

**Lectionary**  
**Readings for every day**  
**You Select!**



in the HCUC

**No. 7**

**For 22 May 2011**

**Dear Friends**

I've just returned from India. At least my body is back. There are some indefinable parts of my being still reluctant to return. All of the 5 weeks away (apart from travel) were spent in the Kullu Valley high up in the foothills of the Himalayas. It is springtime in the valley and the signs were all around us—from the occasional sudden thunder storm with its fantastic lightning display, to the delicate irises and beautiful roses coming into full bloom. Little wonder we didn't linger longer in the 40°C heat of Delhi. The city swells daily as thousands pour in to add to the 17 million who are already there. It seems as if every middle class family aspires to having a car—and are succeeding. At least it is a step up from the whole family riding on a Vespa bike.

The purpose of our visit to Kullu was to participate in the life centred on the International Meditation Institute (IMI). There are two people there who attracted us like filings to a powerful magnet—our son who lives there and the teacher who is as dynamic, loving, enlightened and authentic as he was when we first visited him over 20 years ago.

The IMI (Ashram) is truly international with people living there from Canada, USA, England, Switzerland, Norway, Holland, Germany, Israel and a very lively bunch of Kiwis. All the members of the IMI live in their own units like university students in their flats around a campus. They are part of the life of the town, living among the Indian families, the shopkeepers, office workers and mountain farmers. Big black crows wake you in the morning, along with the hiss of pressure cookers as families cook their dhal. The road is busy and dangerous as hundreds of buses, cars, bikes, tri-cabs and tractor swarm up and down the valley road. Living there is demanding on the body. You walk the road (with no footpath) to buy your fruit and vegetables for each meal. You climb hundreds of steep concrete steps to visit friends, you attend the daily meditation/teaching sessions which last 2-3 hours. You do your own study, meditation and exercise to keep fit. If the aging body is lucky you will give it an afternoon nap. So now we are back to the real world! Ah that's the rub. What is the real world? Actually that's why we went. To experience it and expand our knowledge of it.

***Sincerely, Lester***

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 23 May:	118:1-3,4-15	Acts 14:5-18	John 14:21-26
Tuesday 24 May:	145:10-end	Acts 14:19-28	John 14:27-31
Wednesday 25 May :	122:1-5	Acts 15:1-6	John 15:1-8
Thursday 26 May:	96:1-3,7-10	Acts 15:7-21	John 15:9-11
Friday 27 May:	57:8-end	Acts 15:22-31	John 15:12-17
Saturday 28 May:	100	Acts 16:1-10	John 15:18-21
<b>Sunday 29 May <u>Easter 6</u></b>			
Ps 66:8-20; Acts 17:22-31; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21			

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 30 May:	149:1-5	Acts 16:11-15	John 15:26-16:4
Tuesday 31 May:	138	Acts 16:22-34	John 16:5-11
Wednesday 1 June:	148:1,2,11-14	Acts 17:15,22-18:1	John 16:12-15
Thursday 2 June:	93	Acts 1:1-11	Luke 24:44-53
Friday 3 June:	47:1-6	Acts 18:9-18	John 16:20-23
Saturday 4 June:	47:1,2,7-10	Acts 18:22-end	John 16:23-28
<b>Sunday 5 June <u>Easter 7</u></b>			
Ps 68:1-10,32-35; Acts 1:6-14; 1 Peter 4:12-14;5:6-11; John 17:1-11			

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 6 June:	68:1-end	Acts 19:1-8	John 16:29-33
Tuesday 7 June:	68:9,10,19,20	Acts 20:17-27	John 17:1-11
Wednesday 8 June :	68:27,28, 32-36	Acts 20:28-38	John 17:11-19
Thursday 9 June:	16:1,5-end	Acts 22:30;23:6-11	John 17:20-26
Friday 10 June:	103:1-2, 11-12,19-20	Acts 25:13-21	John 21:15-19
Saturday 11 June:	11:4-end	Acts 28:16-20,30-31	John 21:20-25
<b>Sunday 12 June <u>Pentecost</u></b>			
Ps 104:24-34,35b; Acts 2:1-21; 1 Cor 12:3b-13; John 20:19-23			

## SEEKING THE REAL WORLD

As we travelled home we had a day in Changi airport. I was drawn to a bookshop—surprise!! I looked in the section by modern science writers. The first three books I glanced at all began with an introduction that raised the question of what is the real world. The two writers I remember were Peter Russell and Stephen Hawking. In brief, they said we tend to believe the real world is the one we see and touch each day. — It includes such obvious solid forms as people, buildings, taxes and taxis, money and moods, cows and countryside. These and much more all form the world we think of as the real world. I'm sure that if I had read on I would have discovered they were writing about the world from a different perspective—a world we cannot touch with our fingers or see with our eyes. A world that doesn't crumble or rust, a world that is without forms and yet is the source of all forms. A world that our eyes don't see and yet gives our eyes the power to see. Ultimate reality is formless and unchanging.

Actually this is the world that we explored at the IMI and it is a very ancient wisdom that modern science is only now uncovering. The companion reality to this is that the process to experience this unborn eternal reality is not through reading books, or even studying great scripture or through rational and logical thought—but through meditation.

This may seem an arrogant claim. It may even sound fanciful or just plain stupid. It is however the oldest and most tried and tested process known to us as human beings made in the image of God. To put it another way, only the God within us can recognise and know God the source of all existence and life. A not-so-old saint (St Paul) expressed this in yet another way: '... we fix our attention, not on things that are seen, but on things that are unseen. What can be seen lasts only for a time; but what cannot be seen lasts for ever.' (2 Cor 4:18)

To live for a month in the daily presence of a community led by a being who knows, loves and lives this vast life vision both challenged my shrunken vision of the real world and was at the same time an exciting 'beyond-belief' experience.

## THE MAJESTY OF THE PRESENCE

What a gift Francis of Assisi gave us when he said:

"That which we are seeking is the one who is doing the seeking."

In other words what we are looking for (the "something more" we want) outside of us, is actually within us already and is prompting the looking.

God, or the infinite love, peace and harmony we seek, is the real source of our seeking. God is in us as our true being. The truth we seek is already within us.

To know this is only a doorway away from the experience of it.

The little "me" is an illusion that obscures your true identity as

TIMELESS  
and  
FORMLESS  
PRESENCE

(E Tolle)

RUMI is the famous Sufi mystic and poet.

When he writes about the majesty of life which we often feel as a presence, a dawn, a company of friends, a splendour that is prior to, and yet the source of, the universe, he speaks of it in terms of what it is NOT.

(Comment by Coleman Barks)

This we have now is not imagination.

This is not grief or joy.

Not a judging state, or an elation, or sadness.

Those come and go.

This is the presence that doesn't.

(Rumi)

A poem titled "This we have now..."