom of union with the Father.  
May you learn to dwell in this One light  
And so become light and let your light shine, every day  
Amen

*"There is only one enlightenment — the opening of the human consciousness of Jesus to the light of God."*

John Main  
MWW

## 25 The Torrent

*“Whoever believes in me, as the scripture says, will have rivers of living water flowing from his inmost heart”*

(Jesus Jn 7:38)



(N) in the name of Jesus and his Spirit who dwells in you:

God bless you this day  
May you open your heart  
To the the flow of the river of God’s love within you.  
Through Jesus, with Jesus and in Jesus  
May you join the the torrent of love that is the Spirit  
Continually returning to the Father  
Amen

*“there is only the prayer of Jesus. This is the prayer. His prayer is the torrent of love and power flowing continuously between Jesus and the Father, and that is the Spirit.”*

John Main  
WMF

## 26 One Little Word

*"God's message is near you, on your lips and in your heart"*

(St Paul Rom 10:8)



(N) In the name of the Creator the Word and the Spirit

God the Creator bless you this day  
May you receive the power to attend to your one little word  
So that through power of the Word and Spirit  
You may become simple, pure and one  
And find your true self in Jesus  
At last whole and full of joy  
Amen

*"... prayer (is) a journey of progressive simplification, the true humility of self-knowledge, a going beyond words and thoughts in the honesty of the 'one little word'."*

John Main  
MWW

## 27 Weeping

*“Those who wept<sup>8</sup> as they went out carrying the seed will come back singing for joy, as they bring in the harvest”*

(Psalm 126:6)



(N) In the name of the Father of compassion, the Son who weeps with us and the Spirit who groans in us:

May you be granted the faith to transcend the trivial distractedness of your ego  
May you be granted the courage to cast off the possessive self-consciousness of your ego  
May you be granted the gift of pure prayer and, as you pass through the furnace of self  
annihilation,  
May you discover the deepening simplicity which dwells at the core of your being  
May you enter Jesus' kingdom of joy where all you think you have lost is wonderfully restored  
May you then know the wonder of your own being, the beauty of life and the centrality of love  
Amen

*“... the unified consciousness of transcendence (is) a condition of complete simplicity that demands no less than everything”*

John Main  
MWW

## 28 Free at Last

*“... there was a great earthquake... Immediately all the doors flew open and everyone’s chains were unfastened”*

(St Luke Acts 16:26)



(N) In the name of the God who enriches the poor, brings sight to the blind and liberty to the captives:

Jesus has assumed your human mortality and in him  
Your chains have fallen off and your heart is free<sup>9</sup>  
So may you begin this day to live your life fully  
Free from the bonds of fear and desire  
May you find your self utterly in harmony  
With God’s eternally present life-source  
And discover your true self being constantly renewed  
By God’s always expanding energy of Love in you  
Amen

*“What we learn from Jesus’ life is that the destiny of each one of us... to live our lives now... not bound by fear or enchained by desire, but utterly in harmony with the liberating power of God’s own energy.”*

John Main  
WU

## 29 Leading and Being Led

*"In Christ you ... were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it"*

(St Paul Eph 1:13,14)



(N) In the name of the Lover the Beloved and Love...

May you persevere in your twice daily discipline  
Of leaving behind all ideas and words  
So you may enter into the pure silence of love  
And know the intimate mystery of Christ within you  
This is where you become real and discover yourself in Christ  
It is the resurrection to which your birth, life and death  
Have always been leading you  
Amen

*"The only way to know Christ is to enter his personal mystery, in the silence of love, leaving ideas and words behind us. We leave them behind so that we can enter fully the love to which life, death and meditation is leading each of us."*

John Main

(From his last pastoral letter "The Oceans of God" December 1982) MWW

## 30 Resurrection

*“... just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man... For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality”*

(St Paul 1Cor 15:49,53)



(N) In the name of the life-giving Creator, the suffering-rising Christ and the transforming Spirit:

May your daily times of stillness, silence and humility  
Enable you to enter more deeply  
Into the mystery of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus  
May your consciousness stir into a clear perception  
Of the love in which you are held and which lives in you for others  
May you keep on deepening your participation in this love  
Until the coming day when Love will be fulfilled in you  
The time when death will be swallowed up in victory  
and the perishable clothed with the imperishable  
Amen

*“End and beginning are two ends of the string of life held in the mystery of God and joined together in the mystery of Christ’s oneness with God and humanity.”*

John Main  
MWW

# 31 Unceasing Prayer

*"Pray constantly"*

(St Paul 1Thess 5:17)



(N) In the name of the God who knows what we need, prays within us and is the answer to our prayer:

During your daily times of prayer  
May the God's Spirit open your heart  
To unite your spirit with Jesus' unceasing prayer to his Father  
So may you come to a deep sense that in every moment of every day  
Your life is grounded in the loving communion  
That flows between Jesus and his Father  
Amen

*The Christian experience cannot be contained by any set of propositions, by any library of books, by any formulas or any creeds. It can only be adequately expressed in the human experience of Jesus Himself. He alone, of all human beings, was able to say of God, 'Abba, Father.'*

John Main  
WU

## 32 Peace

*... the peace of God which transcends human understanding, will keep constant guard over your hearts and minds as they rest in Christ Jesus”*

(St Paul Phil 4:7)



(N) In the name of the God of peace bringing, peace making and peace building

May you be blessed with the freshness, honesty and integrity  
You need to live a life fully turned away from self and unto the Other  
May your mind and heart discern the need  
For you to continue to change and grow  
And attend to what is emerging in you and in your circumstances  
May a newly awakened creative energy arise in your consciousness  
To enable your heart to meet, hold and harmonise the conflicts of your life  
As your centre holds these paradoxes of being  
In dynamic and wonder filled suspension  
May your heart be enabled to make and build peace within you  
Amen

*The centre is the heart. It is the open space where this dynamic suspension of conflict is both the goal of all life-affirming movement and the condition that makes infinite growth possible. Another name for this dynamic suspension of paradox is peace.*

John Main  
MWW

## 33 The Centre

*"...the Kingdom of God is within you."*

(Jesus Lk 17:21)



(N) in the name of the Creator whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere.

As you journey from the periphery to the centre  
May you daily gather the courage, energy and dedication you need  
To persevere with your daily times of stillness and silence  
May you thereby, gradually transcend all aspects of your life  
(family life, relationships, work, recreation)  
To become profoundly open to the Source -  
The source of all energy and harmony at your centre -  
There may you dwell in union, peace and joy  
In the presence of Presence in you own heart  
Amen

*"The way to the centre is the way of our daily meditation, the time we set aside every morning and every evening of our life."*

John in Main  
IB

## 34 Wealth

*“He was rich beyond our telling, yet he became poor for your sakes so that his poverty might make you rich.”*

(St Paul 2Cor 8:9)



(N) In the name of the self-giving God, the poverty of the suffering Jesus and the Spirit of Love:

May you find within you self,  
The infinitely uncontainable energy of the love,  
In that place in your heart where Jesus has always been,  
Seeking to empty and lose his divinity in your humanity  
Now God has sent his Spirit to dwell in your heart  
So that you may discover the fullness of love in your emptiness,  
And the wealth of joy and peace through your poverty  
Amen

*In obedience to the dynamic of the divine being, God seeks another to whom he can give himself, into whom God can empty and lose divinity. For Jesus we are that Other.*

John Main  
MWW

## 35 Becoming Other-Centred

*“The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had: ... of his own free will he gave up all he had”*

(St Paul Phil 2:5,7)



(N) in the name of the self emptying Creator, The Son who gave his all and the Spirit who is the gift:

May your daily times of meditation  
Teach you that you are not the centre of the universe  
May your self-centred approach to life diminish and  
Your practice transform you into one  
Who is centred in the one who lives in your heart:  
In Jesus, who is himself always simultaneously other-centred in God and in you  
Amen

*“...as we progress we reduce this self-centred perception and become more other-centred.  
Meditation ... sets the standard of other-centredness for life as a whole.”*

John Main  
MWW

## 36 Resonance

*"... you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God"*

(St Paul Col 3:3)



(N) In the name of the God of red dirt, white grass and blue sky:

May you ever be given the inward sight you need to follow Jesus in the path into silence  
May you ever be faithful, in all sincerity of heart, to your word, each morning and each evening  
May you ever be gentle and patient with yourself as you daily say your word  
May you ever be receptive, open to the power of God, the divine energy, the divine love  
Until this energy flows strongly in your own heart, the silence becomes profound and  
The whole of your interior and exterior life resonates in harmony with the power of God  
Amen

*"we are called to be resonant with God (and) in Him... this is our destiny: to find peace beyond ourselves in God."*

John Main  
DS

## 37 Rain

*"... let us press on to know the Lord; ... he will come to us like the showers, like the spring rains that water the earth."*

(Hosea 6:3)



Let us pray to the God of germination, growth and fruitfulness:

Fecund God  
Open our hearts in Jesus  
Send the gentle Autumn rains  
To germinate the seeds of love in us  
Send the drenching Winter rains  
So your love may grow strong in us  
Send the late Spring rains  
To ripen the fruits of your Spirit in us  
Then may our lives may be blessed  
With a bountiful summer harvest of love  
Shared in joyful celebration  
With all creation.<sup>10</sup>  
Amen

*"... just as our physical growth takes place in its own natural rhythm, ... so does our prayer life develop quite naturally. We ... simply say the mantra without haste, or expectation"*

John Main  
WS

## 38 The Tune

*“Birds find nooks and crannies in your house, sparrows and swallows make nests there. They lay their eggs and raise their young, singing their songs in the place where we worship”*

(Psalm 84:3)



(N) In the name of the God who sings:

May you be given ears to hear the song of the One  
Who sings in and through all created things  
May the songs of birds echo in your heart  
And resonate with the songs of your soul  
Until you live your life in tune with the One  
Whose song of Love is sounding to all and in all creation  
All the time  
Amen

*Faith endures. It changes only by growing to be more perfectly what it always is, our personal commitment to truth.*

John Main  
MWW

## 39 The Glorious Ordinary

*"... those who trust in the Lord for help will find their strength renewed. They will rise on wings like eagles<sup>11</sup>; they will run and not get weary; they will walk and not grow weak"*

(Isaiah Is 40:31)



(N) In the name of the God of big things, small things and all things:

This day and every day may you give space and time  
To allow your spirit to breathe, gain sustenance and rest in silence, stillness and humility  
May you open yourself to the glory of the ordinary  
And so discover that the ordinary is full of the potentiality of love  
In this vision, may you find your weary, weak spirit  
Strengthened and renewed with the gift of the wings and legs necessary  
To fly, sprint and stroll into the heart of the divine Mystery  
Amen

*"Just as breathing is necessary for the life of the body, so meditation is necessary to develop and sustain spiritual life."*

John Main  
MWW

## 40 The Mother of All

*"You ... forgot the God who gave birth to you"*

(Moses Deut 32:18)



(N) In the name of the generative God who birthed you into being:

May the Mother of all life  
Whose love is the energy of the universe  
Accompany you to the creative centre of your life  
May her love enable you to journey beyond your own self-centredness  
And attend solely to the Other to rest in the infinite liberty of love  
Amen

*"... as Jesus was conceived and grew in bodily reality within Mary, so no less really He is conceived by the power of the Spirit and grows to full stature with the power of love within every responsive human heart."*

John Main  
CL

# 41 Flowing

*"... the Holy Spirit that was given to us has flooded our hearts with God's love"*  
(St Paul Rom 5:5)



(N) In the name of the Lord who is the Spirit:

May the Lord who made you simply to be who you are  
Enable you to become silent and still  
May you, in simple poverty, open your heart to the Spirit of Jesus  
So your life may flow with the beauty of the Spirit  
Coursing through your whole being  
For this you were made  
Amen

*"The Spirit is the stream flowing within our hearts."*

John Main  
WU

## 42 The Energy of God

*"Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!"*

(St Luke Lk 23:46)



(N) in the name of the Father, the Son and the Spirit:

In the silence of prayer you have heard Jesus' invitation to enter into the fullness of life  
May you now be assured that God's Spirit of love has filled your heart  
And given you the commitment you need to enter fullness of life  
May you experience this power of self-giving that has been given you  
May you overcome all the hesitancies which are stopping you from giving your all to the silence  
May your absolute commitment to the silence become of supreme importance to you  
So may you commune with, not only the silence of peace, but the silence of the energy of God's  
Love  
Amen

*"(God) gives us everything but in order to enter that fullness, in order to receive that gift we  
ourselves have to be equally generous. Everything is given both by God and by ourselves."*

John Main  
BW

## 43 The Spring

*"If anyone is thirsty, he can come to me and drink! Whoever who believes in me... will have rivers of living water flowing from his inmost heart"*

(Jesus Jn 7:38)



(N) In the name of the God of the Spring, the Stream and the Flow:

May you sense the flow of love within your heart  
Summoning you to recover a lost generosity, innocence and purity  
It is Jesus calling you, "Follow me, I am the way."  
Whatever difficulties and demands now confront you  
May you hear and respond to Jesus invitation  
And, as you follow the stream of love to its source,  
May you be given the faithfulness and persistence you need to keep saying your word  
May your prayer word sustain, refresh and guide you on the way  
May you stay on the path until you reach the Spring  
And find yourself living in the full light of Christ  
Having not only recovered your lost innocence  
But grown to full maturity - the life of Christ fulfilled in you  
Amen

*"Our call is to come into the full light of Christ, and it is a call given to each one of us to grow to that maturity and full stature which is nothing less than the full, immortal life of Christ."*

John Main  
WU

## 44 Blessing

*"I am giving you a new command—love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you must love one another."*

(Jesus Jn 13:34)



(N) In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

May the eternal God, our Father  
Today and every day  
bless you in Jesus  
Then, in the power of Jesus' Spirit  
May you, in turn, bless all you meet this day  
With the same love without measure.  
Amen

*"The world will believe when we ourselves dwell fully in Gods presence."*

John Main  
BW

## 45 The Vision

*"... everything got started in the Son and finds its purpose in him"*

(St Paul Col 1:16 )



(N) In the name of the God who is sight, the vision and the seeing:

May the Great Giver - the source of all being  
Open your hearts to see the eternal reality of Jesus in you  
May you be blessed with a vision of Christ  
So that, focussed on him,  
And by the power of his Spirit,  
You may see yourself and all reality as it is - in God.  
Amen

*"The vision – make no mistake about it; every one of us is summoned to it – the vision is the blinding light of God's almighty love."*

John Main  
FA

## 46 Hope

*"... the mystery ... is Christ in you, the hope of glory."*

(St Paul Col 1:27)



(N) In the name of the Lover, the Beloved and Love:

May the Spirit who lives out the divine mystery in your heart  
Empower you to discover your true self in the big silence within you  
In that secret place, knowing yourself as beloved in Jesus,  
May you realise your communion with the Great Lover  
In whom you were made to dwell forever  
in the joy and peace of this moment.  
Amen

*"The mystery of the vision is that this experience of oneness, of wholeness, of harmony is to be found deep within each one of us, to be found within us in the Spirit of God who dwells in our hearts, Our meditation is the outward expression of our inward commitment to the presence of that Spirit of God, dwelling in our hearts."*

John Main  
DS

## 47 Seeing Reality

*"The Beloved Son... is before all things, and in him all things hold together."*

(St Paul Col 1:17)



(N) In the name of the God of who holds all things together:

May the vision you glimpse in your times of silence  
Yield an ever growing, powerful humility within you  
Which strengthens your resolve to keep on keeping on  
May your journey into the Deep Silence become a crucible of integrity  
Purifying your soul in the fires of Love  
And yielding the fruits of a common-union in your life  
May the Spirit who is loving to all, lead you into the oneness  
Which is the wholeness of everlasting communion with all creation  
Amen

*... the true nature of this journey we are all making together (is) a journey of faith, an expanding of the capacity to love and to be loved, and a deepening of our vision of reality.*

John Main  
PC

# 48 This Propitious Day

*"This is the day that the Lord has made"*

(Psalm 118:24)



(N) In the name of the God of yesterday, today and every day:

May God bless you this day  
And grant you the grace to be present  
To the eternal gracious Presence that lives within you  
Then, in Christ, may you see and greet Christ's presence  
in each precious person you meet  
in every present moment of this propitious day  
Amen

*"We do indeed learn, from being in His presence, to live out of the resources of that presence, thereby to communicate His goodness, His holiness to everyone we meet."*

John Main  
WU

## 49 Meaning and Purpose

*"I keep going on, grasping ever more firmly that purpose for which Christ grasped me."*

(St Paul Phil 3:12)



(N) In the name of the God of the path, the journey and the arrival

When you sit each day in stillness and silence

May you always remember that you are being called and guided

Into a state of constant wholehearted openness to love

May the Spirit use your prayer word to lead you into the utter fullness and simplicity of pure prayer

May you be given the strength to overcome the obstacles on your path to simplicity

May you receive the grace you need to freely dispose of all that you do not need for your journey

And, in the end, may you be surprised by joy in the discovery of the fullness, meaning and purpose of your one wild precious life<sup>12</sup>

Amen

*"... nothing can be said about prayer that can at the same time describe its utter fullness and its utter simplicity"*

John Main  
MWW

## 50 Your Inner Room

*"... when you pray, go into your own room, shut your door and pray to your Father privately"*

(Jesus Matt 6:6)



(N) In the name of the God whose absolute demand is for complete simplicity demanding not less than everything:

May the God of silence bless you this day  
May Jesus greet you at the door of your still heart  
In that quiet space may your spirit unite with Spirit of Jesus  
To join him and the eternal song of all creation to chorus as one crying "Abba" Father  
Amen

*"... Dame Julian of Norwich... described prayer as a way of complete simplicity, demanding not less than everything."*

John Main  
BW

# 51 The Guardian

*“Guard the good deposit entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.”*

(St Paul 2Tim 1:14)



In the name of God our Maker Lover and Guardian<sup>13</sup>

During your daily times of silence and stillness  
May you attend generously and completely to your prayer word  
May your word keep watch over and protect your mind  
To keep you free from trivial and wandering thoughts  
May your word free you from temptations to ‘holy’ feelings  
And the deceptions of pretentious piety  
May your word continue to guard your heart and mind each morn and eve  
And so purify your heart, bringing you to poverty of spirit  
So your life may remain be wholly undivided and  
Continually centred upon the prayer of Jesus eternally flowing within you  
Amen

*“..the mantra is like a watchdog guarding your heart. That is why you are asked to learn to say it from the beginning to the end of each meditation”*

John Main  
WU

## 52 Steady Trust

*“Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love.”*

(St Paul 1Cor 13:13)



We are born in love  
We live in love  
We return to love  
All things come and go  
Love endures forever....

A blessing:  
May God the Father Son and Spirit  
Bless you this day to live in the love  
From which you have come  
And to which you are going<sup>14</sup>  
Amen

*“To possess this knowledge (of the love of God) is to allow oneself to be possessed by the infinite love of God and to re-find oneself transformed into servants of that love. We love one another because ‘we possess the mind of Christ’”*

John Main  
MWW

# Sources for John Main Quotes

- HC The Heart of Creation (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1988; New York: Continuum, 1998).  
MC Moment of Christ (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1984).  
MWW Monastery Without Walls (Canterbury Press Norwich 2007)  
WMF Word Made Flesh (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1993; New York: Continuum, 1998).  
WS Word into Silence (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1980; New York: Paulist Press, 1981).  
WU Way of Unknowing (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1989; New York: Crossroad, 1989)

From "DAILY READINGS with JOHN MAIN Silence & Stillness in Every Season" Edited by PAUL T HARRIS published 2010 in Singapore by Medio Media:

- BW Being on the Way, tapes (London: Medio Media, 1991)  
CL Community of Love (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1990; New York: Continuum, 1999)  
DS Door to Silence: An Anthology for Christian Meditation (Canterbury Press, UK, 2006)  
FA Fully Alive (Medio Media, US, 1991)  
IB In the Beginning (Medio Media Collected Talks VIII)  
PC The Present Christ

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> "To Bless the Space Between Us" it would be helpful to first read the addendum, "To Retrieve the Lost Art of Blessing". I promise, you will be blessed.

<sup>2</sup> See p58

<sup>3</sup> Paul Harris Silence & Stillness in Every Season Daily Readings with John Main. Medio Media 2010

<sup>4</sup> Moment of Christ pxii

<sup>5</sup> Moment of Christ pxii

<sup>6</sup> Word Into Silence (1980) from the Preface by John Main

<sup>7</sup> "We conceived God as holy Being. We conceived Being, in turn, as both transcendent and immanent—transcendent because it is not itself a being or a property of beings but the prior condition that there may be any beings or properties, and immanent because it is present-and-manifest in every particular being. We conceived it further as both dynamic and stable, and formulated this in terms of primordial Being, expressive Being, and unitive Being" (John Macquarrie Principles of Christian Theology SCM 1966)

<sup>8</sup> In Israel's climate grain crops were sown following a hot dry summer and was initiated by the first rains of Autumn. The grains of wheat were broadcast onto bare, dry ground. The seeds that were 'thrown away' were the very grains that could be used to sustain your family for the coming winter., but "the seeds (may) die in the dry earth" (Joel 1:17). Throwing away your food takes both courage and faith and the cost is revealed in tears. However, casting the bread seeds away to 'die' was essential to ensure there could be joyous songs of harvest in late Spring. Just so, John Main insists that "... we pray to the degree that we turn away from ourselves... and If this sounds like annihilation, it is only because it is a description of the unified consciousness of transcendence a condition of complete simplicity that demands no less than everything". It is only by this 'throwing away' of all that sustains us, can we know the joy of pure prayer "the wonder of our being, the beauty of life, the centrality of love" (Letters from the Heart).

<sup>9</sup> "Long my imprisoned spirit lay/Fast bound in sin and nature's night;/Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,/I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;/My chains fell off, my heart was free;/I rose, went forth and followed Thee." Charles Wesley (1738) A song from my Methodist childhood.

<sup>10</sup> Where Jesus lived wheat, was sown in Autumn, grew in Winter, ripened in Spring and was harvested in early Summer. The Autumn and Spring rains were essential to a good harvest. The most frequent image of Jesus' resurrection in the Bible is not the green shoots of 'new birth' emerging in Spring, but the gathering of the 'firstfruits' in Summer, assuring an abundant coming harvest.

<sup>11</sup> When this photograph was taken both the handler and the wedge tailed eagle were looking out the hills where another eagle was hunting. These birds are very territorial and will quickly fight should another bird encroach on their grounds. The bird in the distance was much bigger than his eagle and the handler wanted to avoid a fight, so the eagle part of the 'show' was ended soon after I took this shot!

<sup>12</sup> "... what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" is a line is from the poem "The Summer Day" by Mary Oliver and "Surprised by Joy" is borrowed from C S Lewis.

<sup>13</sup> a phrase from Julian of Norwich

<sup>14</sup> Based on a prayer by Peter Traben Haas *Centering Prayers*