

# WCCM-USA

## UPDATE AND NEWS

VOL. 48, No. 3, OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2024

### Events in the Community:

#### **MOM Event in WCCM Chicagoland**

WCCM Chicagoland welcomed 60 people to our Morning of Meditation at St. John of the Cross Parish Center, Western Springs, IL, on Saturday, September 21, 2024. We were honored to have Professor Bernard McGinn, with whom many of you are familiar from his WCCM series, "Into the Mystics," as our guest speaker. Dr. McGinn gave an informative and inspiring lecture on 16th century Christian mystic, St. Teresa of Avila, who is a model for us of contemplation and action.

The Chicagoland community hosts three Mornings of Meditation each year, in the Fall, and during Advent and Lent. The Mornings begin with Hospitality and include two periods of meditation in addition to a program. Our audiences include people who are new to Christian Meditation, and we've been using the cartoon, "How to Do Christian Meditation," as an introduction before the first meditation period. The Mornings have been a great way to gather members of our local groups and to introduce CM to others. — [wccmchgo@gmail.com](mailto:wccmchgo@gmail.com)

part of the beautiful Villa De Matel built by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in 1928 and reserved a Tuesday afternoon thru Friday morning spot in late October. No weekends were available until May. The Center is dedicated to silence. No talking is allowed except in the meeting rooms, the meals are in silence, the paths through the grounds are silent, it is a perfect fit for us.

We chose the JMS 2024 "Widening Your Tent" as our topic and watched the videos in our morning and afternoon gatherings and discussed what we had taken in during those sessions in the evenings prior to compline.

We had 5 meditation sessions per day including the wccm tradition of an optional 7:00 am morning session. Several of the attendees needed some convincing that this early session was indeed optional, they were allowed even encouraged to sleep in if that is what their body needed. Many retreats ago I was given the job of leading that early morning session. My duties consisted of lighting the candle(s), straightening the chairs, picking up yesterday's coffee cups, putting on some appropriate music, usually Margaret Rizza, to set the atmosphere, and then sound the chime at exactly 7:00. I have always loved that first session, the darkness mixed with candlelight, the music leading you to silence, no words-readings, announcements, etc.-to break the atmosphere, the meditators entering quietly, one by one, bowing to the icon, taking their seat, ready to begin.

#### **Retreat held at the Ruah Center in Houston**



We held a retreat last week. Our group consisted of 9 Houston area meditators from 5 different groups in the Houston area. In August I had contacted the Ruah Center,

We are just now as a community, as is the world, recovering from the Covid epidemic. This summer under the quite capable hands of Archbishop Jason Gordon at JMS 2024, we were led in a discussion of "what are the tent stakes", the foundational parts, of our community. How do we widen those stakes, how do we continue to "communicate and nurture" this gift we have received to the world. Certainly, spending time on retreat in community is part of that foundation. — [patrickking50@gmail.com](mailto:patrickking50@gmail.com)

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## ***Encouragement in the Midst of a Fractured Culture: Online Event***

Our 7-week retreat which began in September continues through the first week of November.

We have had engaging conversations around the topics of the retreat which have included, but are not limited to:

Encouragement through Surrender

Encouragement through Lovingkindness

Encouragement through Hope with Patience

Encouragement through Christ Consciousness

Encouragement comes by 'Going Through'

Each week participants receive a 12-18 minute voice memo presenting the topic of the week. On Wednesday, they receive some additional materials via email... poems, quotes, photos, etc. to add to their consideration.

When we meet on Thursday, we open with 15 minutes of conversation regarding the material/topic of the week. We enter into a time of lectio, again supporting our theme—followed by Meditation. We conclude the evening with the Lovingkindness Meditation.

Many kind emails have been received about the flow and content of this special retreat. It has been a wonderful way to stay whole and centered as we wait for the November 4th Elections. — [thecelticmonk@att.net](mailto:thecelticmonk@att.net)

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## ***Contemplative Summit***

Outreach Event with [SpiritualWanderlust.com](http://SpiritualWanderlust.com)

Across history, contemplation has been something of a wild thing, crossing denominational borders, social boundaries, and faith traditions. I think of a clergy person that once told me, "I can feel to have more in common with meditators of other traditions than with non-meditators of my own denomination."

The wildness of contemplation in our time is giving rise to events such as the Contemplative Summit, hosted by Spiritual Wanderlust October 24-27 and sponsored by the WCCM-USA. Oblate and Regional Coordinator Tim Kelly and I presented at this event that featured voices from across the wider contemplative community, including Fr. James Martin, Carmen Acevedo Butcher, James Finley and Christine Valters Paintner. It included Catholic, Protestant, monastic, Sufi, Buddhist, and Native American leaders.

Tim's session on "Meditation and Healing from Trauma" described how his vocation working with refugees and life as a meditator came together in the formation of meditation groups for refugees coming out of traumatic experiences. His conversation partner was intrigued with meditation crossing faith traditions--many of the refugees are Muslims--and Tim pointed out that John Main learned meditation from a Hindu swami before discovering the practice within his own Christian tradition. I presented a live session that introduced the WCCM and the practice of Christian meditation, led participants in twenty minutes of meditation, and concluded with conversation on meditation.

For me, one of the Contemplative Summit's delights was that the host for Tim's session and mine was a fellow Presbyterian pastor I sent to seminary with twenty-five years ago! Since then, we have both deepened in contemplative practice and have become grateful for the contemplative movement that is growing in our time. We laughed at how even heady Presbyterians are coming into contemplative life. But there it is, contemplation is a wild thing...

— [matt@wccm-usa.org](mailto:matt@wccm-usa.org)

## **Save the Date!**

***Come Away to the Quiet***

**AN ADVENT/WINTER SOLSTICE RETREAT**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21st, 2024**

**(All times are EST)**

In the midst of the busyness, we are inviting you to come away to the quiet of a day-long, Advent/Winter Solstice Retreat. Our retreat will follow the times of the Liturgy of the Hours. At each of the designated hours, there will be a short presentation followed by meditation. The presentations may include Poetry, Lectio Divina, Music and Readings.

We will follow the traditional Hours practiced by monks and mystics in monasteries, hermitages and at home.

***Join when you can!***

5:30 am	Vigils
6:45 am	Lauds
7:30 am	Terce
12:15 pm	Sext
2:15 pm	None
5:30 pm	Vespers with Communion
7:30 pm	Compline

Watch for an email invitation or go to [www.wccm-usa.org](http://www.wccm-usa.org) to register. For more information: [bronagh.oblsb@icloud.com](mailto:bronagh.oblsb@icloud.com)

Christian meditation is a deep grace in my life. The practice of meditation I learned through the WCCM-USA is a pearl of great price that I can't quantify with a dollar amount. If this is the case for you, I invite you to join me in contributing to the 2024 Annual Appeal.

While the WCCM-USA asks no fee to learn meditation or participate in a group, our ability to share and nurture the gift of meditation is greatly helped by financial contributions. We recently co-sponsored the Contemplative Summit at which Tim Kelly and I presented. We will have a booth and advertisements at next year's Congress for Religious Education in Los Angeles. We take pleasure in providing scholarships to events in the U.S. and

### From Our US National Coordinator



Bonnevaux and, of course, have expenses for operating as a community.

If you receive the Annual Appeal letter by email or postal service, you may give by those means, digitally or through the mail. You may also give at [wccm-usa.org](http://wccm-usa.org) by clicking on "Support Our Work." Gifts of any amount are a blessing to our community and our mission to teach and nurture Christian meditation in the spirit of serving the unity of all.

*It's Changed!*

**Financial Office:**  
**WCCM-USA Ltd Corp**  
 217 South Laurel Circle Dr  
 Black Mountain, NC 28711

### To Donate to our Annual Appeal:

- Donate online at [WCCM-USA.org](http://WCCM-USA.org) securely
- Send your check to our new Financial Office address
- Use the envelope in your Annual Appeal letter

### A Note From Our WCCM-USA Financial Officer, Gene Bebeau

We wanted to give you a summary of how your donations are used in the WCCM-USA Community. You will see **from the Pie Charts below** that the donations we receive are used for WCCM projects both in the US and in other countries. We honor the donor's wishes on how and where they want their gifts to be used.

Because the US and Europe have different financial considerations and laws, if you donate to Bonnevaux or WCCM International and wish to receive a US tax acknowledgment, you would send your gift through

WCCM-USA. If there is no directive we will deposit the money in the US account to fund US projects and efforts.

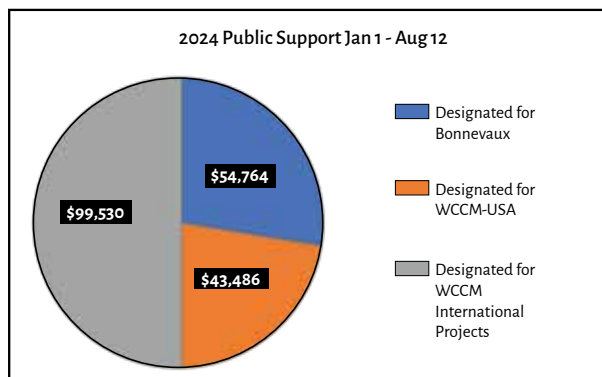
Each quarter, the WCCM-USA Community supports WCCM International with a \$5,000 donation from the moneys we receive through your gifts.

WCCM-USA is a 501c3 organization. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

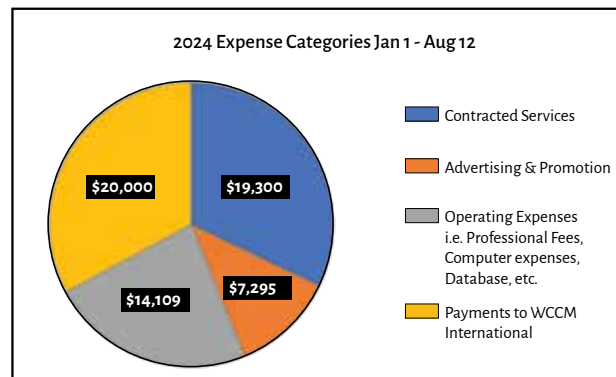
love&prayers  
[gbebeau@gmail.com](mailto:gbebeau@gmail.com)



WCCM-USA Gifts and Grants Received 2024



WCCM-USA Expenses 2024



## Upcoming & Current Events

### We invite you to Join us!

**Climate Crisis Awareness Conversation online**  
Saturday, November 23, 2024

**The Eight Big Problems of Life (last session)**  
December 7, 2024 12:00PM - 2:00PM EST  
*More Info: Paul Dunn (pauledunn365@gmail.com)*

**WCCM-USA All Community Christmas Party**  
Sunday, December 8, 2024 Via Zoom  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (Central Time)  
*More Info: Pat King (patrickking50@gmail.com)*

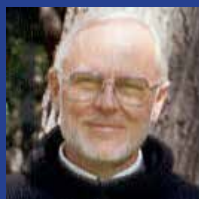
**Advent/Solstice Retreat online**  
Saturday, December 21, 2024

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**Christian Meditation & The Four Mysteries  
of the Rosary Quarterly Series**  
1st Session: **The Joyful Mystery**  
**Wednesday, January 8, 2025: 7-8:30 PM EST**  
*More Info: Paul Dunn (pauledunn365@gmail.com)*

**LA Religious Education Congress 2025**  
February 20-23, 2025  
([mwc@wccm-usa.org](mailto:mwc@wccm-usa.org))  
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Check your email to register  
for the above online events.  
For further information contact:  
[Sharon@wccm-usa.org](mailto:Sharon@wccm-usa.org)



**“The journey to meditation is the  
journey to depth...a depth both of  
understanding and of being.”**

**JOHN MAIN OSB**  
**The Heart of Creation**

## *A Letter from Kevin*

**Dear Group Leaders and Friends in Christian Meditation,**

For some time, I have been pondering becoming an oblate of the World Community for Christian Meditation. I am sure that many of you are oblates, and some for many years. I hope this sense of call is something you can relate to on your own journey. This desire has been in my heart and on my mind since I began to meditate over twenty years ago. I remember reading the psychologist and spiritual teacher, James Finley, as he encouraged: “Find your contemplative practice and practice it.” I found Christian meditation when I needed it most. I began the mantra in silence, stillness and simplicity. There is a beautiful fidelity in the practice. From the Benedictine perspective, there is a life-giving stability in the twice daily practice of meditation. This is the one tradition that resonated with me.

With our World Community for Christian Community, I quickly found a home. Again, from James Finley, “Find your community and be faithful to it.” It has been my goal these last years, no matter where I served as a priest, or now as a hospice chaplain, that I continue to be faithful to the practice and to our community. There is something grounding and humbling to sit in silence and know that our minds want to think and that letting go of distractions is the most difficult part of meditation. John Cassian advised us to lay aside our thoughts. There are days when the old adage “easier said than done” is spot on. We are tasked with the stability of continuing to sit in meditation when on some days it’s tempting to get off our mat or off our chair and run away. This brings us back to the stability of the practice and the supportive presence of the community. Our “monastery without walls” remains with us even when we are meditating alone in the solitude of our own rooms. I am sure that we all have learned in our own ways that we need the practice (and to practice), and we need the Community.

I am not seeking to be an oblate in our community because I am an expert at meditation. Trust me, I am not. I am, however, one like you, seeking the transformation that I need each morning and each evening to get a glimpse of the Kingdom of God.

Be sure to visit our website for a wonderful 20 minute video on the WCCM oblate path from folks in Canada. I encourage each of us to take some time to watch this video and maybe it will speak to you and draw your heart to the oblate path in our World Community for Christian Meditation.

For more information on the WCCM Oblate Path, please visit <https://wccm-usa.org/christian-meditation/benedictine-oblates/>  
*Warmly, Kevin Maksym, WCCM-USA Postulant*

### Contact Us: WCCM-USA

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**NEWSLETTER**  
For article submissions,  
please contact Sharon@  
[wccm-usa.org](mailto:wccm-usa.org)

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

<https://wccm-usa.org>