

Report to Parish Pastoral Assembly

May 2nd 2021

Christian Meditation in the Hibiscus Coast Parish

Since 2004 the parish has had people meeting weekly to meditate together and share and encourage each other on their Christian contemplative journey.

There are three groups; two at St John the Evangelist and one at St Francis by the Sea.

- **Monday** 7.30pm led by Monica Manning at St John's
- **Wednesday** 5.30pm led by Vincent Maire at St Francis'
- **Thursday** 4pm led by Jackie Abraham at St John's

Monica took on leadership of the Monday group in 2020 from Jacqui Driscoll who led the group from when it started 16 years ago. We thank Jacqui for her dedication and for introducing so many people to the practice of Christian meditation during her tenure.

Jacqui continues to lead a Christian meditation group in Maygrove Village while parishioner Anne Hollier-Ruddy leads a group at Evelyn Page Village.

The Wednesday and Thursday groups include members from other churches, notably the two Anglican parishes on the Coast.

Groups have between five to ten meditators regularly attending each meeting. The meetings start with an opening prayer, a reading or listening to a CD talk followed by 25 minutes of silent meditation. The tradition invites people to silently and interiorly recite a mantra or prayer word to anchor their time of meditation. The word *Maranatha* is used by many. Meetings end with quiet music, a prayer and often discussion on the reading.

Each year the Auckland Christian meditation community has community days in three locations around the city. The Autumn meeting has long been held in the hall at St John's. In March 2020 we had a day devoted to *The Cloud of Unknowing* and on March 21st, 2021 the topic was the *Christian Roots of Meditation and Contemplative Prayer*. In both instances more than 60 people from around Auckland and beyond attended these events. Special thanks to members of the parish meditation groups for helping to organize and host these community days.

The three groups are part of the World Community for Christian Meditation which is present in over 100 countries. WCCM has its headquarters in Poitiers, France and is led by Benedictine monk Fr. Laurence Freeman OSB. Here in New Zealand more than 100 groups meet weekly in churches, homes and via Zoom around the country.

Vincent Maire is the Auckland regional coordinator for WCCM (NZ) and also a member of the National Committee. In May 2020 Fr Laurence invited Vincent to join the International Guiding Board of WCCM. Vincent is the first New Zealander to take up this role; an honour for him and especially for the New Zealand Christian Meditation Community.

Vincent Maire