# Meditation with Children

**A handout for Parents**

The World Community for Christian Meditation
www.wccm.org

In her book *Born Contemplative* Madeleine Simon, says: Children are natural contemplatives, so if we encourage them to be still and open their hearts to the Divine love within them, they will have a gift to last the rest of their lives. Sowing the seed of meditation in a young child allows God to do the work of God and provides the foundation for paying attention, for love.

Children across the country are learning to meditate in the Christian tradition, following the principles used by members of the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM).

When this practice is shared in schools, the children are introduced to it as prayer, a way of being with God through listening, rather than talking, to Him. It is a way of being silent in a very busy, noisy world and being open to the spirit of Jesus working in our hearts. Children enjoy meditation and it attunes them to listening and being attentive.

So what happens in meditation time at school or home? How do children meditate?

It is a very simple practice:

- We make a quiet space with a candle, flowers or prayer bear. This provides a focus and the children can help to set it up.
- The children sit on a chair or cross-legged on the floor with a straight back to help with paying attention.

- They close their eyes gently.
- They silently say a prayer word (or mantra) to help them focus against distraction.
- The word we use is Ma-ra-na-tha, said in four equal syllables. It is an ancient Aramaic prayer from the Bible meaning *Come Lord*.
- The teachers play a CD of music and a song, which the children can sing, after which a chime will sound at the start and then the end of meditation
- When the children first meditate, the meditation period will be just a minute or two long, rising over time to between 5 and 10 minutes, depending upon the children's ages.
- Teachers meditate with the children.
- Most importantly, and as with all prayer, there is no measurement or judgment – the act of praying is enough.

Here are some of the things children have said about meditation:

"You visit your heart room when you meditate".

"Meditation is a great way to move closer to God".

"Sometimes when you are praying, you don't really take the time to listen to what he is saying".

"You know that meditation will make you calm down and think about what you are doing next, not what has gone before".

"If you are angry about something, it makes you feel okay and nothing bad is going to happen, and you feel happy and relaxed".

"I think meditation is very graceful, it's very fun and it's also joyful".

A teacher asked the children "Why is it that you want to do more meditation?" and they said "We want to spend more time with God".

**WCCM Contact and Reference Information**

For more information about meditation with children in UK schools, email the Meditation with Children Coordinator ukmeditationwithchildren@wccm.org

A simple introduction to how to meditate and about adult groups in your area can be found on the UK Website: www.christianmeditation.org.uk