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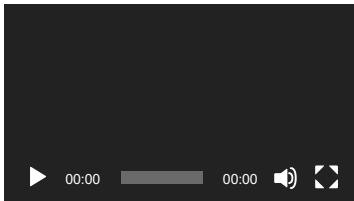
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DAILY AUDIO REFLECTION BY FATHER CHRISTOPHER WHITE

Summary: What importance do I give to listen to the Word of God? Reflections by Fr Christopher White on 2 Samuel 7:4-17 & Mark 4:1-20. *Indian Catholic Matters* is happy to provide Fr. Christopher White's daily audio reflection to *Catholic Bishops Conference of India* website. Click below to listen audio.



Interview with Rev. Fr. Abbot Philip Anderson: We Must All Build Bridges

January 23, 2018 | Team ICM | Spirituality

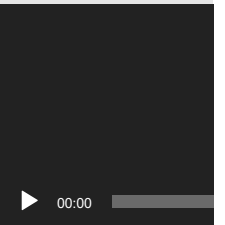
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By Subhasis Chattopadhyay –

In a first-ever dialogue between a [Solesmes](#) Abbot and an Indian Hindu, the very Reverend Philip Anderson, Abbot of [Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey](#) in Hulbert, Oklahoma points out that only peace (शान्तिः śāntiḥ) can come to the aid of a world where ill-informed men and women will have us fight against each other in the name of God.

Hinduism is essentially turned inwards. Hindus over the eons have experimented and perfected various ways in which to be in touch and even be one with the One who is beyond the Darkness:

THE POPE VIDEO – RELI 2018



'SPRINGS FOR THE SOUL' REFLECTION BY FR.
ADOLF WASHINGTON

Never be discouraged GOD is on the mountain top
with YOU, says Adolf Washington. Click below to
listen.

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वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तम् । आदित्यवर्णं तमसस्तु पारे ।

सर्वाणि रूपाणि विचित्य धीरः । नामानि कृत्वाऽभिवदन् यदास्ते ।

from *The Purusha Sukta*

It is this quest for Him who is beyond our knowledge gained through the senses (*gunas*) that led this Hindu interviewer contact one of the most orthodox and spartan Roman Catholic monasteries in the world: *Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey* situated in rural Oklahoma in 2013. From then till date he has had the monks of [this Catholic monastery](#) where each professed monk (unlike the [Camaldoli at Big Sur](#)) still prays the Liturgy of the [Hours](#) in Latin, journey with him in his humdrum life. This interviewer knows that these men in rural USA have found that (तत्त्वमसि, *Thou art That*) which Hindu seers had spoken of in their sacred Scriptures before the discovery of monasticism in the West. The author thanks [Indian Catholic Matters](#) for facilitating this dialogue.

Excerpts:

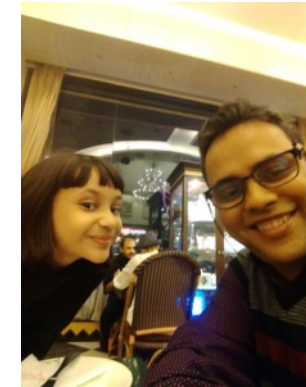
Subhasis. Reverend Abbot Anderson, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. You are aware that India is a Hindu majority nation and Hinduism often prefers the interior life (*vita contemplativa*) over the active life (*vita activa*). Hindus are familiar with total renunciation of the world akin to the spirituality of [Saint Nimatullah Kassab Al-Hardini](#) (1808 – 1858 AD). Within this context of being a land of great renunciation how do you think Benedictine spirituality can help our plural society?

Abbot Anderson. There are, I believe, in India a great number of philosophical and religious doctrines, many of which diverge significantly from one another. In most of them, however, as I understand this, there appears a quest for interior peace and for a unity that transcends the multiplicity and confusion of ideas and doctrines, not to mention the conflicting opinions of warring political factions in the world. The motto of the Benedictine monasteries is precisely “peace,” and this peace comes from a profound unity of doctrine and a deep spirituality that is nourished by ascetic effort and prayer, under the influence of what we call “grace” [कृपा]. Perhaps contact with this spirituality could inspire new hope for something beyond the visible world and a renewal of the quest for both unity and for truth in India, in a great and ancient land, which has no doubt suffered in modern times from influences coming from a decadent Western Civilization.

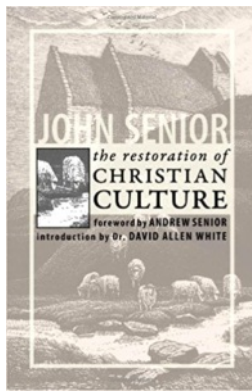
Subhasis. You Reverend Father Abbot belong to the [Solesmes Congregation](#) which yet has no presence in India. How do you think your Congregation’s charism could help Indian Catholics and Hindus?

Abbot Anderson. The special emphasis of the [Solesmes Congregation](#) is the importance placed on liturgical prayer, whose rites express most eloquently the reality of the supernatural. Liturgical prayer is a language that must be learned, but it has a certain universal appeal. [It suffices to see it take place in order to understand most of our spirituality that is invisible.](#)

Subhasis. The Catholic understanding of this world is that it is very real. [Samkhya](#) and some Hindu understandings of this world is also that it is fecund and important for one’s *mukti* (there is no cognate in English since [Hinduism does not admit of absolute dualism](#)). What concrete steps can Catholics and Hindus take in India to help themselves grow spiritually?



The interviewer with his daughter
in Calcutta



It is Professor John Senior who had inspired young men to search for meaning as Catholic monastics

Abbot Anderson. At some point the spiritual man must face the reality of evil. This is a very hard point. All seek liberation from death and evil. Benedictine spirituality is nothing other than undiluted Christianity. We cannot grow without finding a path toward liberation from evil, from "sin" as we say. I do not know of another way of doing this completely than through the mystery of the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ. Surely God provides a providential path for Hindus. What is it? That is a very good question that only Hindus can answer.

Subhasis. Lastly, Reverend Father Abbot, you know that Angels are there, you also know that suffering can be transferred and shared. I stand witness that through your direct intervention, you reduced the real physical pain of someone. Hindu holy men and women can do the same. Can you explain to us how both Catholic and Hindu intellectuals have dumbed down our knowledge of the supernatural and what can we do to restore this knowledge of the supernatural in this day and age? Because it is impossible to be religious without acknowledging the supernatural.

Abbot Anderson. The modern world has grown accustomed to ignoring the supernatural, but this has been to its own detriment. The fact is that the human being is, according to the theological saying, "*capax Dei*," which is to say, "capable of God." In other words, there is a dimension of openness to the infinite in us that cannot be filled except by the infinite being of God. On the other hand, this acquisition of the infinite God which we desire is beyond our power to attain on the natural level. We are in the strange and mysterious position of needing a certain completion of our being which we cannot acquire naturally, but only through a supernatural grace. But that grace can be given. We can seek it and pray for it. There is no reason to live a life that cannot find its true end. [Saint Benedict](#) and all the Saints urge us to seek it.



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