



Walking the Mystical Path Contemporary Sages show us the way...

Union and uniformity are two different journeys with very different strategies. Religion frequently seeks uniformity; the mystics seek and enjoy the foundation itself –

Divine union, totally given. – Richard Rohr –

The *Walking the Mystical Path* programme is for those wishing to integrate a contemplative dimension into their lives. Many of us have walked the way of uniformity as it has a certitude that is very attractive in this age of considerable dis-ease and dissonance.

Many of us too have looked east, west, north and south to discover what might lie behind the veils of illusion, Merton's 'false self' and the promise of heaven after death. Fortunately now is one of the best times to be alive because we are a century into a growing community of contemplative mystics who have the dual gifts of being both mystics and grand story tellers of their experiences.

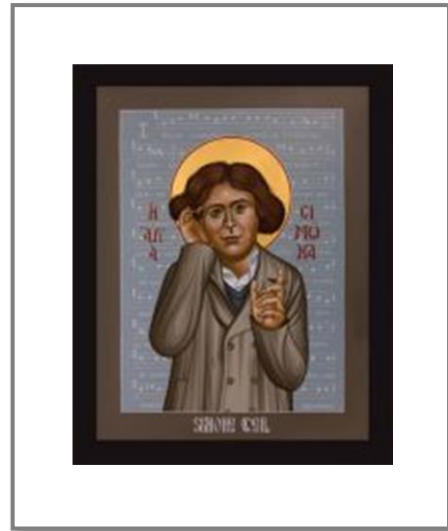
While the stories they tell stem from the growth of Wisdom from antiquity, they are imbued with not only a contemplative understanding of the deeper wisdom teachings of the first century Jesus the Christ, but are positively influenced by the developing understanding of psychology, neurophysiology, astral-physics, quantum entanglement, poetry, art, embodiment...

What these sages have to teach us is learning to see as the mystics see and learning to experience what the mystics' experience: *Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear?* Mark 8:18.

Who Might Be Interested in This Program?

This program is for anyone who feels drawn to contemplative spirituality and who:

- Desires a deepening relationship with Life and to live out of that relationship
- Acknowledges that it is not so much *what* we do, but *how* we do it
- Wishes to develop or deepen a consistent spiritual practice
- Is keen to explore and learn within a broad ecumenical Christ centered framework, enhanced by the wisdom of **all** traditions, by creativity and by their life so far
- Is leaning towards letting go of control and becoming unattached to outcome
- Longs to be a transforming and supportive presence in the 'community'
- Wants to share this part of the 'journey home' with the support of a spiritual companion



Program Components

- It is designed to be completed over an eight month period wherever one lives
- Four sessions of spiritual companioning by skype or phone

The programme content is developed around five stands leading towards 'union' or 'non-duality' or 'Christ Consciousness' with examples from contemporary mystics who embody them. Naturally the strands interconnect and will include simple spiritual practices the contemplatives have embodied.

The five strands for the purposes of this programme are:

- **Theology/Knowledge:** Underhill, Borg, Johnson, Fox, Rohr, Benner, Delio, Newell, Tolle
- **Contemplation:** Main, Keating, Cowley, Bourgeault, Finley, Artson
- **Compassion:** Aubert, Catherine Doherty, Mother Theresa, Merton, the Dalai Lama
- **Co-Creation:** Baxter, Spangler, Angelou, Wheen, M.C. Richards, Michael Leunig, DeMore
- **Contemplative Action:** Chittister, , Martin Luther King, Rev. Tutu, Andrew Harvey, Weiwei

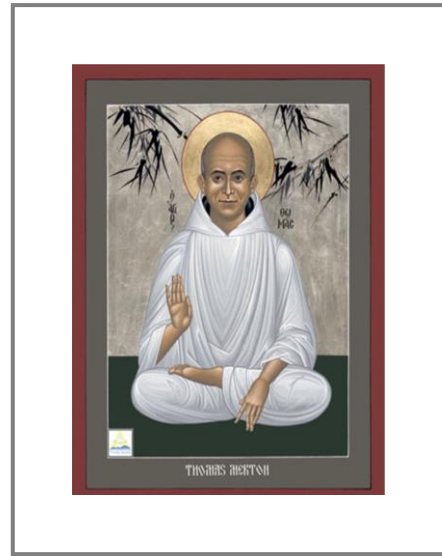
Understanding and practicing a more contemplative and simple lifestyle may require guidance and support of a kind easily read about but not always experienced. *Walking the Mystical Path* is a programme comprised of experiential learning, reflection, spiritual practices, exploration of contemporary sages and mystics, readings, YouTubes and individual spiritual companioning sessions. It is hoped that participants imbed these components in a way that will best serve their spiritual deepening.

There are no prerequisites for this program, and if you are interested contact Pip for either a phone, skype or email chat.

Programme Facilitator

Pip Nicholls has had many influences in her life with not the least being cradled in the beauty of Wellington and the whole of Aotearoa, New Zealand. Other formative places, people and events have been the Erskine College chapel in Island Bay, being a member of the Aubert, Baxter, Merton, Kirk community in Featherston since 1975, a year in a Thai Buddhist monastery in the late '70's, meeting wonderful teachers such as: Thinly Norbu Rinpoche and Mother Theresa, returning to catholic roots through the teachings of Tessa Bielecki (now a hermit in Colorado) and being involved in contemplative practices and studies from her early 20's.

In addition, she worked for 25 years within the disability sector and became a Spiritual Companion in 2006. She graduated from the *Living School*, run through the Centre for Action and Contemplation in 2015. She is a member of the Contemplative Network, Aotearoa and the NZ Association of Spiritual Directors.



Information: If you want to find out more about the programme or to get an Interest Form please contact Pip: on (04) 562 6364 or: pip.nicholls@xtra.co.nz

Start Date: The programme runs over eight months beginning the 31st March 2017

Fee: \$330 (plus postage and photocopying if you don't have access to email). Check with Pip for foreign currency fees.

A \$130 deposit needs to be paid and an Interest Form completed by the 14th March 2017.

If for any reason the fee is prohibiting you joining, please contact Pip to discuss some arrangement.

Feedback so far:

- *Very wide ranging options and not pushing a particularly barrow*
- *Helped deepen my understanding of spiritual awakening with simple steps*
- *Very broad and interesting range of topics and mystics – terrific*
- *Thank you for not bringing dogma into it... more about experience than a set of beliefs*
- *Helped me to let go of old beliefs and feel confident to trust the 'spaciousness'*
- *Yes, what I've understood to be right for me and some practices are more deeply embedded*