



# Speak Lord. *Your servant is listening.*

Newsletter of the Benedictine Camaldolese Oblates of  
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## Chaplain's message Fr Michael Mifsud Oblate OSB Cam

Recently while up at my Mountain Hermitage for the beginning of Spring I was doing a bit of spring cleaning .I had travelled through some 40 kms of snow country with up to half a meter of snow on both sides of the road. The next morning after a night dusting of fresh snow I had two beautiful though cold days. Going through some old notes of a good friend, Kevin Woof (now deceased), which he had written at the Seminary in 1977, I fortuitously came across an article he had copied from "Living Prayer" by Metropolitan Archbishop Anthony Bloom. I was very astounded as it related almost perfectly with a recent Victorian Oblate Day discussion. I will now transcribe it here with a few comments and capitals and hope all of you find it as inspiring as I did.

Foreward: "Worship to me means a RELATIONSHIP ... I think that worship can mean nothing at all to someone for whom there is no object (subject) of worship.

What is essential for Prayer is a DEEP SILENCE of COMMUNION ...

In Human relationships ... love and friendship are deep when we can be SILENT with someone. As long as we need to talk in order to keep in touch, we can safely and sadly assume that the relationship is still superficial; and so if we want to worship GOD, we must first of all learn to be happy, being Silent Together With Him"

There is so much truth to be pondered in Anthony Bloom's words of advice here on human and divine relationship (as St Aelred said "GOD is Friendship").

Bloom: "If we learn to speak to God without breaking the Silence of Intimacy by words we can use any Worship. If we try and make Worship Itself out of the words we use, we will get desperately TIRED of these words because unless they have the depth of silence, they are shallow and tiresome.

But how inspiring words Can be when they are Backed by Silence and Infused by The Right Spirit (as Jesus said, "God is Spirit and must be worshipped in Spirit and Truth ").

Chapter 1 "The Essence of Prayer": The Beginning Of Matthew's Gospel confronts us with "the very essence of Prayer". "The Magi ... expressed prayer in it's Perfection, which is CONTEMPLATION and ADORATION..."

I believe this is the very basis of True Worship coming from a pure heart. As we always learned at the seminary in a quote from Moltmann—"Liturgy Pre-Supposes Private Prayer".

Bloom: "It is that Prayer is a Dangerous Adventure and that we cannot enter upon it without RISK. As St Paul says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of The Living God" (Heb 10:31)

"Therefore to set out to deliberately confront the Living God is a dangerous, DREADED Adventure--EVERY Meeting with God is, in a certain sense, A Last Judgement."

"Whenever we come into the Presence Of God, whether in the sacraments or in prayer, we are doing something which is full of Danger because, according to the words of Scripture, God Is a Fire.

Unless we are ready to Surrender ourselves without reservation to the Divine Fire and become that Burning Bush of the Desert, which burned but was never consumed, we shall be scorched because the Experience of prayer can only be known from the Inside, and is Not to be Dallied with."

These are very powerful words coming from Bloom's deep contemplative experience which so obviously both informs and infuses his Prayer and Worship (Liturgical and otherwise) with such genuiness and spiritual depth--very apt for our Oblate Camaldolese vocation and life.

I hope that we can all together experience something of this in our coming retreat; The Silence together (and sharing at times), the Communion in Silence, in Friendship and in Sacrament and Listening and Prayerfully chanting the Word, the contemplative Worship in our heart and the Divine Liturgy. We may also experience something of the Fire, the Dread and the Presence in our Meditation, private and communal prayer and Koinonia (community).

Hope to share the Mystery of the Spirit with You in the Privilege Of Love.

## Reflection

### Peter Izzard Oblate OSB Cam

ONE alone  
 is not by nature Love,  
 or Laugh,  
 or Sing

ONE alone  
 may be Prime Mover,  
 Unknowable  
 Indivisible  
 All  
 and if Everything is All and All is One  
 One is Alone  
 Self-Centered  
 Not Love  
 Not Laugh  
 Not Sing

TWO  
 Ying/Yang  
 Dark/Light  
 Male/Female  
 contending Dualism  
 Affirming Evil/Good  
 And striving toward Balance  
 At best Face-to-Face  
 but Never Community

THREE  
 Face-to-Face-to-Face  
 Community  
 Ambiguity  
 Mystery  
 Love for the Other  
 And for the Other's Love  
 Within  
 Other-Centered  
 Self-Giving  
 Loving  
 Singing  
 Laughter  
 A fourth is created  
 Ever-loved and loving.

--William Paul Young,  
 Author, *The Shack*, *Cross Roads*, and *Eve*.  
 Trinity Sunday, 2016.

## Mindfulness Meditation: Spiritual versus Therapeutic \* Andrew Hede, Oblate OSB Cam

Mindfulness meditation, as it is currently practised in both the spiritual and therapeutic domains, originated with religious observances in India dating to before recorded history. Contemporary scholars have observed that there are strong similarities among the various religious traditions in their meditation practices including: those of Biblical origin in the Middle-East (viz., *in chronological order* – Judaism, Christianity and Islam) [1]; traditions of Indian origin (e.g., Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism) [2,3]; and also those of East-Asian origin (e.g., Daoism, Confucianism and Shintoism) [3]. Within each of these traditions there have arisen variations in meditation practices that are observed today. To elaborate on one pertinent example, the main active Buddhist meditation tradition contains two distinct sub-traditions which spread out over many years as part of the cultural growth of a number of Indian and Asian countries. The first of these sub-traditions is *Mahayana meditation* (including Zen) which developed in China, Korea, Japan, Tibet and Vietnam [4]. The second Buddhist sub-tradition is *Theravada meditation* which spread mainly in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia [4]. These two meditation practices have spread widely including to Western countries. For example, the Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, has been successful in promoting a blend of both Mahayana and Theravada meditation practices in the English-speaking world, principally in America [5].

Observances in meditation practice have not always been consistent within the various traditions over the centuries. An informative example is a type of meditation which was developed in the 4th Century CE by the Christian hermits of the Mediterranean. This meditation practice was based on focusing attention on the unceasing repetition of a short exhortation [6]. Such a prayerful exclamation functions in this form of meditation as a focal point for the 'busy mind' somewhat like the mantra in Hindu practice and related forms of meditation. Following the so-called 'East-West Schism' in the Christian Church (from 1054 CE), this meditation practice continued to be promulgated throughout the Eastern (Orthodox) Church through to the present day, but was largely ignored for nearly a millennium within the Western (Roman) Church. There was a revival of this 'desert meditation' tradition late last century led by Benedictine monk, John Main. It is significant that he was initially trained in Hindu meditation practice and that he promoted what he called '*Christian Meditation*' with the

personal support of his friend the Dalai Lama, world leader of Buddhism [7]. It should not be surprising that Christian, Buddhist and Hindu meditation influences all converged in this contemporary meditation movement which is thriving in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It would appear that meditation practices have been at the core of human experience across the ages linking diverse religions and cultures. We can only speculate about the possible health benefits ancient peoples might have gained incidentally from their spiritual practice of meditation thousands of years ago.

Of the many Buddhist meditation traditions and practices, the one that has attracted most attention and acceptance in the Western world is 'mindfulness' (called 'sati' in the Pali language as used in the Theravada tradition and called 'smṛti' in the Sanskrit language as used in the Mahayana tradition). This is the main Buddhist form of meditation and can be traced to the original Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama, c.500 BCE). The English translation of 'sati' as 'mindfulness' is credited to Rhys Davids in 1881. From the earliest times of Buddhism, distinctions were drawn between different forms of meditation, namely, mindfulness (sati), concentration meditation (samadhi), supramundane powers (abhijñā), tranquillity meditation (samatha) and insight meditation (vipassanā).

Mindfulness meditation was already being taught in the U.S. as part of various international Buddhist education programs from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century. But it was not until Dr Jon Kabat-Zinn established the Centre for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in 1979 that this approach engaged medical institutions in the West [8]. This was evidently due to the program's scholarly reputation, its effective marketing and its high participant satisfaction. A major factor in the acceptance of mindfulness meditation in America was that it was promoted with few religious trappings.

A recent popular article has claimed that Rhys Davids' original translation of 'mindfulness' was not entirely accurate, suggesting to the contrary that 'mindfulness' really means 'memory of the present'. However, a more authoritative Buddhist source asserts that 'mindfulness' as traced to its original roots would best be characterised as 'lucid awareness' or more precisely "the element of watchfulness, the lucid awareness of each event that presents itself on the successive occasions of experience". Kabat-Zinn promoted the following definition which has been widely adopted: "*Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.*" [9, p.4].

The author can vouch for these three simple defining features being effective in teaching mindfulness practice to executives. Thus, with its accessibility in practice, its hints of exoticism and its lack of emphasis on religion, mindfulness has proved very marketable to a Western secular audience especially when used for 'respectable' university medical purposes.

As well as establishing an educational base for mindfulness in the U.S., the University of Massachusetts Center for Mindfulness quickly became the springboard for mindfulness training in other English-speaking countries especially in the U.K. where leading researchers applied it to treating mental illness principally relapses in depression. In the almost 40 years since the original centre was launched, its official reports indicate that more than 24,000 people have completed one or other of their courses including the original 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course and more recently, various online mindfulness courses. Significantly, many of these course alumni would have gone on to conduct their own mindfulness courses in their own country thereby continually spreading this approach. For example, the 27,000 who have undertaken courses by Australia's leading mindfulness trainer, Dr Russ Harris, over the past decade are almost all identified as health professionals. Further, there appears to be a clear trend of incorporating mindfulness as a mainstream topic into university psychology courses around the world and this will presumably ensure the ever-growing adoption of mindfulness in future clinical psychology practice.

However, considering this high rate of adoption of mindfulness in the secular world, the question arises as to how this compares with the original spiritual meditation practice handed down within Buddhism. According to one learned source, some modern Buddhists are concerned that modern mindfulness is becoming alienated from the traditional Buddhist approach. Not surprisingly, many medical and psychological practitioners endeavour to teach mindfulness divorced from spiritual meditation as alluded to previously. Indeed, an influential article titled '*Mindfulness Without Meditation*' asserts: "'Mindfulness' can be defined in a variety of different ways, but they all basically come down to this: paying attention with flexibility, openness, and curiosity." [10, p.21].

As an indicator of Western acceptance of mindfulness, it is worth considering that the American Mindfulness Research Association (AMRA) has been collating all the

scholarly journal articles on mindfulness which have been published worldwide since 1980. Their latest official records yield the following figures up to 2017: in the 20 years between 1980 and 2000, there were a total of only 58 publications on mindfulness; in the decade between 2001 and 2010, there were a further 578 publications; and between 2011 and 2017 there were 3,149 mindfulness publications. The cumulative total to 2017 was 3,785 publications which is currently increasing at about 700 publications per year.

In his recent recollections long after establishing the Centre for Mindfulness, Kabat-Zinn commented that in his first book on mindfulness published in 1990, his intention was to “embody to whatever degree possible the dharma essence of the Buddha’s teachings put into action and made accessible to mainstream Americans facing stress, pain, and illness.” Kabat-Zinn further elaborated on his use of the Buddhist concept of ‘*dharma*’ in the following words: “The intention and approach behind MBSR [Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction] were never meant to exploit, fragment, or decontextualize the dharma, but rather to recontextualize it within the frameworks of science, medicine (including psychiatry and psychology), and healthcare so that it would be maximally useful to people who could not hear it or enter into it through the more traditional dharma gates, whether they were doctors or medical patients, hospital administrators, or insurance companies.” [11, p.288].

We see then that Kabat-Zinn openly employed the spiritual/religious language of Buddhism in launching mindfulness in the U.S. (particularly in promoting ‘*dharma*’ as illustrated in the quotations above). Thus, Kabat-Zinn found a way of promoting Buddhism in a Western medical framework almost four decades ago, without diluting its essential Eastern message and without alienating potential Western converts to mindfulness meditation for spiritual purposes.

Since then, therapeutic mindfulness has gained acceptance worldwide in psychology and medicine. Hundreds of rigorously controlled studies have confirmed that mindfulness is effective in treating stress and depression [11]. What is as yet unknown is exactly how mindfulness achieves its therapeutic efficacy. The author’s full paper addresses this issue.

\* **Extract from article submitted to *Integrative and Complementary Medicine Journal*, 2018.**

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## Travel Notes

### Ruth Harrison Oblate OSB Cam

Two years ago I came across a painting by a young Noongar man in Perth that spoke to me deeply. It was depicting what would happen to Beeliar Lakes, Aboriginal land that was to be destroyed in order to develop the proposed Roe 8 freight link. There was fierce opposition from the community, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, who argued that an existing highway and port that would serve the purpose, and were making a huge effort to save the land. I knew I had to take that painting back to my prayer room in Millgrove, to place on the wall along with the Aboriginal Christ on the cross which was already there.

But I also knew I could not just pick up this piece of art and bring it back across the continent. I had to find the land it depicted, and walk there. It took a train ride, several bus rides and a few false trains to find the land. It was late in the afternoon when I noticed an orange sign across a busy road, “Stop the freight link”. Behind it was undeveloped bushland. I started following a path into the land. I asked a woman who was also walking there if this was the land. “Oh yes,” she said. “Aboriginal people used to live here until the 1960’s.” I walked on, until I came to a place where the banksia, the wild flowers, grasses and trees held me with their beauty. The longer I stood there, the more welcoming I knew that land to be. I felt so safe, that I wanted to curl up and sleep

there. But a severe storm was predicted, all of Perth was battering down, and my brother's family was expecting me home for tea.

And now, much to my surprise, I am returning to live not far from that country which so welcomed me. I have lived in the Yarra Valley for the past sixteen years, and I love this land and the community which lives here. I have learned the terrain, and the plants that belong here. At Reefton I got to know the lace monitors, the greater gliders, the antechinus, the bassian thrush, the gang gang and yellow tailed cockatoos, the swamp wallabies and the lyrebirds, and a wonderful array of amazing insects. After seven years I moved to Millgrove, and there the red wattle birds feed on the red berries of the prickly currant bush, the eastern spine bills give me joy each morning as they come foraging among the grevilleas and correas I have planted, and crimson rosellas and king parrots and bronze wing pigeons visit for their ration of bird seed in winter. This country is in my blood. I have belonged to it. Here I have found friends, healing, joy and belonging. Here, my call to a life of prayer has continued and grown. I thought I would never leave.

Then, last June, on my annual visit to my brother's loving extended family in Perth (my sister in law is Indian and one of nine siblings, and the family has grown to embrace other nations as the years have gone by) unexpected things happened. I encountered the little town of Jarrahdale, in the Darling Range, not far from all the family in Perth. My offer on the only house I could afford there was accepted, and from that moment it has been a whirlwind of activity and adjustment.

More than any other move I have made, I have been aware of this one as a pilgrimage — of letting go, and being in a liminal space, in between something that has been, and something which is not yet, and which I cannot quite imagine. The removalists come on the 7th September, and then I will be staying with friends until on the 17th September I set out in my little Subaru with my two dogs to drive to Western Australia. I decided to drive across because Emma, the dog I inherited from Lesley Macvean, is a rescue dog and suffers from acute separation anxiety. She would not be able to manage being shut in a crate and bundled onto a plane. Somehow I am very glad I am following the terrain, right across the continent, before settling into a new part of the land which I will have to learn from the ground up — the geology, the vegetation, the insects and birds and animals. At the end of my journey I will be meeting up with the only Camaldolese oblate who lives in Western Australia. So it feels like connecting a part of my way of

life here in Victoria, with a new expression of that commitment in a new place.

And it is indeed a beautiful place I am going to — lots of forrest, national and state and conservation parks, a creek running through this oldest of forestry villages, now with a heritage overlay, less than an hour's drive from Perth. It is a gateway to the stunningly beautiful country of the south west corner of Western Australia, which is one of 34 plant diversity hotspots in the world. (Look up [jarrahdale.com.au](http://jarrahdale.com.au) on the internet.)

My new address is 5 Cousens St, Jarrahdale, WA 6124. I hope many of my friends and acquaintances will come and visit and explore this part of the world. There are spare bedrooms, and my email address ([rharrison46@gmail.com](mailto:rharrison46@gmail.com)) and phone number (0411 523 127) will be the same as they are here. So do get in touch if you are thinking of coming over.

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### Some reflections on the Sacred Liturgy – East and West Joseph Leach Oblate OSB Cam

(This article is based on materiel from the book I wrote with Father Lawrence Cross, *In the Household of the Spirit: A Western Christian's Guide to the Sacraments in the Byzantine Church*, Freedom Publishing, Melbourne, Australia, 2014.)

In all its most ancient traditions Christianity is a sacramental religion. Sacraments form the very life of the church through which the Spirit of God flows into the world. However, sacramentality implies a particular view of nature which is radically at odds with the secular, materialist view of modern western culture. It is a view that holds creation to be graced, sacred and full of meaning. The sacredness of nature thus lies at the very heart of Christianity and it is vital, when our relationship with nature is looming as one of the great moral questions of our time, that we understand how fundamental the sacredness of nature is to the sacramental life of the Church. In recent times this has become difficult in the Western Church because of the minimalist and informal way in which the liturgy and the sacraments are often approached. A study of the Eastern Church, with its love of elaborate ritual and symbol, can perhaps lead western Christians back to an appreciation of the full richness and grandeur of the Christian sacramental life.

This communication of the sacred in the things of this world is at the core of any understanding of the sacraments. Assaulted by the secularism of our age, many Western Christians have to some degree lost their sensitivity to the sacramental rituals of the Church and may now need to look to their brothers and sisters of the Eastern Church to regain the fullness of sacramental understanding. Long before the split occurred between the two churches, sometime in the eleventh century, each of the churches had developed its own culture and ecclesiastical style. In theology, the West was more analytical and the East more mystical (although both churches knew both analytical and mystical theology). In liturgical practice, the West favored simplicity and directness while the East valued beauty and elaboration. Neither approach is wrong, neither really excludes the other and each has its strengths. Legitimate diversity is the glory of God as Pope John Paul II has pointed out:

*From the beginning, the Christian East has proved to contain a wealth of forms capable of assuming the characteristic features of each individual culture, with supreme respect for each particular community. We can only thank God with deep emotion for the wonderful variety with which he has allowed such a rich and composite mosaic of different tesserae to be formed.*

However, in this minimalist, post-modern age, Pope John Paul II recognized that Western Christians now had to learn the wisdom of their Eastern brothers and sisters and so appreciate the fullness and richness of God's Church. This is not to say that Western Christians should abandon their own liturgical and sacramental practice and traditions but rather that they should use the sacramental understanding of the Eastern Church to enhance their understanding of their own sacraments, to appreciate fully the depth of symbolic meaning and to live the Christian life in all its fullness. It is by coming to know the East that the West can learn to understand itself.

On the notice board outside the front door of Sts Peter and Paul's Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in Melbourne (an Eastern Catholic Church of the Byzantine Rite), there are a series of notices explaining the differences between the Latin and Byzantine Rites of the Catholic Church – presumably for visiting and curious Latin Rite Catholics. These notices do not talk about differences in Eucharistic theology but rather differences in liturgical practice. It is an interesting choice and seems to be predicated on an understanding that the disputes in Eucharistic theology between the two traditions are small and subtle and in themselves give no indication of the life of either church.

When dealing with differences which are primarily differences of emphasis and nuance, as we are in Eucharistic Theology, then the celebration of the Liturgy is the best window into the understanding of the respective churches.

The comparisons given can be summarized as follows: in the Latin Church the Eucharist is seen as the people of God gathered around the table of the Lord and is based on the model of the last supper while in the Byzantine church the celebration is seen as leading the people to participate in the heavenly liturgy of God's Kingdom and takes this heavenly liturgy as its model. The Latin Church's liturgy is thus simple with a relatively frugal use of symbols. It promotes clear messages with a "down to earth" atmosphere and sees beauty in simplicity. The Byzantine Liturgy on the other hand makes full use of all the senses and uses symbols extensively to promote a more subconscious, holistic understanding which comes from the deepest part of the self. Its focus is on cosmic realities and eschatology. It seeks to make heaven present on Earth and thus celebrates with a fullness of beauty.

This simple comparison is perhaps drawing too sharp a line and opposing end points without looking at the fullness of practice in each of the traditions. It is, however, a useful summary and indication of the real differences in approach. The notices go on to point out that these approaches are not truly in opposition but are rather complimentary and that together they express more of the fullness of God's Church.

Neither approach is without its problems. Not all simplicity is noble and, without care and reverence, the 'noble simplicity' of the Roman Rite can easily become minimalist and mundane. On the other hand, not all elaboration is beautiful and, without care and reverence, the symbolic richness of the Byzantine Rite can easily become a boring repetition of poorly understood and performed gestures. It is here that each tradition can help the other.

It should be noted that none of the elements emphasized in one tradition is totally absent from the other and that neither is central to the reality of the eucharist; they are both simply ways of expressing that same reality. Just as we joined with Christ and so brought into the presence of the Father, made participants the heavenly liturgy, through the sacrifice on Calvary, so the sacrifice of the last supper is not separate from the sacrifice on Calvary. Rather, it is the same sacrifice in anticipation, just as each

eucharist is the same sacrifice in re-presentation and the heavenly liturgy in anticipation.

In the upper room Christ offers himself for us by his own hand and makes it clear that he is both the priest and the willing victim in the sacrifice of Calvary. It is this union between the celebration of the Eucharist and the sacrifice on Calvary that gives life to the church. The church is constantly standing with Mary in the presence of the cross and being nourished by the blood flowing from his side – just as it is constantly standing in the transcendent glory of the resurrection. When a group of early martyrs were offered their lives if only they would refrain from celebrating the Eucharist, they replied that this was impossible since the Eucharist was life to them.

In coming into the closest possible union with Christ, the people of God are also brought into union with each other. This is the fundamental unity of the church; that we are all members of the one mystical body of Christ. In the Eucharist we are called together by the Word, formed into the Body of Christ by the Spirit and brought before the throne of the Father. It is here that the church is most fully herself, mystically united across time and space in the worship of God. It is this mystical union which finds its expression in Holy Communion and it is entirely appropriate that the Rite of Christian Initiation concludes with the new Christian entering into this communion for the first time.

In Communion we come most intimately into the presence of Christ and his presence within us transforms us; not only uniting us with our fellow Christians but changing us so that we become like Christ. Indeed, we are made into Christ. As the bread and wine are changed through the action of the Spirit into Christ's body and blood during the prayer of consecration, so by the same Spirit are we changed into Christ in Holy Communion.

*May purity of conscience remove the veil from the face of your soul so that by contemplating the glory of the Lord, as in a mirror, you may be transformed from glory to glory in Christ Jesus our Lord. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

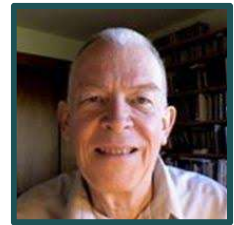
It is indeed the destiny of the Christian to be transformed from glory to glory by the Spirit, to made more and more Christ-like until we, in union with all of creation, stand before the throne of the Father and cry glory! This is the journey started at baptism, this journey to divinity, to a participation in the life of the Trinity. The bread and wine which were made by human hands to sustain us in our everyday journeys are marvelously changed to become

the mystical food we need for a journey to the very depths of what is real. Our bodies take the normal food and change it into the energy we need for our everyday lives. The food of the Eucharist takes our normal bodies and makes them into God, makes our whole being shine with the life and Spirit of God.

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## Introducing Fr Thomas Matus OSB Cam Fr Michael Mifsud Oblate OSB Cam

Thomas Matus is a highly respected scholar and writer having written *The Mystery of Rom uald and the Five Brothers* and much more. He has lived both in Italian and American monasteries and hermitages for many years. Thomas is a great musician and with Cyprian helped bring out and compose many psalm tones in the Camaldolese psalmody based on ancient chants.



Recently, last September, I met Thomas again in Rome at San Gregorio Magno and at Camaldoli at the General Chapter where we discussed the coming visit and retreat on the theme of the Camaldolese Charism as it applies to Oblates and how we can live it in daily life.

I have met Thomas quite a few times both in Italy and Big Sur and I think once in India. Thomas has been a great friend of Dom Bede Griffiths and we often spoke about his relationship with Bede and Shantivanam Ashram. In fact, Thomas is the one who recommended Bede to go to Rome and apply to transfer his Benedictine stability to the Camaldolese Congregation which immediately welcomed him and was prepared to support and encourage his Inter-Faith Ashram and work. At one of the General Chapters I attended some 12 or 18 years ago, Bede was acclaimed in the presentations as one of the modern prophets for our time.

When I was at our Monastery in Rome last year both Thomas and John Dupuche from the Inter-Faith Community I live in at Warburton, along with other speakers, presented at the top Gregorian Pontifical University in Rome at an Inter-Faith Conference.

So we are all very privileged to have Thomas Matus come visit us from USA and we pray for his safe travels and for a blessed retreat for all of us who attend and all who are unable to make it. Peace and blessings.