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Catholics Can Learn a Lot from the Dalai Lama

Maureen Fiedler | Sep. 18, 2009 NCR Today

I was mesmerized by our lead interview on Interfaith Voices this week. My guest was Pico Iyer, a friend of the Dalai Lama for more than 30 years, and the author of a new biography of him called The Open Road: The Global Journal of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

He provides an intimate portrait of this highly learned man, who calls himself a ?simple Buddhist monk.? But the Dalai Lama is a philosopher, a lover of science, a leader of the Tibetan community in exile, and a globe-trotting political leader. Yet he finds time to spend at least eight (count ?em ? eight!) hours a day in meditation. And he?d like more.

Maybe this spiritual practice has something to do with his commitment to non-violence, his willingness to forgive the Chinese for invading his homeland, and his long-range view of what brings real change.

And perhaps most amazing, he is not out to convert anyone to Buddhism; he encourages believers to simply delve deeply into their own faith traditions.

Umm? deeply contemplative, non-violent, and non-dogmatic. We Catholics could learn a lot. We?ll get a closer look when he visits the United States in October.
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If you want to listen to the interview with Pico Iyer, and the rest of the show (an interview with a transgender Jew, and a piece on the Muslim call to prayer), go to the Interfaith Voices [1]web site.

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Links:
[1] http://www.interfaithradio.org/