our environment

reverence and responsibility
From the Editors...

What role does religion play in shaping our attitude towards the natural world?

In ancient religious traditions, people considered themselves to be an element of nature, rather than separate from it. Animistic religions held the belief that there existed a spirit in every tree, mountain, or lake, all of which were to be respected. Hunters and gatherers saw themselves not as owners of the land but as belonging to it, just as the animals they hunted did. As human populations grew and agricultural areas developed, monotheism developed. Simultaneously, power and wealth became more concentrated, which had an effect on respect for nature.

Even so, Judaism, Christianity and Islam went on to challenge earthly forms of power, maintaining there is no god but God, who rules all things. They did see themselves as separate from the natural world, with the duty and power to restrain and control it – though it is interesting to note that ancient words in their creation epics refer to human beings as “earth creatures”!

Over time, each of these traditions focused attention on an everlasting future for those who believed. God and soul were separate from earth and body, earthly life less intrinsically important than a life beyond.

Nowadays many people are challenging cosmologies that devalue the natural world. Some are looking to the traditions that honor the sacredness of nature. But others are searching for lost wisdom in the “great religions” that call for a deeper, humbler stance. They are finding spiritual values that impel individuals to take responsibility for an ailing planet. Many of these are expressed in our current issue.

When I look at the night sky and space I am filled with awe and marvel at the greatness and magnificence of the universe. When I’m walking in the midst of nature, in a forest, or on a mountain peak, I feel a sense of sacredness, like the feeling of being in an overpowering presence.

Humans act like they are set above nature, when they are only part of it. Our environment forms us, protects us, and destroys us. It is profound beyond our ability to attain with our senses, beautiful beyond words, and complex beyond grasp. I believe that we should relate to it with humility, awe and respect, with as much reverence as believers bring to their God.

Global climate change is the most important environmental issue facing the planet today. We cannot pour infinite amounts of waste into our atmosphere and oceans and expect no consequences. Humans are careless consumption machines. We have the means and the morals to use our natural resources in an environmentally friendly manner, but not a lot of people seem to understand the importance of that. Communities struggling with unproductive land and contaminated waters are on the verge of an ecological catastrophe. A ruined environment ruins lives and extinguishes hope. I believe that whatever our worldview or spiritual tradition may be, we all share one fragile, beautiful planet, and the duty and privilege of caring for the earth from which we came.

Thank you and enjoy our environment issue of Radix!

Rasha Srouji, Coeditor

The theme for our next issue is

War & Peace
(with apologies to Tolstoy)

If you are interested in firing a volley, send your submissions to the editors at radix@mail.mcgill.ca.

You can find it out on stands in January.

“Thank God men cannot fly, and lay waste the sky as well as the earth.” – Henry David Thoreau

“The sun, the moon, and the stars would have disappeared long ago...had they happened to be within the reach of
Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle, Rethink, Repent, Rejoice

Refrain:
People of God, Children of God, Household of God Reduce
People of God, Church of God, Disciples of God Reuse
People of God, Servants of God, Apostles of God Repair
Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle, Rethink, Repent, Rejoice

Everyone is hoppin’ in their car to go shoppin’;
no one has enough
They’re usin’ up their debit, stretchin’ out their credit,
loadin’ up with stuff
Nothing fills the void, time’s never been better employed
than goin’ out to shop
Once you’re down that road, even when your home is owed,
you won’t be able to stop

Planet Earth, she’s the gang’s home turf;
she’s givin’ it the best she’s got
But you know she’s gettin’ weary, even kind of teary,
when every field becomes a parking lot
The water’s risin’ higher, we’re sinkin’ in a mire
of non-biodegradable trash
The air is smellin’ rotten; it seems that we’ve forgotten,
life can’t be bought with cash

All around the world, every woman and every girl
has got something to say
Bearers of the Word, their voice has gotta be heard
if we’re to wakeen to a brighter day
They’re speakin’ of connection, of spiritual reflection,
of inter-relatedness
They’re teachin’ about love, that heavenly love
that will lead us out of this mess

Words by Archdeacon Tai Tuatagaloa-Matalavea and Robert Bergner, music by Robert Bergner.
Robert is our Anglican Rep. Archdeacon Tuatagaloa-Matalavea is the Anglican Observer at the United Nations.
This song was performed by an international chorus of women at the 13th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Nottingham during the summer of 2005.

A Buddhist “Treatise” for the Environment

In Thailand, some trees have been ordained as Buddhist priests. (What’s the catch?)
Ancient trees of full virtue have been wrapped in saffron and welcomed into the sangha by Thai Buddhist monks. This innovative protest has protected them and the surrounding forest from imminent rape by the forestry machine.

Is this a case of religion co-opted by environmentalism for political expedience?
The conventional notion of environment implies a dualism (the D word) between inside and outside, self and environment. The environmental movement tries to build an ecological understanding of the environment. By definition, this involves recognizing the relation between humans and the environment as an interrelationship, whereby the harm we do to nature is inexorably revisited upon ourselves. By integrating humans into and with nature, ecology works a sort of non-dualism on our way of life. In fact, Buddhist notions of inter-connectedness and dependent arising find perfect articulation through the language of ecology. In turn, Buddhism is a perfect champion for environmentalism. Nature is Non-Dual.

Shouldn’t Buddhists be more concerned about the non-duality of the duality and non-duality of nature?
If it is true that people are ultimately one with the environment, it is nevertheless equally true that we live distinct and free-willed, autonomous of nature. Mahayana Buddhists must reconcile this duality; we must both be distinct beings and also at one with nature.

I can devise a number of ways of imagining this second order non-duality. For me, it’s about creating relationships with all living things. Hence the long tradition of ordaining trees. We breathe the oxygen produced by our planet’s trees. We and the trees are two, but in the exchange of oxygen and carbon-dioxide, our relationship is consummated between us as a wholeness. We are like two sides of a coin: each side distinct, but intractably related one to the other. When we recognize the relationship between ourselves and a tree, we recognize the essential trick to the oneness of self and nature—that we must exist as separate to be considered whole. Although Thai Buddhists ordaining trees likely do not practice Mahayana, it seems a case could be made for tree ordinations in East Asia.

Trevor Fraser
Trevor is a U2 IDS & Literature student who is entirely certain that he does not understand the non-duality of duality and non-duality.

Photography on this page by Robert Bergner.
Creation Sings

Prior to becoming Catholic I had not much interest in the environment. For whatever reason I considered it merely the passive outer context in which I negotiated my personal salvation. I basically held a form of the Cartesian dualism that considered “the flesh” to be of negligible worth and fundamentally severed from the spirit.

My own train of thought was summarily scandalized when someone explained to me the Catholic belief in the Eucharist, wherein Christ is said to become “really” present in the offering of wine and bread. I suppose this to be a rather shocking belief for non-Christians. It certainly shocked me.

One commentator has argued, “Why balk at the gruel of the Eucharist, when you have swallowed the camel of the incarnation?” Indeed, the primary “scandal” in Christianity is that the Messiah has come as God in the flesh, Jesus Christ. Once one accepts this, the Eucharist is a possible conclusion, since it would appear that Jesus himself founded the ritual, “this is my body . . . do this in remembrance of me.”

The incarnation therefore “forever hallows the flesh.” Creation itself has been “infected” with a kind of good infection of a redeemed creation that is unstrained by the fall by the historical presence of God-in-flesh in the person of Jesus.

Surely, this is the crux of the Christian faith. Yet for many it is hard to believe in a Christ who is still present, hidden in a wafer of bread or cup of wine. It seems too miraculous, or improbable. However those who do accept the miracle of water into wine, or wine into blood, do well to consider the quotidian miracle that turns water into grapes on the vine.

It certainly is something of a mystery that lets the particular dance of light, soil, and water transform itself into fruits and vegetables of innumerable variety. The mystery of life itself continues to fascinate thinkers and technicians of science. We are discovering (or re-discovering) the delicate interrelationship between human life and the plant and animal life that we call the “wild.” While some may wish we could “overcome” nature itself, I think it is rather warlike and inhuman to imagine the total subjugation of nature.

Instead, I am fascinated in uncovering the ways in which humanity is intrinsically married to the well-being of the “environment.” On one level, it marks the end of the dichotomy between civilization and nature when civilization predicates itself on a type of harmony with the natural order. Our very flesh comes from the earth and returns to it eventually. It is through the lens of the Catholic faith that I take some joy in considering the mysteriously mundane links. I think of Saint Francis and his words with the animals, or the elves in The Lord of the Rings whispering a strange sweet story so that the trees themselves awake from their slumber—just as God whispered a particular “Word” that could awaken the Dead Man.

Jeffrey Derman
Jeffrey is a year 3 law student and a recalcitrant gardener.

Something has gone horribly wrong with the “developed” world.

Humans do not have the best track record when it comes to keeping the environment in good condition. While there are cultures which appreciate what they have access to in their region and take as little as they need from the earth, western society, the so-called “developed world,” thrives on abusing the resources that are available. Land, water, trees, and anything beneath the earth’s surface are exploited to the utmost extent. Tracts of land, after their use has expired, are discarded and abandoned, and flourishing, unarnished areas become the next target.

Our culture seems to be afraid of nature. We pave over everything and kill everything that frightens us. We live in enormous houses and can go entire days without actually being outside: from garage to car to parking garage to work and back. We are constantly complaining about the weather and how it mistreats us, as though it were a malevolent enemy. We treat nature as if we are constantly at war with it.

As an atheist I have a problem with this western development view of the earth. I believe that death is the end of a human’s body and mind, and that there is no continuing spirit which separates and lives on. I think, then, that what happens in this life is of incredible importance, for we are leaving the world for the next generations and we want things to be in order before we no longer have any influence over its state. This earth is also, from my point of view, all we get, and we should try to treat this as our one time chance.

Unfortunately, there is an almost overwhelming amount of work to be done in order that there will still be something to give to future humans. This includes ending our dependence on fossil fuels and lowering the amount of waste we produce. The largest obstacle may be, however, changing our entire point of view—everything isn’t ours; we are merely borrowing it from future generations. We fear the natural world as an enemy, which we constantly try to control and conquer, but cannot. This attitude also must change, as we must live together with the earth, not as angry inhabitants. If we don’t change our treatment and view of the earth, there may not be any resources remaining for the next generation, or an earth that anyone wants to live on.

Amanda Unruh
Amanda is our atheist rep.
The change of the seasons always has a way of making me feel absolutely invigorated. I never really knew why until I read C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*. I've lived in the same part of Canada almost all my life, and I've seen the same streets covered in snow (or fallen leaves or budding flowers or green grass) many times over. Granted, the colours of autumn, the freshness of the first winter snowfall, the budding of spring and the warmth of summer are certainly wonderful, but what makes them so exhilarating every single year? What makes a season special when it isn't unique?

The answer hit me across the face when I read *The Screwtape Letters*. It is rhythm—the balance of pattern and novelty—which I love. Like steadfast friendships, the smell of my Grandmother’s cooking, or a new song by a favourite band, the seasons of nature are simultaneously familiar and fresh. Lewis writes of how God has made both variety and stability pleasurable to us and of how “He has contrived to gratify both tastes together on the very world He has made, by that union of change and permanence which we call Rhythm.”

Lewis points out that the same rhythm is present in the Christian liturgical year. We “change from a fast to a feast, but it is the same feast as before,” he writes. The Church year has its own cycle, which begins with Advent (a time to wait, to recall the expectation of the Messiah and to anticipate the time when He will come again), and is immediately followed by the joyous Christmas season (not just Christmas Day!). Perhaps the best example of the fast-to-feast pattern is the transition from Lent to Easter. During the 40 days of Lent, Catholics are called to fast, reflect and repent in order to prepare for Easter and to become better Christians. The Lenten fast ends as the Easter feast begins, and during the weeks of the Easter season we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the new life that He brings us.

Each liturgical period—a change from the one that preceded it and yet the same as it was the previous year—has its own flavour and its own focus, like the seasons of the natural world. Perhaps this is one reason why I never tire of the Church’s celebrations. Every Easter is a new experience, even though I have heard all of the scriptural readings and hymns before, as my faith deepens and I am drawn to different parts of the celebration. Yet, my own familiarity with the season places it within its context, giving comfort and a sense of harmony.

I find myself in awe of a Creator who fulfills me mysteriously and deeply, within both the natural and spiritual worlds, for (as Lewis writes), “He gives [us] the seasons, each season different yet every year the same, so that spring is always felt as a novelty yet always as the recurrence of an immemorial theme.”

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Religion and the Environment

The whistles of the winds of the world
Are not the colours of the trees in fall, letting down long locks of reds and yellows. They are strong and grandiose,
Not very much like dirt, the footing for feet who need brown to sigh, who need stumps and stones to throw arms wide.
Snow, hard soft powder ice white and yellow and postcarding peaks
Young and old do come and to find a field of gold or a sea of emeralds or something to make their tender hearts leap up.
The voice of His makes the cedars speak.
Laughing like a child he comes to pray deep in green enclaves of goodness.
Sweet honey is the beaver’s architecturally flawless dam.
Thankful for the trees
For green paper
For the wood that warms Victorian rooms
The great swirl of wild
Of untouched
Of stillness
He is grandfatherly in his carefree smile. His rocking chair chuckle.
Know the Great Gift that sits outside rain soaked window panes.

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Alex Eidman
Alex is a UO student writing from a Jewish perspective. He is currently concerned with jumping rope to Michael Jackson’s “Thriller,” and not so much with what he will be doing with his life.

Tara McElroy
Tara is on of our Catholic reps.
The Pollution of the Purifying Ganga

The city of Banaras wakes before the sun and drowsily makes its way to the banks of the Ganga to bathe, to make offerings to the sacrosanct river, to fill vessels with her holy water for the home, and to brush teeth. The first time I immersed myself in her icy folds, clutching onto a heavy metal chain so as not to be dragged off by the current, and eager to wash away my overwhelming slack of sin, I felt refreshed, invigorated, and hours later... unbearably ill.

Approximately 300 million gallons of waste are unloaded into the Ganga every day, polluting her waters with sewage, garbage, food remnants, and bodily remains. The latest water samples accumulated in Banaras reveal fecal coliform counts of roughly 50,000 bacteria per 100 milliliters of water, overwhelmingly higher than the standard for safe river bathing, let alone suitable drinking water. It is estimated that one-third of India’s deaths, and 80% of its health-related problems, can be attributed to the water-borne diseases resultant of this contamination. Regrettably, I only found the time to gather these stats from my trusty Lonely Planet once I was confined to a hospital bed in New Delhi.

Fecal coliform bacteria or not, the Ganga is venerated by Hindus as a nurturing Mother, a Goddess who graciously descended from the celestial realm to forgive, embrace, ritually cleanse, and grant salvation to her faithful devotees. A single drop of Ganga water is said to relieve one of transgressions accumulated over multiple lifetimes, and her banks are the most desirable place to die; the Mother Ganga purifies the dead and carries them to heaven.

Does the tangible pollution of the river, one might ask, have any bearing on the belief that the Ganga is, within the Hindu framework of ritual purity and pollution, purifying in her very essence? The answer is that the river does not simultaneously function as a natural, organic entity and a “supernatural” one. As posits author Diana Eck, “the natural is the religious...” if the river does not stand for, or point toward, anything greater, beyond itself, it is part of a living sacred geography that Hindus hold in common.” The Hindu veneration of the elements, which compose an animate sacred landscape, including mountains, trees, and bodies of water, is age-old. The Ganga, then, unlike the temple image, need not undergo the pratishtha rite whereby divinity is installed; she is primordially divine, sacred, auspicious, and pure. She cannot be separated from this divinity, and is thus necessarily a primary vehicle of purification; the physical pollution of her waters is, thereby, hollow and artificial.

This does not mean that the current condition of the river is of no consequence to the nation, but rather that the Hindu conception of sacred geography must be incorporated by any project which seeks to clean, lastingly, the Ganga. Veer Bhadra Mishra, founder of the Sankat Mochan Foundation, which began in Banaras in 1982 and is attempting to sanitize the water, seeks to do just this; his approach stresses that human action, and not the sacred river, is responsible. Rather than call the Ganga “dirty,” and imply that she is no longer holy and pure, Mishra loudly proclaims: “We are allowing our Mother to be defiled.”

Hillary Brenhouse
Hillary is a Joint Honors Philosophy/Religious Studies student who has an unnatural passion for semicolons.

Photography by Robert Bergner.
Building Community in an Age of Disconnection

For most of my life I have felt great sadness and pain flowing from the destruction of communities and ecosystems around the world. I carried with this pain a determination and a deep-rooted commitment to halt this destruction and to create alternatives that will sustain ecosystems and communities for generations yet to come. For as long as I can remember I have felt the purpose of my own life intricately bound to the resistance of destruction and the creation of life-sustaining alternatives. I have felt well-suited to this purpose because I was born near the roots of this destruction with the awareness, privilege, and power to change it. Every day I learn more to sharpen and deepen my analysis of the roots and the shape of destructive forces at work around me, and every day I work to borrow and build the resources and ideas from which to create life-sustaining alternatives.

I have long believed that the destruction of communities and ecosystems around the world is rooted in the all-consuming lifestyles of privileged populations like those in North America, where I have lived all my life. I believe that poverty, starvation, biodiversity-loss, genocide, climate change, war, pollution and almost all other forms of oppression stem from the lifestyles of privileged populations and that a massive lifestyle change or social change is needed to end all of these forms of oppression and destruction. The fundamental question of my life has been, “How can we create and sustain radical social change in privileged populations?” For the first time in my life, through the Montreal Urban Community Sustainment (MUCS) Project, I have begun to find answers to this question.

What is MUCS?

The MUCS Project is dedicated to building a sustainable community through the creation of an affordable, co-operative home, a community centre, and collective businesses for Montreal students and residents.

The goals of the MUCS Project are: (1) to provide people with the collective resources and tools they need to improve their lives and the world, and (2) to do so through the creation of a “sustainability,” a tangible, physical definition of progress towards sustainability.

The objectives of the MUCS Project are: (1) to create a diverse and compassionate community of 200 Montreal students and residents, (2) to build an affordable, co-operative living space to house this community, (3) to integrate spaces for a community center and collective businesses into the design of the project, and (4) to design and construct the building as a model of ecological efficiency in the urban environment.

What are the roots of the MUCS project?

The MUCS Project is rooted in the idea of creating and communicating an alternative lifestyle that meets the true hopes and needs of privileged populations, as well as the true hopes and needs of currently oppressed and marginalized populations. MUCS is committed to the city, because it is in urban areas that people are closest to their collective potential for social change and simultaneously most aware of hopes and needs that are not being met in their own lives or in the many lives around them. The MUCS vision springs from the belief that partial and disparate alternatives that meet only some hopes and needs will only ever add-up to partial and disparate social change. It is only when partial solutions come together and begin to meet a more holistic set of hopes and needs that sustained social change becomes possible.

How can you get involved in the MUCS project?

As a young project with an ambitious and long-term vision we are always in need of guidance, people-power, financial support, and technical expertise. We would love to hear from you about stories, resources, and ideas that relate to the work of the MUCS Project; whether it’s a story about intergenerational conflict in your community, an innovative model for a workers co-op, or a connection to a community foundation! Check out the MUCS website at www.mucs.ca or give us a call at (514) 398-1829.

Spencer Mann
Spencer is graduate of the School of Environment.

McGill has a new composting program called Gorilla. At the moment Gorilla is involved in composting non-animal product organic waste from McGill cafeterias. They also wish to expand composting to all interested faculty and students by providing them with the necessary materials. Currently, the project is in need of more volunteers. Find out more at www.gorilla.mcgill.ca/ or email gorilla.compost@gmail.com.

Note from the editors: Many of the perspectives presented in this issue of Radix indicate the need to take action. We think a great way to link religion and culture is through social activism. This page includes ways in which you might consider living out your faith-inspired environmental concern right here at McGill.
McGill Ecumenical Chaplaincy’s
St. Martha’s in the Basement
Good food for Body and Soul
Please share our Bible study, worship
and a simple vegetarian supper
Wednesdays at 6 pm
basement of UTC (3521 University)
Call Gwenda Wells for more info: 398-4104

McGill Student Parents’ Network
We invite all student parents
and their families to our annual
Holiday Party
on December 18th at 1:30pm
in the Newman Centre.
Holiday Hampers (our gift of food)
will be distributed at this
time for those who have
applied by December 1st.
Interested families should contact Kate at:
398-4104  mcgillspm@yahoo.ca

New Earth Voices
Singing is good for the soul!
Our Holiday Concert will take place
on December 3rd at 5:00 pm
at the Diocesan College
4475 University St.
for more information, call us at
398-4104

The Yellow Door...
Volunteers needed!
The Yellow Door Elderly Project is seeking
volunteers to work with seniors living in and
around the McGill Ghetto. No major time
commitment required — flexible hours, just a cou-
ples of hours per month! Great opportunity to
contribute to community spirit.
If you would like to become a
Yellow Door volunteer
call 398-6243
or email:
yellowproject@hotmail.com

Habitat for Humanity
Habitat for Humanity is a worldwide organization
committed to the elimination of homelessness.
At the McGill Campus Chapter, we work towards
this goal by raising awareness on campus, raising
money, volunteering at soup kitchens and
homeless shelters, and participating in builds
in different parts of Canada and the US.
Weekly Meetings:
Newman Centre, 3484 Peel St.
habitat_mcgill@yahoo.com

Student Nights at St. John’s
Students, faculty and staff are welcome at
monthly student nights and other activities.
Call St. John’s Lutheran Church: 844-6297
Or email: students@SaintJohnsLutheranMontreal.org

The Muslim Students Association of McGill
We offer:
weekly study circles, free Islamic educational
materials, services during Ramadan, lectures/conferences, prayer facilities, li-
brary (Shatner building, room 430)
3460 McTavish Street, Rm. 14
ssmu.mcgill.ca/msa
msamcgill@montrealmuslims.ca
398-3001 ext. 09849
Visitors from other faiths are always welcome.

Share a HOT VEGAN LUNCH at the
RABBIT HOLE CAFÉ
A Collective Vegetarian Kitchen
3625 Aylmer, downstairs • Fridays, 1-5 pm
Donations of $1 or a non-perishable food item are appreciated.

Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal
An urban church
in the heart of Montreal
Serving the needs of Mennonites and friends
Sunday Worship: 11am
Young Adult Discussion Group: Sunday 10am
Young Adult Social Group: Friday and Saturday evenings
120 Duluth E. 849-9039  www.mfintl.ca

The Art of Living
Yoga of Breath
Breath is the link between body, mind and spirit.
Come experience the Art of Living course
Knowledge and practice that will contribute to your spiritual growth.
December 6-11
(514)739-5448
montreal@artofliving.org

Montreal Diocesan Theological College
3475 University Ave.
Daily Christian worship—all are welcome!
Morning Prayer, Mon.-Thurs.: 8:30-8:30 am
Evening Prayer, Mon.-Thurs.: 4:30-5 pm
Holy Eucharist, Wed.: 11:30-12:30 and
Fri.: 7:30-8:30 pm
All are welcome!

Sikh Chaplaincy Open Meeting
Social get-togethers
Newman Centre, 3484 Peel
Contact Manjit Singh,
Sikh Chaplain
te.man@sympatico.ca

Newman Centre
McGill’s Catholic Community
3484 Peel, between Dr Penfield and Sherbrooke
398-4106
www.newmancentre.org
Holy Mass: Saturdays 5pm & Sundays 11am + courses, Bible studies, discussions + meals and social activities + volunteering, social justice + daily Mass, confession.

Scriptura: Nouvelle Série
a journal of
the Faculté de théologie et de sciences des religions de l’Université de Montréal. Published twice yearly, it is entirely managed by graduate students and committed to allowing M.A. and Ph.D. students to publish their work and set foot in the extensive world of academic journals. Primarily a biblical journal, each issue approaches a given theme through exegetical and interpretive articles. This nucleus is complemented by religious and social science articles on the theme. Due to the increasing collaboration of graduate students from various universities in Quebec and Ontario, we publish articles in both French and English, which are submitted to a bilingual reading committee.

For subscription or submission information contact the McGill rep, Sara Parks Ricker, at
saraandaaron@yahoo.com

Sikh Chaplaincy
Open Meeting
Social get-togethers
Newman Centre, 3484 Peel
Contact Manjit Singh,
Sikh Chaplain
te.man@sympatico.ca

McGill Chaplaincy Service
3600 McTavish, Suite 4400
Please join us!

Radix publishes ads for groups and events with a spiritual or social justice theme—for FREE! Email us to submit an ad of under 30 words: radix@mail.mcgill.ca

Buddhist Beginners Meditation
Thursday, January 12, 2006
2-4 pm
McGill Chaplaincy Service
3600 McTavish, Suite 4400
Please join us!