

International Thomas Merton Society

NEWSLETTER

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Art: Jim Cantrell

Program Set for 1999 General Meeting

At its June meeting, the Board of Directors of the International Thomas Merton Society approved the program for the ITMS Sixth General Meeting, to be held June 10-13, 1999 at St. Jerome's University, affiliated with the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. The main speakers for the conference, "Magnetic North / True North: Geography Beyond Boundaries," will be Mary Jo Leddy and Barry Lopez. The program will also feature a banquet address by ITMS president Tom Del Prete, two roundtable sessions, a general session on Thomas Merton and Henri Nouwen, as well as thirteen concurrent sessions and workshops, meditation and worship sessions, and entertainment.

Keynote speaker Mary Jo Leddy is one of Canada's most distinguished Catholic writers, editors and social activists. She holds a doctoral degree from the University of Toronto, and was a founding editor of *Catholic New Times*, Canada's independent Catholic newspaper. Her books include *Memories of War, Promises of Peace* (1989), *Reweaving Religious Life: Beyond the Liberal Model* (1990), *Say to the Darkness, We Beg to Differ* (1991), *In the Eye of the Catholic Storm: The Church Since Vatican II* (1992) (with Bishop Remi de Roo and Douglas Roche), and most recently *At the Border Called Hope: Where Refugees are Neighbors* (1997), which draws on her work as a member of the Romero House Community in Toronto. In 1996 she was

awarded the Order of Canada for her humanitarian work.

Barry Lopez is a contributing editor of *Harpers* magazine and the author of twelve books on nature and environmentalism, including *Of Wolves and Men* (1982), winner of the John Burroughs Medal for distinguished nature writing, *Arctic Dreams: Imagination and Desire in a Northern Landscape* (1986), winner of the National Book Award, and the trilogy of short fiction *Desert Notes* (1976), *River Notes* (1979) and *Field Notes* (1994). His most recent work is *About This Life: Journeys on the Threshold of Memory* (1998).

Editors of the recently completed edition of Thomas Merton's journals will participate in a roundtable discussing the significance of the various volumes for understanding Merton's life and thought.

There will also be a roundtable on Merton's friend and mentor Catherine de Hueck Doherty, featuring biographer Lorene Hanley Duquin, author of *They Called Her the Baroness: The Life of Catherine De Hueck Doherty* (1995), and members of the Madonna House Community, founded by Catherine Doherty, including Rev. Robert Wild, author of books on her spiritual teaching and diocesan postulator for the cause of her canonization.

Carolyn and Geoffrey Whitney-Brown, coworkers of Fr. Henri Nouwen, will present a general session on Merton and Nouwen as kindred spirits, comparing the teaching of the two great contemporary spiritual writers.

Concurrent session topics include:

- "Merton and the East" (Walt Chura, Sidney Griffith, John Wu);
- "Merton's Columbia Crossroads" (Michael Callaghan, Joan Combs, Paul Spaeth);
- "Merton's Paths to Wholeness" (Jacques Goulet, John Noffsinger, Thomas Magner);
- "Merton Beyond Boundaries" (David Belcastro, Janet Malone, Gary Young);
- "Merton and the Feminine" (Christine Bochen, Suzanne Zuercher, OSB);
- "Merton: Reading, Writing, Realization" (Don Nugent, Dewey and Victor Kramer);
- "Merton's America" (Ross Labrie, Monica Weis, SSJ);
- "Merton's Sense of Place" (Paul Pearson, Brad and Daniel Mattingly);
- "Merton and Ecology" (Dennis O'Hara, Donald St. John);
- "Merton and Hope" (Tim Fullerton, Bang Sik Oh);
- "Merton the Poet" (Patrick O'Connell, Lynn Szabo);
- "Merton and the Bible" (William Apel, Margaret Betz).

Workshops include:

- "Thomas Merton in Bangkok: Zen Death of a Christian Monk" led by Donald Grayston;
- "Thomas Merton as a Guide for Those Living Alone" led by Bunny Stewart;
- "Thomas Merton and Robert Lax: A Friendship in Letters" led by Arthur W. Biddle.

Opening sessions include the "First-Timers Session" with Bob Grip; *"The Merton Annual"* with George Kilcourse and Victor Kramer; "Teaching Merton" with Virginia Ratigan and Tim Trewin; "Merton on the Web" with Steve Furino; and "ITMS Chapters Workshop" with Ed Farley.

Meditation sessions will be led by Harriet Hope and Susannah Malarkey, OP; Bradford T. Stull will lead morning Tai Chi exercises.

Entertainment includes "Beyond the Shadow and the Disguise: A Geographical Anthology of the Writing of Thomas Merton," a multi-media presentation by Kevin Burns, and a concert featuring a setting of Merton's poem "Song: Contemplation" by Canadian composer Alfred Kunz. Christine Hogan and Mary Murray will coordinate the poetry session.

Registration materials will be included in the Winter 1998 issue of *The Merton Seasonal*. Further information on the general meeting can be obtained by contacting the conference planning office by email: the address is: merton@usjc.uwaterloo.ca.

Shannon Fellowships Awarded

At the June meeting of the ITMS Board of Directors, Monica Weis, SSJ, chair of the Shannon Fellowship committee, announced the names of the five winners of the 1998 fellowships. They are Andrea Cook, Andrei Kirilenkov, Sonia Petisco Martinez, Cristóbal Serrán-Pagan y Fuentes and Phillip Thompson. The Shannon Fellowship program was established in 1997 in honor of the founding president of the ITMS to promote scholarship on Merton and his work. Up to five annual awards, of a maximum of \$750 each, are granted to scholars for research on primary-source Merton materials at the Merton Center at Bellarmine College or other archival collections. This year's selection committee included Sidney Griffith and Ross Labrie as well as Monica Weis.

Fellowship winners and their projects include:

- **Andrea Cook**, the dean of studies at St. Mark's Episcopal School in Florida, who will use her award to research material for her project, "A Feminist View of *Eighteen Poems* and Merton's 'Yes' to God."

- **Andrei Kirilenkov**, of the Moscow chapter of the Merton Society, who will use his award to translate and publish a Russian translation of Merton's *Thoughts in Solitude*.
- **Sonia Petisco**, a doctoral student in philology at the University of Madrid, who will use her award to do research at the Bellarmine College Merton Center on her project, "A Critical Study and Translation into Spanish of the Poetry of Thomas Merton."
- **Crisóbal Serrán-Pagan**, a doctoral student at Boston University, who will use his award to complete his research on his dissertation, "Mystical Vision and Prophetic Voice in Thomas Merton and St. John of the Cross."
- **Phillip Thompson**, a doctoral student at the University of Chicago, who will use his award to complete his research on his dissertation, "Merton's Reflections on Modern Technology."

In announcing the grants, Monica noted that two of the new fellows, Sonia and Cristóbal, are also former winners of Daggy Youth Scholarships, which enabled them to attend the ITMS Fifth General Meeting, a sign that efforts to encourage young people's interest in Merton are proving fruitful.

The deadline for applications for Shannon Fellowships for 1999-2000 is March 15, 1999. Awards must be used between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2000. Awards will be based on the quality of the proposal submitted and on the need for consulting archival materials at the site proposed. Applicants must be members of the ITMS; they may join the Society at the time of application by including a check for \$20, made out to "ITMS", along with their proposals. Current officers and Board members of the ITMS, as well as grant committee members, are not eligible for fellowships during their term of office.

Application for Shannon Fellowships must include the following:

- a detailed proposal of 500-750 words explaining the subject and goals of the applicant's research and the rationale for consulting primary sources at the Merton collection selected by the applicant;
- a letter of recommendation from a scholar familiar with the applicant's qualifications and research interests;
- a proposed expense budget: grants will cover costs of travel to and from collections; expenses for accommodations and food during time of research at archives; costs of photocopying;
- disclosure of any other sources of funding awarded or applied for, with amounts received or requested.

Applications are encouraged from established scholars, from researchers without academic affiliation, and from students and younger scholars, including those engaged in research for theses and dissertations.

Completed applications for fellowships should be sent to the selection committee chair, **Dr. Monica Weis, SSJ, Department of English, Nazareth College, 4245 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14618-3790.** The committee's decisions will be announced to the ITMS Board of Directors at their June 10, 1999 meeting and to the society at large at the Town Meeting at the ITMS Sixth General Meeting, June 12, 1999, at St. Jerome's University, Waterloo, Ontario.

Cistercian Jubilee Year

As well as being the thirtieth anniversary of the death of Thomas Merton and the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of his best-selling autobiography *The Seven Storey Mountain*, 1998 is a jubilee year marking three

significant anniversaries for Merton's order and monastery.

On March 20-21, a conference and celebration at Citeaux, France commemorated the ninth centennial of the founding of the Cistercian Order there in 1098 by St. Robert of Molesme, St. Alberic and St. Stephen Harding as a reform movement of Benedictine monastic life. (Merton's 1949 book *The Waters of Siloe* tells the story of the founding of Citeaux and the later history of the Cistercians, including their coming to America.)

On December 21, the sesquicentennial of the founding in 1848 of the Abbey of Gethsemani, the first Cistercian monastery in the Americas, will be celebrated at a eucharistic liturgy with the Cistercian Abbot General, the abbots of Gethsemani's foundations, and clergy of the Archdiocese of Louisville joining the monks of Gethsemani. (At the one-hundredth anniversary of the monastery's founding, on December 21, 1948, Frater Louis Merton was ordained subdeacon, and at the public celebration commemorating this milestone the following June, as related in *The Sign of Jonas* and *Entering the Silence*, Merton provided commentary for visiting journalists.)

On March 15, Abbot Timothy Kelly (one of four current or former Cistercian abbots trained by Thomas Merton as novice master) marked his silver jubilee as Abbot of Gethsemani. Called by Archbishop Thomas C. Kelly of Louisville "one of the great churchmen of this century," Abbot Timothy celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving with the Gethsemani community and visiting abbots and abbesses on February 8.

Merton Annual

At the ITMS Board of Directors meeting in June, the Publications Committee of the Board submitted a proposal to develop a closer

relationship with *The Merton Annual*. The *Annual* includes unpublished or out-of-print works by Thomas Merton, scholarly articles, reviews and interviews; alternate-year issues include many papers delivered at ITMS General Meetings. Beginning with Volume 11 (1998), the *Annual* will be issued by Sheffield Press, a distinguished British publishing firm.

At the meeting, the Board approved a proposal to subsidize the *Annual* at a rate of \$2400 per year for the next two years, minus the total amount of money raised (if less than \$2400) from members who purchase the *Annual* through the Society for that year at a special rate of \$12 per volume.

Those ITMS members who are interested in purchasing *The Merton Annual* for the reduced rate of \$12 (list price for volumes 6-10 has been \$24.95) should check the box provided on their membership renewal forms, or contact the Merton Center, Bellarmine College, 2001 Newburg Road, Louisville, KY 40205.

Merton Cross

Sculptor David Kocka, best known to many ITMS members as the designer of the "Louie" award, given for scholarship and service at ITMS General Meetings, has created a cast-bronze celtic cross based on one of Merton's own designs for sale to the general public.

This is one of literally thousands of Merton drawings described by Kocka as "mystical doodles," which include both recognizable images such as monks, monastic landscapes, crucifixes, and sketches of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, and more spontaneous, less representational calligraphies that have come to be known as "Signatures." Of the latter, Merton wrote in *Raids on the Unspeakable*, "For the only dream a man seriously has when he takes a brush in his hand and dips it into ink is to reveal a new sign that can continue to stand by itself and to exist in its own right,

transcending all logical interpretations." Kocka notes that Merton "has developed seeds of a spiritual theology around these images," which "represent spontaneous expressions of freedom and authenticity."

In association with the Bellarmine College Merton Center and the Merton Legacy Trust, Kocka is developing a series of bronze reproductions of some of these drawings, the first of which is the cross, which is closely related to the abstract "Signatures" but has some representational form. The image is based on the traditional celtic crosses of Ireland, but Kocka notes that "Merton, in his usual way, has added his contemporary and spiritual Zen-like twist" to the cross.

The 2 1/2 inch image is available for \$35.00. Further information can be obtained from the Merton Center, Bellarmine College, 2001 Newburg Road, Louisville, KY 40205; phone: (502)-452-1887; or from David Kocka, Botegga Sculptural Designs, 995 Beech Road SE, Laconia, IN 47135; phone: (812)-737-2261.

Elsie Mayer (1930-1998)

Long-time ITMS member and Merton scholar Elsie F. Mayer of Bingham Farms, Michigan, died June 12 after an extended illness. Her work had appeared in both *The Merton Seasonal* and *The Merton Annual*, and she had presented papers at the ITMS General Meeting and at the Kansas Merton Conference, with a particular focus on Merton's literary achievements.

She was one of the first group of recipients of the ITMS Shannon Fellowships, for her projected work on Merton and Bob Dylan, but was prevented by her illness from using the award. She was also an active member of the College English Association, and published articles in *The CEA Journal* as well as in *America* and *The Explicator*. She was also the

author of *My Window on the World: The Works of Anne Morrow Lindberg* (1980).

She is survived by Earl Mayer, her husband of thirty-six years.

In a poem she wrote at the beginning of her illness, entitled "Hope," both her determination and her wit are evident:

Hope keeps me awake tonight
with her promise of a rosy dawn
like the fiery sky earlier this evening.

I'll not give in to yesterday's failure,
a harpy tearing through layers of doubt
to the bedrock of despair.

If tomorrow Hope knocks on my door,
I won't dismiss her as I would a visitor
mistaking me for some more worthy tenant,

Nor will I call the super, thinking her a vagrant
strayed from a familiar corner.
Instead, I'll ask her in to tea.

We'll chat about her sister Faith,
so long ago a neighbor on this block
but since become a stranger rarely seen.

And if before she leaves, Hope offers me
a basketful of herbs grown in her garden,
though twined with nettles,

I'll not refuse her gift.

Dear Named FOR Head

Rev. John Dear, SJ, author, peace activist, Jesuit priest and active member of the ITMS, has been named executive director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the world's oldest interreligious pacifist organization, founded by British and German clergy at the outset of World War I to affirm and maintain the bonds of Christian unity in countries at

war. Dear is the first Catholic priest to head the Fellowship.

Thomas Merton joined the FOR on September 25, 1962, one of the few Catholic members at the time. He also served as a sponsor of the Catholic Peace Fellowship, which was founded in July, 1964 as one of the Religious Peace Fellowships associated or affiliated with the FOR, which currently number fifteen. Merton's articles "The Root of War Is Fear," "Red or Dead: The Anatomy of a Cliché," and "Blessed Are the Meek" appeared in *Fellowship*, the FOR magazine; the last, probably the most significant of Merton's peace writings, was originally written at the request of Hildegard Goss-Mayr, International FOR Vice President, and was also published as a pamphlet in July 1967 by the CPF. The peacemakers' retreat on "The Spiritual Roots of Protest" that took place at Gethsemani in November, 1964, was largely organized by John Heidbrink, the FOR Secretary for Church Relations, who also brought Thich Nhat Hanh to visit Merton in May, 1967.

Dear, 38, is a North Carolina native and a graduate of Duke University, who has lived and worked in Central America and Northern Ireland as well as inner-city Washington, DC. He has been arrested over fifty times in religiously based peace actions, including a 1993 "Plowshares" protest that resulted in a nine-month jail sentence. His work has appeared in both *The Merton Seasonal* and *The Merton Annual*, and he has spoken at an ITMS General Meeting. He is the author of numerous books, including *The God of Peace: Toward a Theology of Nonviolence*, *Peace Behind Bars*, *Disarming the Heart: Toward a Vow of Nonviolence*, and *Our God is Nonviolent: Witnesses in the Struggle for Peace and Justice*, which includes a chapter on Thomas Merton. Most recently, he edited *The Road to Peace: Writings on Peace and Justice* by Henri Nouwen, a portion of which appeared

in the Spring, 1998 issue of *The Merton Seasonal*.

Further information about the FOR is available from the Fellowship at Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960; phone: (914)-358-4601; email: fellowship@igc.org; website: <http://www.nonviolence.org/for/fellowship>.

Merton at CPA

The field of Merton Studies was well represented at the awards ceremonies of the Catholic Press Association meeting in New Orleans in June, 1998.

The sixth volume of the complete Journals of Thomas Merton, *Learning to Love*, edited by Christine M. Bochen, received a third-place award in the history/biography category.

Named as second-place winner for best scholarly article was "Merton on the Eve of the Third Millennium" by Patrick F. O'Connell, an expanded version of the presidential address delivered at the Fifth General Meeting of the ITMS, held at Spring Hill College in June, 1997.

It appeared in *Grail, An Ecumenical Quarterly*, which received a first-place award in the scholarly periodical category; *Grail*, which frequently features articles on Merton, is edited by ITMS member and Sixth General Meeting site coordinator Michael Higgins.

Merton at Chautauqua

Thomas Merton and members of the International Thomas Merton Society were much in evidence this year at the Chautauqua Institution in western New York, the oldest summer cultural program in America. Merton's life and work were a featured topic during a week-long series of afternoon lectures.

On Monday, August 17, Msgr. William H. Shannon, ITMS founding president and

general editor of the Merton letters, began the series with a talk on "*The Seven Storey Mountain: Fifty Years Later*"; the Wednesday presentation by Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB, executive director of Benetvision, focused on Merton's *New Seeds of Contemplation* and was entitled "Thomas Merton: Seeder of Radical Action"; on the following day, Dr. Christine M. Bochen, editor of *Learning to Love*, the sixth volume of Merton's complete journals, spoke on "Love and Solitude: The Journals of Thomas Merton." The series also included lectures on Tuesday, August 18 by Dr. Lawrence S. Cunningham, editor of *Thomas Merton: Spiritual Master*, entitled "Gaudium et Spes: Catholicism Confronts Modernity at Vatican II," and on Friday, August 21 by Abbot Francis Kline, OCSO of Mepkin Abbey, South Carolina, entitled "The Church at the Millennium: Ongoing Formation of the People of God" (focused on the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Church).

In addition, Rev. Bonnie B. Thurston, Ph.D., fourth president of the ITMS and currently professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, served as chaplain at Chautauqua during the ninth and final week of the program, delivering the sermon and conducting the service on Sunday, August 23, and leading the morning worship during the week of August 24-28.

Merton Conference at Oakham

The Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain and Ireland held its Second General Meeting March 27-29, 1998, at Oakham School, Rutland, England, Thomas Merton's Alma Mater. The conference theme was "Thomas Merton: Poet, Monk, Prophet." Close to 150 people from ten different nations participated in the meeting.

Major addresses included "New Words for God: Contemplation and Religious Writing,"

by Rt. Rev. Rowan Williams, Anglican Bishop of Monmouth; "The Camera in the Hands of a Monk," by Dr. Esther de Waal; and "Thomas Merton: Cistercian Monk," by Rev. Basil Pennington, OCSO. The presidential address, "A Day in the Life of Thomas Merton," was delivered by Canon A. M. Allchin. The meeting also featured a panel discussion by the editors of the Merton Journals: Patrick Hart, OCSO, Lawrence Cunningham, Victor Kramer and Christine Bochen, and a performance of the play "Un Pas de Deux, Un Pas de Dieu" by Christine Jensen Hogan, a dialogue between Merton (played by Michael Woodward) and Puritan poet Anne Bradstreet (played by Hogan).

Concurrent sessions focused on the three aspects of the conference theme. Speakers in the "Poet" sessions included:

- (Saturday morning): Bonnie Thurston, "Thomas Merton Poet: Human Love and the Love of God in *Eighteen Poems*"; Paul Pearson, "*The Geography of Lograire: Thomas Merton's Final Prophetic Vision*";
- (Saturday afternoon): Christine Bochen, "Speaking of Contemplation: A Matter of Metaphor"; Sonia Petisco, "The Influence of William Blake on the Poetry of Thomas Merton: Recovering our Innocence."

Speakers in the "Monk" sessions included:

- (morning): Victor Kramer, "A Journal Turned Toward the World: Merton's Private Record and Public Awareness"; Catharina Stenqvist, "How Postmodern is Thomas Merton?";
- (afternoon): Michael Callaghan, CM, "The Influence of the English Mystics on Thomas Merton's Life and Writings"; David Scott, "Thomas Merton: The Apophatic Landscape."

Speakers in the "Prophet" sessions included:

- (morning): Colin Albin, "Thomas Merton and Interfaith Dialogue: Exploring a Way Forward"; John Wu, "Thomas Merton and Asia";

- (afternoon): Patrick Eastman, "For the Sake of the World"; Danny Sullivan, "In Praise of Insanity: Revisiting Thomas Merton's 'Devout Meditation in Memory of Adolf Eichmann'."

Workshops were offered by Arthur Biddle on "Bob Lax and Thomas Merton" and by Richard Fournier on "A Psycho-Spiritual Journey of Connection."

The meeting also featured a collection of photographs by Merton and a selection of memorabilia from his days at Oakham. The school was founded by Robert Johnson, Archdeacon of Leicester, over four hundred years ago. Merton, who attended from 1929 to 1933, is probably its most famous alumnus.

The TMS Third General Meeting is scheduled for April 7-9, 2000 and will once again be held at Oakham. The conference theme will be "Thomas Merton: A Mind Awake in the Dark." A Call for Papers will be forthcoming, and proposals will be due in June, 1999. For further information contact Paul Pearson, 18 Colby Road, Upper Norwood, London SE19-1HA, Great Britain; email: p.pearson@ucl.ac.uk.

Merton and Grieving

The insights of Thomas Merton have proven to be of particular help to parents grieving the loss of a child. Bernadette Zambri, a member of the resource team for Morning Light Ministry, a retreat and support group for Catholic parents dealing with the death of their young children, has recently published *Morning Light: Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Early Infant Death from a Catholic Perspective*, based on her experience as a bereaved parent and a counsellor for others suffering a similar loss.

The chapter on "Spiritual Journeying" includes a number of passages on suffering from Merton's *No Man Is An Island* that

counter what Mrs. Zambri calls "comments from well-meaning people" about accepting the will of God that "'set God up' for the anger of the bereaved parents."

In his preface, Toronto Auxiliary Bishop Terrence Prendergast, SJ, writes, "The reflections, prayers and coping suggestions of Bernadette Zambri's beautifully-titled *Morning Light* will contribute much to healing the pain of loss."

The cost of *Morning Light*, all profits of which will be used to benefit the ministry, is \$20 (Canadian) plus postage. Further information on the group and the book can be obtained from Morning Light Ministry, c/o St. Mary Star of the Sea Church, 11 Peter Street South, Mississauga, Ontario L5H 2G1, Canada; phone: (905)-278-2058; fax: (905)-278-0961.

Vancouver Conference

A weekend conference entitled "Thomas Merton: Spiritual Master" will be held October 16-18, 1998 at St. Andrew's-Wesley Church, 1012 Nelson Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Featured presenters include Donald Grayston, author of *Thomas Merton: Development of a Spiritual Theologian*; Ross Labrie, author of *The Art of Thomas Merton*; Donna Kristoff, OSU, ITMS Board member; and Lynn Szabo, Shannon Fellowship winner.

The program will begin with a multi-media presentation on Friday evening entitled "Merton: A Hermit at the Heart of the World," led by Donna Kristoff with participation by the other three main presenters.

Saturday's main talks include

- Donald Grayston: "Zen Death of a Christian Master";
- Ross Labrie: "Merton and Time";
- Donna Kristoff: "Seeds of Merton's Aesthetics";

- Lynn Szabo: "Iconography of Silence in Merton's Poetry."

There will also be three concurrent workshops on Saturday afternoon: "Signatures of the Spirit," led by Donna Kristoff; "Poetry as Your Spiritual Guide," led by Lynn Szabo; and "Creating Silence in a Noisy World," led by Leila Billows, a Buddhist practitioner and teacher of meditation. The workshops will be repeated on Sunday morning, followed by a worship service, which will include guest preacher Rev. Dr. Herbert O'Driscoll's sermon, "The Man Who Would Be a Hermit," followed by a concluding reception.

The conference is sponsored by the British Columbia chapter of the ITMS, in association with the Christian Development Ministry of St. Andrew's-Wesley Church. The fee for the weekend is \$40 (Canadian). For further information, contact conference organizer Judith Hardcastle at (604)-669-2546.

Corpus Christi Conference

A one-day conference to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of Thomas Merton's Baptism will be held November 14, 1998 at Corpus Christi Church, 579 West 121st Street, New York City, where the baptism took place. The conference, "The Conversions of Thomas Merton," is sponsored by Corpus Christi in association with the Iona Spirituality Institute.

After Morning Prayer led by Fr. John Giuliani, Anthony Padovano will deliver the keynote address, "The Conversions of Thomas Merton," with responses by Regina Bechtle, SC, Jonathan Montaldo and Christine Bochen.

Workshops, which will be given twice during the afternoon, include:

- Robert Kennedy, SJ: "Merton's Turn to the East";
- Eileen Egan: "Merton's Radical Catholicism";

- Kathleen Deignan, CND: "Merton's Mystical Routes";
- Joseph and Sally Cunneen and Robert Giroux: "Merton and Catholic Intellectual Life";
- Christine Bochen and Jonathan Montaldo: "Awakening to Wisdom's Voice: 'Continuing Conversion' and the Feminine in Merton's Journals";
- Patrick O'Connell: "'Then Life Will Have to Begin': Conversion in Thomas Merton's New York City Poetry";
- Rabbi Shaul Magid: "Tradition as Liberation: Monasticism as a Modern Alternative."

The day will conclude with a talk, "Remembering Merton," by author, poet and peace activist Daniel Berrigan, SJ, a correspondent and close friend of Thomas Merton.

On Sunday, the 10:15 Mass at Corpus Christi will include a choral work commissioned to commemorate the anniversary, performed by the Corpus Christi Choir, and will be followed by a reception in the Fr. George Barry Ford Auditorium.

The cost for the conference is \$90 (\$95 after November 1); checks made out to "Corpus Christi Church" should be mailed to: Iona Spirituality Institute, Iona College, 715 North Avenue, New Rochelle, NY 10801; further information may be found at the Iona Institute web page; the address is: http://www.iona.edu/stu_life/ministry/ministry.htm.

Atlanta Conference

The Aquinas Center for Catholic Studies at Emory University, Atlanta, GA, is sponsoring a one-day conference on "Merton and Ecumenism" on November 7, 1998.

Featured speakers are Roger Corless, professor of Religious Studies at Duke

University and author of *The Vision of Buddhism*, and A. M. Allchin, correspondent and friend of Thomas Merton and founder of the Society of St. Sergius and St. Alban, a group promoting dialogue between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy.

For further information, contact Carrie Griffin at the Aquinas Center, 1703 Clifton Road, Suite F-5, Atlanta, GA 30322, email: cjgriff@emory.edu; phone: (404)-727-8860.

Merton at CCL

The 1999 annual meeting of the Midwest Region of the Conference on Christianity and Literature will be held on April 16-17, 1999 at Campbellsville University, not far from the Abbey of Gethsemani. The keynote speaker will be Prof. Ralph Wood, author of *The Comedy of Redemption*.

The program is tentatively scheduled to include a visit to the monastery, and proposals for presentations on Thomas Merton are welcomed. For further information, contact Professor William Neal, Campbellsville University, Campbellsville, KY 42718; email: billneal@campbellsvil.edu.

At the 1998 Midwest Regional CCL Meeting, held April 17-18 at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, Patrick O'Connell gave a presentation entitled "The Loss and Recovery of the Word in Thomas Merton's *Cables to the Ace*"; he is also scheduled to present a paper entitled "Poetry and Contemplation: The Evolution of Thomas Merton's Aesthetic" at the Northeast Regional CCL Meeting, to be held at St. Anselm College, Manchester, New Hampshire on October 22-24, 1998.

Merton Happenings

ITMS Board member Jonathan Montaldo, editor of *Entering the Silence*, the second volume of Thomas Merton's complete

journals, has recently presented a number of lectures and conferences on Merton's thought. On March 4, he spoke on "Attaining Love: An Ignatian Reading of Thomas Merton's Private Journals" as part of the Jesuit Center Lecture Series at Loyola University, New Orleans. On April 25, he gave the Flocchim Forum lecture, sponsored by the St. Ignatius Institute at the University of San Francisco, entitled "'Loving Winter When the Plant Says Nothing': Aspects of Thomas Merton's Spirituality in his Private Journals." On May 9, he conducted a day-long conference at St. Bartholomew Church, Cape Elizabeth, Maine entitled "Thomas Merton's Spiritual Legacy: A Day of Recollection, Dialogue and Prayer." A free copy of Jonathan's 1997 Emory University address, "Seeking God in the Journals of Thomas Merton: 'Loving Winter When the Plant Says Nothing'," Occasional Papers on the Catholic Intellectual Life #3, is available by calling Carrie Griffin at 404-727-8860, emailing her at cjgriff@emory.edu, or writing her at the Aquinas Center for Catholic Studies, Emory University, 1703 Clifton Road, Suite F-5, Atlanta, GA 30322.

The Fifteenth International Conference on the Study of Shamanism and Alternative Modes of Healing, scheduled for September 5-7 at Santa Sabina Center, San Rafael, CA, included a presentation entitled "Thomas Merton's Solitude: Seeds of Hope" by Santa Sabina co-directors Susannah Malarkey, OP and ITMS Treasurer Harriet Hope. Santa Sabina also hosted a two-day conference on "Thomas Merton's Ways of Prayer" on May 12-13, and Harriet and Susannah, along with Joan Ohannassen, led "Our Mystical Tradition: A Day of Reflection with Thomas Merton and Hildegard of Bingen" on March 28 at the Thomas Merton Center, Palo Alto, CA.

The New York College English Association annual convention, held September 18-19 at

Nazareth College, Rochester, New York, included a session devoted to Thomas Merton. Developing the conference theme of "Literature as Journey," the session included presentations by Christine M. Bochen on Merton's journals, by Michael Callaghan, CM on Merton and his medieval predecessors, and by Monica Weis, SSJ on Merton and ecological consciousness.

Upcoming Events

Milford Spiritual Center, Milford, OH is sponsoring a retreat October 30-November 1 with James Finley, clinical psychologist, former student of Thomas Merton, and author of *Merton's Palace of Nowhere*. The silent retreat, entitled "The Seeker's Heart: Explorations in Contemplative Living," will draw from Merton, Meister Eckhart and related sources to explore ways in which it is possible to live a more contemplative life in the midst of today's world. It will include time for group meditation, personal reflection, and discussion. The cost of \$200 includes room and board. For further information contact Milford Spiritual Center, 5361 S. Milford Road, Milford, OH 45150-9746; phone: (513)-248-3500.

Wisdom House, Litchfield, CT is sponsoring a retreat/conference November 6-8 entitled "Tracking the Spirit: The Journals and Letters of Thomas Merton - A 30th Anniversary Commemoration." Featured presenters are peace activist and Merton friend Daniel Berrigan, SJ, Jonathan Montaldo, editor of the second volume of Merton's complete journals, and filmmaker Adam Van Doren, grandson of Merton's teacher and friend Mark Van Doren. On Sunday, schedule permitting, actor Sam Waterston will present a dramatic reading of selected passages from Merton's journals and letters. The fee varies from \$140

for commuters to \$185 for a private room, and includes all meals. For further information contact Wisdom House, 229 East Litchfield Road, Litchfield, CT 06759-3002; phone: (860)-567-3163; fax: (860)-567-3166; email: JAI@wisdomhouse.org.

Fr. Patrick Eastman will lead a retreat on "The Spirituality of Thomas Merton" at The St. Scholastica Center, Fort Smith, Arkansas April 16-18, 1999. For further information contact the center at P.O. Box 3489, Fort Smith, Arkansas 72913; phone: (501)-783-1135.

Chapter News

On April 21, as part of its "Merton Lecture Series," the Michiana Chapter of the ITMS sponsored a presentation by Dwight Judy entitled "Praying with Teresa of Avila." Judy is a Methodist minister, writer, spiritual director, and director of the Oakwood Center in Syracuse, IN. The group also met to discuss Kathleen Norris' *The Cloister Walk* in preparation for attending her lecture "The Quotidian Mysteries: Laundry, Liturgy, and 'Women's Work'" at St. Mary's College on April 16. For further information contact **Jan Jenkins**, 3621 Sullivan Court, South Bend, IN 46614.

The Capital University Chapter of the ITMS continued its discussion of Thomas Merton's *The New Man*, focusing at its April meeting on the chapter entitled "Life in Christ," in May on "Sacramental Illumination," and in June on "Called Out of Darkness." The June meeting also featured a potluck picnic-supper. For further information contact **Nancy Kellogg**, 5915 Headley Road, Gahanna, OH 43230; phone: (614)-855-8160.

An organizational meeting for an Atlanta Chapter of the International Thomas Merton Society is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 20, at 3:30 p.m. at the Aquinas Center for Catholic Studies at Emory University. Dewey and Victor Kramer will make an informal presentation on the topic of Merton and Nature. For further information contact **Carrie Griffin** at the Aquinas Center, Emory University, 1703 Clifton Road, Suite F-5, Atlanta, GA 30322; phone: (404)-727-8860, email: cjgriff@emory.edu.

Merton Abroad

A four-day conference on Cistercian Mysticism, organized by the International Center for Mystical Studies and the Spanish Cistercians, will take place October 9-12 in Avila, Spain. The third day of the conference will be devoted entirely to Thomas Merton as representative of twentieth-century Cistercian spirituality. For further information contact conference co-director Fernando Beltrán Llavador, C/Pico de Jalama, 11-B, 37008, Salamanca, Spain.

Three different events are scheduled in Great Britain to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of Thomas Merton's death. On December 5, a one-day conference entitled "For the Sake of the World: Thomas Merton's Social Thought on the Eve of the New Millennium" will be held at St. Botolph's Church, Aldgate, London; featured speakers will be Rev. David Emmott, vicar of St. Bartholomew's Church in the London Borough of Merton, and Rev. Kenneth Leech, author of *Soul Friend* and *Thomas Merton: Theologian of Resistance*. On the same day, at the Mirfield Centre, Stockbank Road, Mirfield, a conference will be held entitled "Thomas Merton: 1915-1968: A Commemoration of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Death of Thomas

Merton"; speakers will be Canon A. M. Allchin, Rev. Gary Hall and Rev. Kenneth Carveley. On the evening of December 10, a program featuring Canon Melvyn Matthews, author of *Discovering Holiness* and *The Hidden Journey: Reflections on a Dream by Thomas Merton*, will be held at St. Andrew's Church, Chippenham; the title of Canon Matthews' presentation will be "Contemplative Pastor, Contemplative Church: Spirituality for a Dark Age." Further information on any of these events may be obtained from Paul Pearson, 18 Colby Road, Upper Norwood, London SE19-1HA, Great Britain; email: p.pearson.ucl.ac.uk.

Writer and photographer Lance Woodruff, who has lived in Bangkok, Thailand since 1968, is coordinating planning for a commemoration in Bangkok to coincide with the thirtieth anniversary of Thomas Merton's death on December 10, 1968. For further information, contact: Lance Woodruff, Editor, Christ Church News, Christ Church - Bangkok, 11 Convent Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand; email: lance.woodruff@thinet.com; phone: (662)-552-1898.

Thanks, Greg Ryan

Due to other pressing responsibilities, especially as editor, web-page designer, and local coordinator for The World Community for Christian Meditation, Greg Ryan has resigned after three years of editing *The ITMS Newsletter*. Greg has earned the deep gratitude of all members of the Merton Society for his hard work in making the *Newsletter* an integral part of the ITMS communications network.

Any and all Merton-related items should now be sent to *Seasonal* editor Pat O'Connell, Box 1028, Gannon University, Erie, PA 16541; email: oconnell001@gannon.edu.