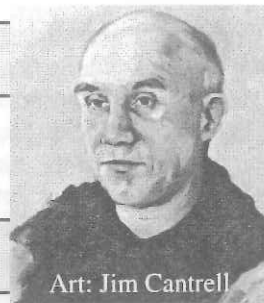


NEWSLETTER

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Art: Jim Cantrell

2001 General Meeting Program Set

At its June meeting, the Board of Directors of the International Thomas Merton Society approved the program for the ITMS Seventh General Meeting, to be held June 7-10, 2001 at Bellarmine University, Louisville, KY. The theme of the meeting, "Shining Like the Sun: Thomas Merton's Transforming Vision," is taken from the famous "Fourth and Walnut" passage of *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*. The conference will include a trip to the Abbey of Gethsemani, with Mass at Merton's hermitage. Major speakers include Myriam Dardenne, OCSO, who will deliver the keynote, Robert Barron, Lawrence S. Cunningham and Wendell Berry. The program will also feature a banquet address by ITMS president Christine Bochen, a roundtable on Merton and artist Victor Hammer, a multimedia presentation by Kevin Burns, twenty concurrent sessions and workshops, meditation and worship sessions, and entertainment. The Thomas Merton Center, the official archive of Merton's manuscripts and other materials, housed in Bellarmine's Brown Library and dedicated in 1997, will be staffed and open for visits throughout the conference, with many rare items on display.

A friend and correspondent of Thomas Merton, Myriam Dardenne, OCSO is the founder and former abbess of the Monastery of the Redwoods, Whitethorn, CA, which Merton visited in the spring of 1968 and again immediately before his trip to Asia in the fall of that year. Her keynote presentation on Friday evening will draw on her friendship with Merton as well as on her studies of Jungian

psychology to highlight her own perceptions of Merton's "transforming vision."

Robert Barron, a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago and professor at the Chicago Theological Union, will deliver the Springboard Address on Friday morning. He is the author of *And Now I See: A Spirituality of Transformation*, which includes a chapter on Merton focusing on the Fourth and Walnut experience. Fr. Barron's talk will be followed by small-group discussions, a new General Meeting feature.

Lawrence S. Cunningham, professor of theology at Notre Dame University, is a distinguished scholar of Merton's thought, editor of *Thomas Merton: Spiritual Master* and of *A Search for Solitude*, the third volume of Merton's complete journals, and author, most recently, of *Thomas Merton and the Monastic Vision*. He will speak at Gethsemani on Saturday afternoon on Merton and Monasticism, with responses by Abbot Flavian Burns and Dr. Bonnie Thurston. The trip to Gethsemani will also feature a welcome by Abbot Damien Thompson, celebration of the divine office with the monastic community, and a visit to Merton's grave as well as Mass; dinner will take place at "My Old Kentucky Home" in nearby Bardstown.

Wendell Berry, distinguished Kentucky poet, novelist and essayist and a friend of Thomas Merton, will give a reading on Sunday morning from his well-known collection *Sabbath Poems*. Also on Sunday morning will be a panel on the artist and printer Victor Hammer and his friendship with Merton, featuring Gay Reading, Paul Holbrook, and Jonathan Greene.

Opening sessions will include a "First-Timers

Orientation" as well as a special orientation session for Daggy Youth Scholars; the ITMS Chapters Workshop with Chapters Coordinator Ed Farley; a slide presentation on Merton's continuing influence on the renewal of the eremitical life with Paul Quenon, OCSO; a sculpture exhibit and presentation by Jim Forcier-Call on Merton and the Celtic Spiritual Quest; and a presentation by John King on the handwritten signatures of Thomas Merton. These sessions will be followed by Kevin Burns' multimedia presentation on the conference theme.

Concurrent session topics include:

- "Merton: Death and Rebirth": Richard Fournier and John Sillito;
- "Merton and Technology": Claire Badaracco and Phillip Thompson;
- "Merton and Civil Rights": William Apel and Don Nugent;
- "Merton and Composition": G. Matthews and Mary Murray;
- "Merton and Ecumenism": Thomas Magner and Ray Wilkie;
- "Merton and Edith Stein": Sidney Griffith and Joan Liebler;
- "Merton and Inter-religious Dialogue": Walt Chura and Allan McMillan;
- "Merton and Poetry": Patrick O'Connell and Johan Seynnaeve;
- "Merton and Psychology": Thomas Sheridan and Michael Sobocinski;
- "Merton and Teaching": Michael Callaghan, CM and Jeff Kiernan;
- "Merton and the Blakean Vision of Innocence": Ross Labrie and Susan McCaslin;
- "Merton and the Contemplative Experience": Cristobal Serran-Pagan and Frank Tuoti;
- "Merton and the East": Tim Fullerton and Lucien Miller;
- "Merton as Listener and Seer": Patrick Eastman and Marilyn Sunderman, RSM;
- "Merton's *Cables to the Ace*": Paul Pearson and Lynn Szabo;
- "Merton's Literary Connections": David Belacastro and John Collins.

Workshops include:

- "Merton in Love: The Transforming Power of the Human Heart": Arthur W. Biddle;
- "The Importance of Being Broad-sided on the Spiritual Journey": Thomas Peterson and Suzanne Zuercher, OSB;
- "The Nature of Healing, the Healing of Nature: Merton's Ecological Vision": Monica Weis, SSJ;
- "Wisdom's Prophet: Thomas Merton's Vision for Transformative Education": Kathleen Deignan, CND.

Meditation sessions will be led by Harriet Hope and Susannah Malarkey, OP and others. Entertainment will include jazz by Dick Sisto and others.

Registration materials will be included in the Winter 2000 issue of *The Merton Seasonal*.

Shannon Fellowships Awarded

At the June meeting of the ITMS Board of Directors, Victor A. Kramer, chair of the Shannon Fellowship committee, announced the names of the four winners of the 2000 fellowships. They are Ginny Bear, Fabrice Blée, Patricia Burton, and Anjali Rao. 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 University or other archival collections. This year's selection committee includes Michael Higgins and Erlinda Paguio as well as Victor Kramer.

Fellowship winners and their projects include:

- **Ginny Bear**, of Redmond, WA, will use her award to research material for her project, "The Multiple Language Abilities of Thomas Merton";
- **Fabrice Blée**, of the University of Montreal, Canada, will use his award to research material for his project, "Thomas Merton's Approach of In-depth Dialogue with Buddhism";
- **Patricia Burton**, of Toronto, Ontario, will use

her award to continue her work (with Marquita Breit) on an updating and supplement to the Breit-Daggy Merton Bibliography;

- **Anjali Rao**, of the University of Madras, India, will use her award to research material for her project, "Developing a Paradigm through Art and Asceticism in the Works of Thomas Merton."

The deadline for applications for Shannon Fellowships for 2001-2002 is March 15, 2001.

Awards must be used between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002. 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. Victor A. Kramer, Aquinas Center, Emory University, 1703 Clifton Road, Suite F-5, Atlanta, GA 30329-4037**. The committee's decisions will be announced to the ITMS Board of Directors at their June, 2001 meeting and will be communicated to applicants shortly thereafter.

Interactive Merton Society

At the June meeting of the ITMS Board of Directors, Board member Bob Grip, co-chair of the Youth Education Committee, made a presentation on the need to expand Merton's presence through interactive media. According to Grip, "One of the best ways to introduce Thomas Merton to a new, worldwide generation of readers is, ironically, not through the printed page. As people across the world spend more of their time in front of computers, the ITMS should reach across international boundaries to find them and lead them to the printed works of Thomas Merton."

Grip suggested that the ITMS must devote its energies to exploring new ways to introduce Merton to the "post-Merton era," readers for whom the Vietnam War and World War II are ancient history, who do not remember the era of tension between the United States and the Soviet Union, and who were not alive before Merton's death in 1968. "We cannot expect young readers to find Merton on their own. As time claims more and more of Merton's contemporaries, whose encouragement has led others to read Merton, we must find ways to reach a generation that is searching for spiritual guidance," he stated.

The ITMS Youth Education Committee has formulated proposals to increase awareness of Merton and his work through interactive media. They include:

- The establishment of an ITMS web site that will serve members and prospective members throughout the world. This site could incorporate information found in the *Newsletter* section of *The Merton Seasonal*, archival information from the *Seasonal*, on-line "exhibits" from the

Merton Center, moderated chat sessions, message boards for those who have questions about Merton scholarship, as well as continuously updated ITMS news, retreat information, and eventually, registration for conferences and on-line renewal of memberships.

- The production of a CD-ROM that could be distributed to Catholic high schools and colleges, as well as Newman Centers and anyone else interested. The CD-ROM could serve as an introduction to Merton, featuring audio-visual material, monastic chant, "virtual" tours of Gethsemani and other important sites of Merton's life, as well as short excerpts of his work. Imagination and financial resources are the only limits on the production of the web site and CD-ROM.
- The production and distribution of posters for school corridors that would include "tear-off" postcards to receive more information from the ITMS.

Any and all ITMS members willing to help with these long-term projects, particularly those with knowledge and expertise as graphic designers, educators and potential webmasters, as well as anyone with further ideas for a Merton web site, CD-ROM or poster, are encouraged to contact Bob Grip, 6424 Shetland Court, Mobile, AL 36695; email: bobgrip@mac.com.

Merton Retreat 2000

Seventeen international leaders came together May 29-June 1 at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky to participate in Merton Retreat 2000. The group engaged in alternating periods of in-depth dialogue and contemplative silence on a topic of vital importance at the beginning of the twenty-first century: the vital relationship between healthy spirituality and sound leadership. The retreat was hosted by the Thomas Merton Center Foundation with major funding from the Fetzer Institute of Kalamazoo Michigan.

Merton Retreat 2000 was built on a concept first put forward by Thomas Merton in the early 1960s

in his well-known Mt. Olivet letter, in which he wrote, "The contemplative character of the setting and the complete absence of the pressures and routines of organizational life will favor a recovery of spiritual and humanistic perspectives in which the emphasis will be not on the social process but on the good of man as 'image of God.' It is believed that such a viewpoint is necessary if man is to dominate the processes he has created instead of being dominated by them."

Participants in Merton Retreat 2000 included: Rev. Daniel Coughlin, newly appointed Chaplain of the US House of Representatives; Indira Chakravarty, director professor and dean, Department of Biochemistry & Nutrition, All India Institute of Hygiene & Public Health; Thais Corral, executive director and founder of the Network in Defense of Humankind (REDEH), Brazil; John Dear, SJ, executive director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation; Myriam Dardenne, OCSO, retired Trappistine abbess; Rose Mary Dougherty, program director for the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation; Bongani Blessing Finca, South African provincial electoral officer for the Eastern Cape; Edward Kaplan, chair, Religious Studies, Brandeis University; Robert Lehman, president, Fetzer Institute; Barbara Mikulski, US Senator from Maryland; Julie Murray, contemplative and co-founder of The Center Within, a spirituality ministry in Cincinnati, Ohio; Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Prize laureate from Argentina and international advocate for human rights; Helen Prejean, MSC, death penalty opponent and author of the best-selling book *Dead Man Walking*; Donald Rothberg, executive editor of *ReVision: Journal of Consciousness and Transformation*; Leticia Shahani, president pro tempore of the Philippine Senate (1995-96) and noted scholar; Makhenkesi Stofile, premier, Province of East Cape, South Africa; Douglas Tanner, president and co-founder of The Faith & Politics Institute.

Artists from the Louisville area who took part in the Retreat were: Gregory Acker, musician, instrument-builder, and arts educator specializing in adapting world music traditions for school and

community groups; Dianne Aprile, award-winning journalist and author of the book *The Abbey of Gethsemani: Place of Peace and Paradox*; and, Penny Sisto, fabric artist whose beautiful pictorial quilts have earned her an international reputation.

Facilitators for the Retreat were: Miriam Cleary, co-foundress and co-director of Spirituality and Justice in the Bronx, New York; Ginny Schaeffer, trainer for the Spiritual Direction Practicum in the Archdiocese of Louisville; Steven Wirth, vice president for mission at St. Vincent's Catholic Medical Centers in New York.

At the conclusion of the four-day retreat, many of the participants traveled to Louisville, Kentucky for a June 2 Public Forum at St. Stephen Baptist Church during which they discussed what they had experienced at the monastery, and then responded to questions and comments from the audience. Audio from that Public Forum is available free and on-demand at www.newdimensions.org.

New Abbot at Conyers

On August 4, 2000 Basil Pennington, OCSO was elected abbot of the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers, Georgia. He was installed in office on September 8. The new abbot, a native of Long Island, has been a monk of St. Joseph's Abbey, Spencer, MA and has served most recently as superior of Assumption Abbey, Ava, MO.

Holy Spirit Abbey, the first daughter-house of the Monastery of Our Lady of Gethsemani, was founded by Dom Frederic Dunne of Gethsemani in 1944 with twenty religious and lay brothers from the Kentucky monastery. It is thus the first Cistercian monastery founded by an American abbey.

Fr. Basil is particularly well known for his writing and teaching on centering prayer. A friend and correspondent of Thomas Merton, he was a principal founder of Cistercian Publications. He is a prolific author of more than four dozen books, including *Thomas Merton, Brother Monk: The Quest for True Freedom* (1987), *On Retreat with Thomas Merton* (1988), and *Thomas Merton, My*

Brother: His Journey to Freedom, Compassion, and Final Integration (1996). He delivered the keynote address at the ITMS Second General Meeting in 1991, and also spoke at the ITMS Fifth General Meeting in 1997.

Cistercian Weekend

A weekend conference entitled "Experiencing Joy: An Introduction to Cistercian Spirituality" will take place November 3-5, 2000 at the Abbey of Gethsemani. It will be led by E. Rozanne Elder, director of the Institute of Cistercian Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, and editor-in-chief of Cistercian Publications.

Sponsored by the Thomas Merton Center Foundation, "Experiencing Joy" is the third in a series of weekend retreats designed to introduce laypersons to the history and present experience of Cistercian spirituality. Limited to 20 participants, each weekend offers readings and discussion of the writings of individual Cistercian fathers and mothers. Participants will also share in the liturgy of the Daily Office at the Abbey of Gethsemani, where all sessions will be held. Accommodations are available in nearby Bardstown.

In this retreat, Dr. Elder will discuss the life and writings of William of St. Thierry, a twelfth-century Benedictine abbot who later became a Cistercian. During this weekend a number of texts by William will be read and discussed, with a focus on his pedagogy and his reflections on the Cistercian vocation.

The fee for the conference is \$125 and includes six meals at Gethsemani. The weekend will begin with introductions and an overview at 4:30 on Friday, November 3, followed by supper in the Abbey Guest House. It will conclude on Sunday November 5, with Mass at Gethsemani followed by lunch. To reserve a place, a check for \$125 payable to The Thomas Merton Center Foundation should be sent to the Foundation at 2117 Payne Street, Louisville, Kentucky 20206. Reduced rate accommodations are available at the Holiday Inn Bardstown, a short drive from the Monastery,

through October 5. For reservations call (502) 348-9253 and ask for the "Cistercian Weekend" rate.

TMS Oakham Conference

The Third General Meeting of the Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain and Ireland took place at Oakham School, Rutland, England April 7-9, 2000. The conference theme, "A Mind Awake in the Dark," is taken from Merton's description of himself in his essay "Day of a Stranger." Major presentations for the conference included: "Who is a Stranger?" by Lawrence S. Cunningham; "Radiant Darkness: The Dawning into Reality" by Christine M. Bochen; and "Sharing Our Faith Journey – For Merton There Is No Stranger" by Bishop Dominic Walker.

Concurrent sessions included Fr. Patrick Eastman: "Marriage of East and West"; Danny Sullivan and Kim Wolfe-Murray: "When the Light of the East meets the Wisdom of the West"; Monika-Clare Ghosh: "Night is our Ministry"; Gary P. Hall: "The Street is for Celebration – The Monk and the City"; Diana Walls: "Merton's Paradise Garden – Space of Silence and Happiness"; Arthur W. Biddle: "Merton in Love"; Rich Fournier: "The Portable Cloister of the Heart: Emerging New Forms of the Monastic Impulse"; David Henderson: "Self-experience in Thomas Merton and C.G.Jung: Apophatic and Cataphatic Traditions in the Twentieth Century"; John Noffsinger: "Thomas Merton and the Edenic Vision"; Cristobal Serran-Pagan y Fuentes: "Merton's Understanding of the Mystical Doctrine of Saint John of the Cross' Dark Night of the Soul"; David Emmott and Robert Gallagher: "'Mind Awake in the Dark' – 'The City That Never Sleeps'"; Mary L. (Bunny) Stewart: "Thomas Merton as a Companion for Those who Live Alone."

The conference also featured a poetry reading, a selection of songs from the Niles-Merton Song Cycle, performed by Damian O'Keeffe, the celebration of Vespers, meditation led by Fr. Patrick Eastman, and a closing eucharist celebrated by Fr. Pat O'Brien.

Publication of the proceedings of the conference is planned for later this year.

Shannon Chair Established

The William H. Shannon Chair in Catholic Studies, an endowed distinguished visiting professorship, has been established at Nazareth College, Rochester, NY. The Chair, made possible by a \$1 million grant from the Chester and Dorris Carlson Charitable Trust, honors Msgr. Shannon, distinguished theologian, Thomas Merton scholar, and author, who was a faculty member at Nazareth College from 1946 to 1982, and chaplain of the college from 1949 to 1975. Msgr. Shannon is the founding president of the ITMS, general editor of the Thomas Merton letters, and author of numerous books, including *Silent Lamp: The Thomas Merton Story*, *Something of a Rebel* and *Thomas Merton's Paradise Journey*.

During its initial year, the Shannon Chair will be held by two scholars: Dr. Patrick O'Connell, associate professor of English and Theology at Gannon University in Erie, PA, during the Fall 2000 semester, and Dr. Clarke Cochran, professor of Political Science at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX, during the Spring 2001 semester.

"I am deeply grateful to the Chester and Dorris Carlson Charitable Trust for the gift to Nazareth College of the Chair in Catholic Studies," said Msgr. Shannon. "It honors the heritage of the college and creates opportunities for exploring the richness of the Catholic intellectual tradition."

Individuals named to the chair must exhibit a demonstrated interest in teaching and research in some area of the curriculum pertinent to the Catholic intellectual tradition, such as theology, biblical studies, spirituality, ethics, philosophy, history, literature, social sciences, or fine arts. Holders of the Shannon Chair will teach in their discipline and give or arrange lectures and seminars open to all members of the Nazareth College community and to the public.

Inquiries, nominations and applications (c.v. and cover letter) the Spring 2002 may be sent by

December 15, 2000 to: Dr. Monica Weis, SSJ, Shannon Chair Search Committee, Nazareth College, 4245 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14618-3790; email: mrweis@naz.edu.

Prades Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage to Prades, France, the birthplace of Thomas Merton, and to other significant Merton sites in the south of France, took place May 16-25. The trip, sponsored by the Humanities Department at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, British Columbia and led by Donald Grayston, Judith Hardcastle, George Kilcourse and Donna Kristoff, OSU, included lectures, discussions, art sessions, ample free time, and meetings with local members of the ITMS. In addition to Prades, the thirty-one pilgrims visited the Abbey of St. Michel de Cuxa and the towns of St.-Antonin and Montauban (including a brief stop at the Lycée Ingres, Merton's boarding school). The next pilgrimage is planned for May 14-23, 2002.

Merton Happenings

On March 16, Sylvia Maddox, ITMS member and spiritual director, gave a presentation on "Christian Contemplation as a Point of Departure for Interfaith Understanding: The Work of Thomas Merton" at the Episcopal Church of Reconciliation in San Antonio, Texas. This was the first of a four-week series entitled "Cultivating Common Ground: The Contemplative Tradition in Judaism, Christianity and Islam" that also featured presentations on Mystical Judaism, Sufism, and the Experience of Interreligious Dialogue.

A retreat entitled "Living the Contemplative Life in the World," directed by ITMS member Frank X. Tuoti, author of *Why Not Be a Mystic* and *Dawn of the Mystical Age*, was held June 18-25 at the Mary and Joseph Retreat Center, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. Included among the sessions was "The Awakening of the True Inner Self," based on Thomas Merton's "The Inner Experience."

Michael Higgins, president of St. Jerome's University, Waterloo, Ontario, led a retreat August 8-11 at St. Anthony's Retreat Center, Honolulu, Hawaii. The retreat, based on his book *Heretic Blood*, was entitled "Thomas Merton: Rebel, Critic, Lover and Wise One."

On September 23, a retreat on Thomas Merton at St. Stephen's Priory, Dover, MA was led by Robert Waldron, author of *Thomas Merton in Search of His Soul, Poetry as Prayer: Thomas Merton* and other works.

This year's Swanson Lectures in Spirituality at the University of Calgary were on the theme "Insights on the Spiritual Journey: A Public Symposium Focused on the Life and Writings of Thomas Merton." The program, held September 21-24, featured presentations by ITMS members Michael Higgins, president of St. Jerome's University, Waterloo, Ontario, and Lynn Szabo, member of the English Department at Trinity Western University, Langley, British Columbia. On Thursday evening, September 21, Lynn Szabo spoke on "The Seven Storeys of Thomas Merton's Mountain: Spiritual Mappings for the Twenty-First Century" and on Friday evening, September 22, Michael Higgins' topic was "The Passionate Monk: Thomas Merton's Search for Wholeness." Saturday seminars on "The View From Here: Merton's Poetic View of the World" with Lynn and "The Tower of Babel and the Silent-Speaking Poet" with Michael were followed by a panel discussion with the two presenters. The symposium concluded with a Sunday morning worship service featuring readings and reflections from Merton. The program was sponsored by the Chair of Christian Thought in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Calgary.

At the Mideast Conference on Christianity and Literature, to be held October 13-14 at the University of Dayton, Ohio, ITMS member Michael Callaghan, CM will give a presentation in the "Mysticism" session on "Spiritual Mountain-Climbing: Thomas Merton's Journey to God as

Portrayed in *The Seven Storey Mountain*." In the same session, former Daggy Youth Scholar Jon Shickler, now a doctoral student at the Catholic University of America, will give a presentation on Julian of Norwich. (Jon and Amber Power, also a 1997 Daggy Youth Scholar, were married in July.)

On October 14, Rev. Wayne Burns will lead a retreat on "The Spirituality of Thomas Merton" at Blessed Trinity Shrine Retreat, 107 Holy Trinity Road, Holy Spirit, Alabama 36859. The fee will be \$30. For further information, phone: 334-855-4474; fax: 334-855-4525.

On November 18, a one-day conference entitled "Conversations on the Edge: Thomas Merton and the Literary World" will be held at the Catholic Chaplaincy, Rose Place, St. Aldgate's, Oxford, UK. Presentations will include David Scott: "Known to One Another in God: Merton and Pasternak"; Paul M. Pearson: "Poetry of the Sneeze: Merton and Nicanor Parra"; Angus Stuart: "Visions of Tom: Jack Kerouac's Monastic Elder Brother"; and Peter C. King: "Roots and Wings: Thomas Merton and Alan Watts: Twentieth-Century Archetypes." The conference fee is £10. For further information, contact Paul M. Pearson, 18 Colby Road, Upper Norwood, London. SE19-1HA, UK; email: p.pearson@ucl.ac.uk.

Chapter News

The April meeting of the Cincinnati Chapter of the ITMS featured a discussion of the topic "Thomas Merton and Asia," led by Tom Moser. The May meeting discussed the talk of Jonathan Montaldo from the Parliament of World Religions. The June meeting completed discussion of "Merton and the East," based on Alexander Lipski's *Thomas Merton and Asia*. At the July meeting, plans for the coming year were discussed, including a November visit to the Merton Center in Louisville. The August meeting featured poetry readings. The guest speaker at the September meeting was Brother Paul Quenon, OCSO of Gethsemani. For further information contact **Tony Russo**, 8087 Bridgetown Road, Cleves, Ohio 45002; phone:

513-941-5219; fax: 513-941-5219; e-mail:

trusso@fuse.net

On April 19, the Chicago Chapter of the ITMS participated in the Holy Week Tenebrae Service at Holy Name Cathedral in lieu of their regular monthly meeting. The May meeting focused on "Being Affiliated with a Monastery," and featured three speakers: Robert Johnson, a member of Cistercian Lay Contemplatives; Matthew Kramer, affiliated with the Cistercian Abbey of New Melleray; and Mary Walsh, a Benedictine oblate with the Monastery of the Holy Cross. The July 23 meeting featured an outdoor Mass with Fr. Rich Bartlett and a "Merton picnic." For further information contact **Gail Wallace**, 2671 Waldron Road, Kankakee, IL 60901; phone: 815-933-4355.

At the September 21 meeting of the British Columbia Chapter of the ITMS, ITMS President Christine Bochen spoke on "Radiant Darkness: The Dawning into Reality." The chapter is sponsoring a weekend retreat October 20-21 entitled "Father Louis: Reflections on Thomas Merton as a Contemplative" with Lawrence S. Cunningham. Future monthly meetings of the chapter include talks by Cynthia Bourgeault entitled "Merton in Love" on November 14; by Sidney Griffith entitled "Merton, Massignon, and Mahatma Gandhi: Mysticism in Action" on January 16; by Lynn Szabo entitled "Paradise Weeps for Us: The Love Poetry of Thomas Merton" on February 20; and by Michael Callaghan entitled "Merton and the Christian Mystics" on March 20. The monthly meetings take place at St. Andrew's-Wesley Church, 1012 Nelson Street, Vancouver. The October weekend will be held Friday evening at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver and Saturday at St. Andrew's-Wesley Church. For further information, contact **Judith Hardcastle** at 604-683-4574 or e-mail at hdcastle@intergate.bc.ca.

Send all Merton-related news to:

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