

WCCM-USA

UPDATE AND NEWS

VOL. 47, No. 1, FEBRUARY 2024



**This year's
John Main Seminar
will be led by
Jason Gordon
Archbishop of
Trinidad and Tobago
&
Fr Laurence Freeman**

In a world collapsing in on itself in a failure to listen and to open to others, the resounding wisdom of Isaiah's call to 'widen your tent' is like a beam of light. It summons us to open our hearts, our ears and our minds in all directions in an ever-widening spirit of universal welcome and solidarity.

Our annual 2024 John Main Seminar will be held in New Harmony, Indiana where in 1991 the WCCM was formed officially following a JMS with Fr Bede Griffiths. Our speaker is Jason Gordon, the Archbishop of Trinidad and Tobago. Jason has been meditating since the early years of his priesthood and has been teaching it in all parts of the church and society. He has also experienced the power of the synodal process at the grass-roots level in his spiritual leadership of the Archdiocese of Trinidad and Tobago and later at the global level in Rome. Synodality is simply the ancient wisdom of consultation, attentive conversation in what St Benedict calls 'calling the members to council'. But as Jason will describe, the active agent is deep listening which makes it a contemplative work and the leader of the process is the Spirit. Contemplative experience prepares us and informs such transformative communication and so they should be seen as two sides of the one path to recovery.

Renewal and discernment will be woven into the Seminar at New Harmony as well as times for meditation and discovering the village's strong spiritual history and presence today.

To register and for more information, visit our website:
<https://wccm-usa.org/>

Also we invite you to watch a video homily from Archbishop J on youtube: The Power of Prayer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hYfhC07ifSk>

Voices from Trinidad and Tobago

Archbishop Jason Gordon, or 'Archbishop J' as he is fondly called is best known for his passion for reaching out to the poorest of the poor, armed not with weapons, but with love and solidarity.

He is not afraid to walk alongside the forgotten, the 'lepers' in our society, the physically, financially and spiritually marginalized who exist in the valleys of darkness in these Caribbean Islands.

Coming from a home where his father taught him to 'give 'til it hurts' even when times were tough, social obligation isn't just a phrase for him but his lifeblood.

Archbishop J is also a well-known personality because of his tv and social media presence both nourishing the intellect and nurturing the spirit. He has an incredible ability to understand the 'vibes at ground level' and is easily recognised wherever he goes in the Caribbean as a man who reaches out, bridging the gap between TV screens and the streets.

In a world often blinded by self-interest, Archbishop J is a leader who inspires, always guiding us towards a brighter, more compassionate tomorrow.





Above, springtime in New Harmony; top right, WCCM visitors in 2018; right, center of the hedge labyrinth; far right, sidewalk monument quote, Fr Laurence Freeman, following JMS 1991.

Memories of New Harmony, Part I

offered by Tom King, WCCM meditator

I first came to New Harmony, IN quite by accident. I am a Chemical Engineer and much of my business throughout my career was oil refineries. If there is an oil refinery in the US, I have probably visited it sometime in my career.

There is a tiny refinery in Mt Vernon, IN about 15 miles from New Harmony. I was visiting this refinery probably in the mid-80s. When we had completed our meeting, the process manager asked where I was staying while in the area. I think I was staying at a Holiday Inn along the interstate about 30 miles away. He said, “No, you are not”. He told me to call and cancel that reservation and to go check in at **The New Harmony Inn**. And so I did. That visit started, if not a love affair with New Harmony, certainly a kind of affection affair.

I remember being attracted by the quaint streets, old well-kept homes, the Shaker type furniture of the Inn and the lovely Red Geranium Restaurant with the great wine list. After spending way too much time in Interstate hotels and Interstate hotel food, the New Harmony Inn was a welcome retreat. And it did have a “retreat” feel to it even before I was drawn to retreats.

So, in the next 10 or so years I probably visited the town three or four times, but I was always aware of it as a nice memory stored in some slightly dusty file in the back of my brain. In those subsequent visits I learned a little more about the history of the town but not much. I was more interested in the lovely, quiet setting, the great swimming pool and of course, the restaurant and wine list.

The town was founded as a Utopian Society in 1814 by a group of Lutheran separatists who had moved to Pennsylvania from Germany to escape persecution from the established Lutheran church. In 1814, their leader George Rapp, bought 20,000 acres of land on the Wabash River in Indiana and he and his followers moved from Pennsylvania to Harmonie, as it was called. They agreed to hold everything in common under Rapp’s direction and to live celibate lives in order to be ready for the coming Millenium or end of the world as we know it. The town prospered. Farming, tanneries, breweries, distilleries were all successful. However, after 10 years, the Millenium had not come, and the Harmonists as they were called decided to go back to Pennsylvania.

In 1824, the town was sold to Robert Owen, a Welsh industrialist and his partner, William McClure. The desire was to build a society where social justice prevailed and education was free to all. McClure brought a group of scientists and learned adventurers to New Harmony on what is now known as the Boat Load of Knowledge. Unfortunately the Owenite social experiment failed two years after it began and Robert Owen returned to Wales; his sons and daughter, however, stayed as did many of the scientists. With the central idea of education for all, “...scientific, cultural, social, and economic benefits were realized not only by New Harmony, but also by the Midwest and nation at large.”

Stay tuned for more of Tom’s remarkable story, and more on the WCCM—New Harmony connection in the next issue!

Meditation With Children in the US

MWC recently held follow-up meetings from its August Program, **The Peace of Childhood**, which were open to participants from the United States. We heard from meditators in California, Texas and South Carolina who have programs on-going in schools for students and parents. Participants expressed being “reinvigorated” by hearing from one another and sharing a meditation time together.

We decided to offer such zoom meetings throughout the year to share ideas for initiating and sustaining meditation with children, parents, and teachers. Stay tuned for notices of upcoming sessions.

Thanks to a generous donor, WCCM-USA has materials available free of charge to those working with children, specifically: Noel Keating’s Book, *Meditation with Children: A Resource for Teachers and Parents*, and *Meditation & Education* by Charles and Patricia Posnett.

In addition, our volunteers are happy to consult with you about training teachers and parents to meditate with children, so let us know how we can be most helpful.

Please email mwc@wccm-usa.org to be added to our email list, to be alerted to upcoming programs, to request materials, or for help getting started on giving the gift of peace to our children through meditation. The fruits of meditation will enrich their lives beyond measure.



Blessings,
Patricia Moore-Pastides
Volunteer Coordinator, MWC
mwc@wccm-usa.org

From Our **US National Coordinator**



Celebrating \$50,000 given to the Annual Appeal

Our 2023 Annual Appeal received more than \$50,000 in gifts from across our community. I am grateful for such an enthusiastic response! Such giving is a particular blessing as we host the 2024 John Main Seminar in New Harmony, IN July 8-13. In addition to supporting the ongoing work of our community, the funds given will help to pay costs for JMS leaders Archbishop Jason Gordon of Trinidad and Fr. Laurence Freeman and will provide scholarships to those who otherwise would not be able to attend.

Heartfelt thanks to all who gave!

We invite you to support
WCCM-USA

ONLINE:

wccm-usa.org/support-our-work/

CHECKS SENT TO:

WCCM-USA Ltd. Corp.
1112 Third Street, Suite #9
Neptune Beach, FL 32266-5066
Thank You!

The Eight Big Problems of Life Video Series

On January 20, a large group of WCCM-USA members and friends joined together on Zoom to meditate, listen to a recorded teaching from Fr. Laurence Freeman and then join in a group discussion about the teaching. The teaching was very insightful and the group discussion was a lot of fun and everyone seemed to really enjoy their experience.

The plan is to meet each quarter, throughout the rest of the year and move through the rest of the 4-part series.



Though all four videos are available on the WCCM+ platform, it is a wonderful experience to be able to get together with other contemplatives and to pray together and share thoughts about Fr. Laurence’s teachings and our own lives.

The depth of understanding Fr. Laurence has about these eight problems human beings face and the contemplative solution to these problems is deeply moving.

Please join us for our next session on April 20th. Look for the invite a couple weeks beforehand.

Paul Dunn
WCCM Oblate
Regional Coordinator NJ/PA
Pauleddunn365@gmail.com

UPCOMING & CURRENT EVENTS

Save the Date!

Registrations open March 1st

Visit our WCCM-USA Website for information

The John Main Seminar

July 8-13, 2024

New Harmony, Indiana USA

(where in 1991, WCCM was formally begun)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://wccm-usa.org/>

<https://wccm.org/major-events/john-main-seminar/>

WCCM-USA Spring Community Day

Via Zoom — Let us all gather!

April 23, 2024

Invitation to come in your email!

More Info: Pat King (patrickking50@gmail.com)

The Eight Big Problems of Life series

Via Zoom April 20, 2024

More Info: Paul Dunn (pauleddunn365@gmail.com)

Currently Meeting Online

Monthly First Monday Compline

via Zoom

Every First Monday of the Month

For your convenience, there will be a zoom group on the east coast and also a zoom group on the west coast.

Times: 8:00 PM Eastern and 7:00 PM Pacific

(You will need to translate to your time zone!)

Bill Hobbs (bhobbs@jesuitretreatcenter.org)

8:00 PM Eastern time

Patrice Jones (pyjharris1@gmail.com)

7:00 PM Pacific time

Watch your emails for invitations and more information

Contact Us: WCCM-USA

**WCCM-USA
Administrative Office**
Sharon@wccm-usa.org
520-829-3197

NEWSLETTER
For article submissions,
please contact Sharon@
wccm-usa.org

We appreciate your support of the publication of
this newsletter. Online donations are welcome.

<https://wccm-usa.org>

Please Help Us Stay In Touch!

We need your consent to send email updates,
announcements and event information.

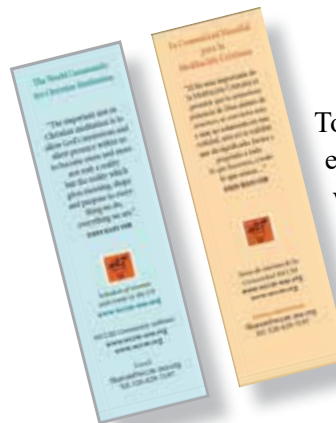
What you need to do:

- Go to <https://wccm-usa.org> and scroll down to Join Our Mailing List. Send us your current contact information.

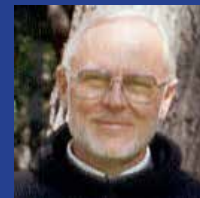
or

- Email Sharon@wccm-usa.org or call **520-829-3197** and indicate that you want to hear from us.

Sharing with your Group — English and Spanish bookmarks with Fr John's prayer.



To request bookmarks,
email Sharon (Sharon@wccm-usa.org)
or call
520-829-3197)



“The experience of prayer, of being filled with
the Spirit, increases our capacity for wonder
and our capacity for understanding the
transcendent potential of our own being.”

JOHN MAIN OSB
The Power of the Mantra
Word Into Silence