

Dear Friends,

Once again, this Lent, we will be offering an Introductory Course in Meditation via ZOOM. Previously, we have had 90 attendees, plus moderators, from Atlantic Canada to BC. Given the number it is essential to have breakout groups for the group discussions to be meaningful. Each group needs a moderator.

Perhaps you are planning to run your own Introductory Course during Lent this year - in which case, bravo! However I am aware of only two groups in Southwestern Ontario who are, or are planning, to do so.

Renewal is vital for groups to remain healthy. In Southwestern Ontario, this is a particular challenge where many communities have no meditation groups - for example: Brantford, Cambridge, Chatham, Fort Erie, Grimsby, Guelph, Milton, Mississauga, Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Sarnia, St. Catharines, Welland, Windsor and Woodstock. There is only one group in, Burlington, Hamilton, London, Oakville, St. George, St. Mary's, Simcoe, Stoney Creek, and Stratford. Only Brampton, Waterdown and Kitchener-Waterloo have more than one group.

I do get that you may not feel the necessity to run an Introductory Group in your own community. Could you help us to reach out to the broader community in Southwestern Ontario who have little, perhaps no, knowledge of the Pearl of Great Price we have received through John Main Meditation?

How, please distribute this email among your members. Longtime meditators already possess all they need to know to guide a small group discussion about meditation. We will do the advertising, prepare the course materials, provide and run the ZOOM facility, but this year, we cannot find enough meditators in the Toronto area to provide moderators for the breakout rooms in each online meeting. Our Zoom licence will accommodate 100 attendees in any given meeting. Therefore we can have no more than 10 groups of nine, which with a moderator maxes out our licence.

We are prepared to help Christian Meditation grow in Southwestern Ontario. But we cannot do so without your help.

What will you get out of all this? A stronger meditation community in Southwestern Ontario. Hopefully you will be once again able to run your own programs, meetings, retreats and seminars; and give back to the broader meditation community across Canada.

If any of your meditators can help by being breakout moderators for our 2023 Introductory Course on ZOOM, please have them contact me at their earliest convenience. My email is frbrian.bartley@gmail.com. The link should be clickable.

The Course itself will run on Saturday mornings, from 10 to 11 am, February 25th to April 22nd, skipping Holy Saturday. It will be eight weeks in length, because we will be using the WCCM CD talks on "The Cloud of Unknowing" as the vehicle for the Course this year.

Should you decide to run a course locally, let me know and I will send you a complete course package with a step-by-step Leader's Guide, and the sound files for each session. If you cannot play an MP3 file on your CD player, the Guide contains complete scripts for each session to be done in the oral tradition.

Pray for us,

Fr Brian Bartley

Course Coordinator

