



## The art of the Inner Way

### A contemplative Living Programme - 2011

### For the Armchair Mystic

*The art of the Inner Way* programme is for those wishing to integrate a contemplative dimension into their lives thus creating a lively human environment from which the three great prayers (and many others); **Help**, **Thank you** and **Wow** arise spontaneously. In essence, the programme is about equipping us with the insights, practices and the support to live our lives in skilful and deeply satisfying ways. The programme won't be about a moralism applied from the outside, but it will be about continually rediscovering the intrinsic nature of compassion and wisdom. Participants will be encouraged to connect with how they are to be and where to act, in the world.

Thomas Merton says it so well that it is worth repeating his quote from his *Book of Hours* pg 73.

*'When I speak of the contemplative life I do not mean the institutional cloistered life, the organised life of prayer. I am talking about a special dimension of inner discipline and experience, a certain integrity and fullness of personal development, which are not compatible with a purely external, alienated, busy-busy existence. This does not mean that they are incompatible with action, creative work and with dedicated love. On the contrary, these all go together. A certain depth of disciplined experience is a necessary ground for fruitful action.'*

*'Without a more profound human understanding derived from exploration of the inner ground of human existence, love will tend to be superficial and deceptive. Traditionally, the ideas of meditation and contemplation have been associated with this deepening of one's personal life and this expansion of the capacity to understand and serve others.'*

#### Who Might Be Interested in This Program?

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

- Desires a deepened relationship with Life and to live out of that relationship;
- Acknowledges that full personhood can be claimed from both a monastic pew and a downtown or suburban armchair;
- Wishes to develop or deepen a consistent spiritual practice;
- Is keen to explore and learn within a broad ecumenical Christian framework, enhanced by the wisdom of all traditions, nature and their life so far;
- Longs to be a transforming and supportive presence in the 'community' ;
- Wants to share this 'journey' within the collective wisdom of a group and with guidance of a spiritual companion.

## Program Components

Understanding and practicing a more contemplative and simple lifestyle can require guidance and support of a kind easily read about but not easily available. *The art of the Inner Way* offers an accessible and flexible program of personal exploring, learning and practice to develop a contemplative perspective, and taking steps to imbed that perspective in your life.

The programme is comprised of experiential learning, reflection, spiritual practices, exploration of past and present mystics, readings, community, and concludes with a silent and simple retreat. It is hoped that participants integrate these components in a way that will best serve their spiritual deepening.

There are no prerequisites for this program.

**Information:** If you want to find out more about the programme please contact

Pip on: (04) 562 6364 or [pip.nicholls@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pip.nicholls@xtra.co.nz)