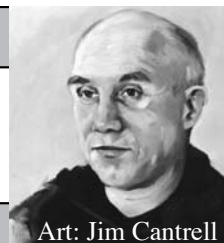


NEWSLETTER

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Art: Jim Cantrell

2009 General Meeting Program Set

At its June meeting, the Board of Directors of the International Thomas Merton Society approved the program for the ITMS Eleventh General Meeting, to be held June 11-14, 2009 at Nazareth College, Rochester, NY. The theme of the meeting is "Bearing Witness to the Light: Merton's Challenge to a Fragmented World." Major speakers include James Conner, OCSO, Herbert Mason with Sidney Griffith, Rachel Fell McDermott and Judith Simmer-Brown. The program will also feature an address by ITMS President Donald Grayston, thirty-five concurrent sessions, workshops and guided prayer sessions, meditation, liturgy and entertainment.

James Conner, OCSO is a monk of the Abbey of Gethsemani, student and former undermaster of novices under Thomas Merton, and former abbot of Assumption Abbey, Ava, MO. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Monastic Interreligious Dialogue and former editor of the MID Bulletin, and has written and spoken widely on Thomas Merton and on dialogue with other religious traditions.

Herbert Mason is William Goodwin Aurelio professor of history and religious thought at Boston University. A friend and correspondent of Thomas Merton, he was also a friend and student of Louis Massignon, of whom he wrote in *Memoir of a Friend: Louis Massignon*, and he edited and translated Massignon's masterwork, *The Passion of Al-Hallaj*. His translation of the Gilgamesh epic was a finalist for the National Book Award. His presentation will be conducted in dialogue with Sidney H. Griffith, professor in the Department of Semitic and Egyptian Languages and Literatures at the Catholic University of America and author most recently of *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam*.

Rachel Fell McDermott is associate professor and chair of the Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures

Department at Barnard College, specializing in South Asia, especially India. She is the author of *Singing to the Goddess: Poems to Kali and Uma from Bengal and Mother of My Heart, Daughter of My Dreams: Kali and Uma in the Devotional Poetry of Bengal*.

Judith Simmer-Brown is professor and former chair of the Department of Buddhist studies at Naropa University and director of the Ngedon School of Higher Studies. She was a contributor to the volume *Merton and Buddhism* and is author of *Dakini's Warm Breath: The Feminine Principle in Tibetan Buddhism*.

Opening sessions on Thursday afternoon of the conference will include a "First-Timers' Orientation" with Bob Grip; "ITMS Chapters Workshop" with Tony Russo; "Merton's Photography as Witness and Technology" with Anthony Bannon; "Another Witness: A Tribute to Dom John Eudes Bamberger" with Morgan Atkinson; and "Merton, Young People and Self-Discovery" with Matthew Herbst, Daniel Horan, OFM and Jeffrey Kiernan. "Merton in Asia: A Conversation" with Harold Talbott and Bonnie Thurston will follow. A roundtable discussion on Abraham Heschel featuring Heschel biographer Edward Kaplan and Rabbi Shaul Magid is scheduled for Sunday morning. The closing liturgy will be celebrated by ITMS founding president Fr. William Shannon. John King will emcee an "I Think I Really Know a Lot about Thomas Merton" quiz show on Thursday evening. Singer Kate Campbell will return as featured entertainment on Saturday evening; the Nazareth College Jazz Ensemble will also perform. Meditation sessions will be coordinated by Veronica Dagher and Rebecca Barnes.

Concurrent sessions include:

- "Merton and Buddhism": Mario Aguilar & Matthew Cressler;
- "Merton and Friends": Ian MacNiven & J. S. Porter;

- “Merton and German Thinkers”: John P. Collins & David Golemboski;
- “Merton and Hinduism”: David Belcastro & Timothy Fullerton;
- “Merton and Interfaith Dialogue”: Joseph Raab & Ryan Scruggs;
- “Merton and Monasticism”: Paul Dekar & Andrea Neuhoﬀ;
- “Merton and Social Justice”: Mark C. Meade & Cristóbal Serrán-Pagán y Fuentes;
- “Merton and Spiritual Integration”: Nass Cannon & Fiona Gardner;
- “Merton and Sufi Wisdom”: Erlinda G. Paguio & Patrick F. O’Connell;
- “Merton and Taoism”: James Beckman;
- “Merton and the Beat Poets”: Mary Chinery & Scott Grapin;
- “Merton and the New Atheism”: Christine M. Bochen & Walt Chura;
- “Merton and Thich Nhat Hanh”: William Apel & Robert King;
- “Merton: Beyond Silence”: Roger Lipsey & Lynn Szabo;
- “Merton: Fragmentation and Dialogue”: Vaughn Fayle & Gray Matthews;
- “Merton’s Ecology”: Deborah Kehoe & Christopher Pramuk;
- “Merton’s ‘Rain and the Rhinoceros’”: Chip Long & David Odorisio;
- “Merton, Wholeness and Healing”: Jessica Funk & Timothy Shaffer;
- “Emerging Merton Scholars Sessions”: Patrick Cousins, Kimberly Morey & Rob Peach; Tyson Anderson, Shirley Frey & Mark Murray.
- Workshops include:
- “Being Contemplative Interreligiously”: Patrick Eastman;
- “‘Lightheartedness in Bearing Light’ Merton’s Humor in Interreligious Dialogue”: Sylvia Maddox;
- “Merton and the ‘I am spiritual but not religious’ generation”: Ted Bergh;
- “Merton in the Marketplace: Ecumenism for the Professional”: Anne-Taylor Cahill;
- “Telling Our Stories with Uncle Louie”: Mark Filut, OCSO.

Guided Prayer sessions include:

- “Awakening Sacred Heart: An Experimental Method in Christian-Buddhist Contemplation”: Toni

Sorgi;

- “‘Desecrated Sanctuary’ Thomas Merton and Thomas Berry in Dialogue on Healing the Natural World”: Kathleen Deignan;
- “Exploring the Heart of Merton and Nature”: Monica Weis;
- “Studying the Truth in Prayer and Meditation: Echo-Meditation with a Text of Thomas Merton”: Detlev Cuntz & Maria Reichel;
- “A Zen Camera: Meditating with the Photographs of Thomas Merton”: Paul M. Pearson.

The program committee for the Eleventh General Meeting is chaired by ITMS Past President Paul M. Pearson, with Christine M. Bochen as site coordinator; other members of the committee include Jamie Fazio, ITMS President Donald Grayston, Gray Matthews, Patrick O’Connell, Bonnie Thurston and Monica Weis, SSJ.

Registration materials, with further information on the schedule, costs and accommodations for the conference will be included in the Winter 2008 issue of The Merton Seasonal. Update information is available at the Merton Center/ITMS web site www.merton.org/Rochester.

Shannon Fellowships Awarded

At its June meeting, the ITMS Board of Directors awarded 2008-2009 Shannon Fellowships to three scholars: Marilyn F. Hendricks, for a project on “The Spirituality and Ethics of Thomas Merton”; David M. Odorisio, for a project on “Thomas Merton and Philoxenus: The Novitiate Conference Tapes”; and Jan Sheridan, for a project on “Seeing through the Eyes of Thomas Merton: The New York Years.”

The Shannon Fellowship program was established in 1997 in honor of Fr. William H. Shannon, 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 Joseph Quinn Raab, chair; John Collins, Robert Grip, Angus Stuart and Bonnie Thurston.

The deadline for applications for Shannon Fellowships for 2009-2010 is March 15, 2009. Awards must be used between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010. 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 \$25, 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 Dr. Paul M. Pearson, Director, Thomas Merton Center, Bellarmine University, 2001 Newburg Road, Louisville, KY 40205; email: pmpearson@bellarmine.edu. The committee's recommendations will be presented at the June, 2009 meeting of the ITMS Board of Directors, who will make the final decisions on awards, and results will be communicated to applicants shortly thereafter.

Daggy Scholarships Available

The International Thomas Merton Society will once again sponsor the Daggy Youth/Student Scholarship Program to make it possible for young people to participate in the ITMS General Meeting. The program is named in honor of the late Dr. Robert Daggy, founding member and second president of the ITMS and longtime director of the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University. Up to fifteen scholarships will be awarded, covering all costs (except transportation) of attendance at the Eleventh General Meeting of the ITMS, to be held at Nazareth College, Rochester, NY,

June 11-14, 2009. The awards will also include one year's free membership in the ITMS. Young people between the ages of fourteen and twenty-nine, and full-time undergraduate students up to the age of forty, are invited to apply.

Scholarship applicants should submit a statement explaining why they are interested in learning more about Thomas Merton and how they think they would benefit from attending the ITMS General Meeting. They should also obtain a recommendation from a youth minister, campus minister, pastor, teacher, or other qualified adult explaining in what capacity he/she knows the applicant and why the applicant should be considered as a qualified candidate for an ITMS scholarship.

Completed applications, including the recommendation, must be submitted by March 15, 2009, to the scholarship committee chair, Dr. Virginia Ratigan: JRATIGAN@aol.com. Applications should include the age of the applicant, proof of educational status (if applicable), telephone number and email address (if available) as well as a return address.

Any ITMS member who knows an eligible young person / student that would benefit from attending the 2009 General Meeting in Rochester should encourage him or her to apply for a scholarship. Application forms are available at: www.merton.org/ITMS/scholarships.

Donations to the program may be sent to the Thomas Merton Center, Bellarmine University, 2001 Newburg Road, Louisville, KY 40205; checks should be made out to "ITMS" with "Daggy Fund" in the subject line.

New Abbot at Gethsemani

On April 29, Father Elias Dietz was elected as tenth abbot of the Cistercian Abbey of Gethsemani, Trappist, KY, for a six-year term. Forty-five members of the Gethsemani community, along with abbots from three of Gethsemani's six daughter monasteries, took part in the election. He succeeds Abbot Damien Thompson, who resigned March 30 after serving as abbot for eight years. Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville conducted an abbatial blessing of Abbot Elias on June 15 in the abbey church.

Raymond C. Dietz was born in St. Louis, MO, in 1959, the fourth child of the late Raymond and Mildred Dietz. He attended Immaculata Grammar School, St. Louis Preparatory School South, and Car-

dinal Glennon College, the seminary for the St. Louis archdiocese, graduating in 1982. He then studied theology as a layperson at the University of Louvain, Belgium, earning a licentiate degree. He entered the Abbey of Gethsemani in 1988, taking the name Elias, and made solemn profession in 1993. He was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Thomas C. Kelly on January 25, 2003. At the time of his election, he was serving as secretary to the Abbot General of the Order of Cistercians in Rome, a post he had previously held from 1998 to 2002. He also has served as editor of Cistercian Studies Quarterly from 2002 to 2007, and as sub-master of novices, director of vocations and choir master at Gethsemani.

Robert Giroux (1914-2008)

Robert Giroux, Columbia classmate of Thomas Merton and editor of his autobiography *The Seven Storey Mountain* and numerous subsequent Merton works, died Friday, September 5, 2008 in Tinton Falls, NJ, at the age of 94.

Born April 8, 1914 in Jersey City, the son of Arthur J. and Katharine Lyons Giroux, Robert Giroux attended St. Aloysius School and Regis High School in New York City. At Columbia University he edited *The Columbia Review* and became friends with Merton, the poet John Berryman and other future literary figures. After graduating from Columbia in 1936, he joined the CBS public relations department for four years, and from 1940 until 1955, with time out for service in the Second World War, he worked for the publishing firm Harcourt, Brace, becoming executive editor in 1948. In 1955 he moved to Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, becoming a partner in 1964 when the publishing firm's name became Farrar, Straus and Giroux, as it still is today; he became chairman of the company in 1973.

Giroux is considered one of the most distinguished editors and publishers of the twentieth century. He edited works by ten Nobel Prize winners, including Hermann Hesse, T. S. Eliot, Pablo Neruda, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Derek Walcott, William Golding and Seamus Heaney, as well as five volumes that won the Pulitzer Prize and ten National Book Award winners. Among his many authors were Berryman, Elizabeth Bishop, E. M. Forster, Robert Lowell, Bernard Malamud, Flannery O'Connor, Walker Percy and Eudora Welty.

He was the author of three books: *The Education*

of an Editor, the Bowker lecture of 1981; *The Book Known as Q*, a study of Shakespeare's sonnets (1982); and *A Deed of Death*, the story of an unsolved Hollywood murder (1990), as well as numerous introductions, articles and reviews.

From 1982 through 2007 Giroux served as a Trustee of the Thomas Merton Legacy Trust, becoming Trustee Emeritus in 2008. In 1987 he received the Ivan Sandrof Award from the National Book Critics Circle for his "distinguished contribution to the enhancement of American literary and critical standards." He was also awarded the Alexander Hamilton Medal from Columbia University and the Campion Award from *America* magazine, and received numerous honorary degrees, including a Doctorate of Humane Letters from Bellarmine University in 2003.

Merton Institute Sponsors Conference

The Merton Institute for Contemplative Living is sponsoring a conference on October 24-26 entitled "Contemplative Living: Recovering the Inner Life of Humanity" at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville, to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the death of Thomas Merton. The conference honors Merton's personal vision that concerned individuals would gather to dialogue in a contemplative way on the major issues confronting humanity.

Major presenters at the conference include **Douglas Burton-Christie**, Associate Professor of Theological Studies and Graduate Director of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, and founding editor of *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*; **Ibrahim Kalin**, Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies at the Prince Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, and associate editor of *Resources on Islam and Science*, a web-based project of the Center for Islam and Science, which provides a comprehensive database on Islam and science; **Stephanie Kaza**, Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Vermont, current President of the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies and co-editor of *Dharma Rain: Sources of Buddhist Environmentalism*; and **David Tacey**, Associate Professor in the School of Critical Enquiry, La Trobe University, Melbourne and author of eight books including *The Spirituality Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality*.

tuality.

On the four days preceding the conference, sixteen people representing a wide range of interests and perspectives will convene at the Abbey of Gethsemani to dialogue on the conference theme. At the opening session of the conference they will share their insights and experience of the retreat. Several of these individuals will also serve on a panel that will reflect on and respond to the conference presentations on Saturday and Sunday; panelists include Dr. David Addis, Senior Program Officer, The Fetzer Institute; Imam Plemon El Amin, Masjid Iman of the Atlanta Masjid of Al Islam; Rabbi Phyllis Berman, Director, Elat Chavvim Center for Jewish Spirituality; Rev. Joan Campbell, Director of Religion, Chautauqua Institution; Rev. Alan Jones, Dean of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA; Rev. J. Cletus Kiley, Executive Director, Faith and Politics Institute; Rob Lehman, Board Chair, The Fetzer Institute; Elaine McCoy, Senator, Province of Alberta, Canada; Martin Hakubai Mosko, Zen Buddhist monk; Dr. Steven Rockefeller, Co-Chair, Earth Charter International Council; Dr. Avidesh Shashaani, President, Fund for the Future of Our Children; Rabbi Arthur Waskow, Founder and Director, Shalom Center, Philadelphia, PA; Dr. Phyllis Woolley, Director, Government Interchange Program, University of Alberta. On Saturday afternoon conference attendees will have an opportunity to dialogue in small groups with the presenters, panelists and one another.

The conference registration fee of \$135 includes a continental breakfast, lunch on Saturday and refreshments during breaks; a special conference price of \$160/night is available at the Marriott Downtown Hotel, 280 West Jefferson Street, Louisville, through Sept. 26; for reservations, call 800-533-0127. Participants may register online at www.mertoninstitute.org or print the online registration form and mail to The Merton Institute, 2117 Payne Street, Suite 206, Louisville, KY 40206, enclosing a check or money order for \$135 or Visa or MasterCard information. For further information, call 800-866-7275. The conference is presented with the cooperation and support of the Fetzer Institute.

Scott Awarded Lambeth Degree

On July 1, Dr. Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, awarded the Revd. Canon David Scott one of ten 2008 Lambeth Degrees, academic awards that have been given since 1533 for outstanding contri-

butions to religious, academic and public life. Canon Scott is a founding member of the Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and has spoken widely at Merton Conferences and other events. The D.Litt. degree was awarded in recognition of his contribution to deepening the spiritual life of the Church of England through his standing as a poet and his teaching ministry, particularly on the work of Thomas Merton but also on a range of other writers from Anglo-Saxon times to the present, including his recent work, *The Mind of Christ*.

Calls for Papers

The Thomas Merton Society of Canada and Canadian Memorial Church & Centre for Peace will co-host a conference entitled "Peace: A Transforming Vision" March 6-7 in Vancouver, British Columbia. Plenary speakers will be Jim Forest, Merton biographer and peace activist, and Peter Dale Scott, political writer and poet. Proposals are invited for presentations and workshops at one of the concurrent sessions of the conference. The sessions will run for 75 minutes; talks should take about 45 minutes, leaving 30 minutes for discussion. While papers can be read, it is hoped that speakers will adapt them, in whole or in part, to the style of an oral presentation. Proposals may be submitted on any aspect of the topic, and should include as well, in a brief or an extended fashion, some attention to the writings of Thomas Merton. The proposal should be limited to one page and include information on whether the session would be a talk, a workshop or other form of presentation. Proposals should be submitted by November 1 to TMSC Program Director, Judith Hardcastle at judithhardcastle@telus.net (preferred) or by mail to Judith Hardcastle, Thomas Merton Society of Canada, #705 – 700 Chilco St., Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6G 2R1.

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Proposals are invited for presentations at the 2009 College English Association Conference session entitled "'Raids on the Unspeakable': Design in the Writing of Thomas Merton." The seventieth anniversary conference of the CEA, an organization of scholar/teachers in English Studies, will take place March 26-28, 2009 at the Omni William Penn Hotel, 530 William Penn Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Presentations of 15 minutes (7-8 pages) should explore Merton's use of design in his essays, poetry, letters, journals, and/or the visual arts. Proposals should be

sent by November 1 to Monica Weis at mweis9@naz.edu. All presenters at the 2009 CEA conference must be members of the Association by January 1, 2009; information on membership is available at www2.widener.edu/~cea/membership.htm; further information on the conference may be found at: www2.widener.edu/~cea/conference2009.htm.

New Merton Center Planned

As part of its Vision 2020 Capital Campaign, Bellarmine University, Louisville, KY is planning to construct three new buildings in front of and connected to the present Horrigan Hall. The project calls for the addition of more than 65,000 square feet of new space and approximately 39,000 square feet of remodeled space in the existing building. Part of the new space will house a relocated Thomas Merton Center, currently housed in the W. L. Lyons Brown Library. The proposed new space would triple the size of the Center, the major repository of Merton's papers and other materials. According to Merton Center Director Paul M. Pearson, the new building would provide increased storage space, improved archival preservation conditions, space for additional staff offices and better arrangements for researchers, and increased space for exhibits. A timetable for construction of the new buildings has not been determined, but projections indicate implementation within the next five years.

Canadian Merton Conference

On October 3-4, the Thomas Merton Society of Canada and St. Thomas University are sponsoring a conference entitled "Disarming the Heart: Pathways to Peace" at the university, 51 Dineen Drive, Fredericton, New Brunswick. The keynote speaker is Michael Higgins, president of St. Thomas University and author of *Heretic Blood: The Spiritual Geography of Thomas Merton*, who will speak on "Thomas Merton and the Post 9/11 Landscape." Other plenary presentations will be given by Ron Dart, on "Thomas Merton and Milton Acorn: Prophetic Canaries in a Hawkish Mineshaft," and Paul Pearson, on "Thomas Merton's Zen Photography: A Pathway to Peace and Mindfulness." Concurrent session presenters include Allen Bentley, on "Thomas Merton, William Blake and Miller Brittain"; Judith Hardcastle, on "Thomas Merton: A Film Biography"; John Porter, on "Thomas Merton: Always a Beginner"; and Lynn Szabo, on

"Thomas Merton and the Aesthetics of Peace: 'That Beautiful Terror.'" The conference will conclude with a contemplative interfaith gathering on peace. Cost is \$75 (Canadian); students admitted free. For more information or registration, contact Debbie Hudson: phone: 506-452-0645; email: Hudson@stu.ca.

Monastic Portfolio Available

Conversatio, a limited-edition portfolio of signed original photographs and letterpress printed text focused on the monastic community of Holy Cross Abbey, Berryville, VA, is now available. The forty-page portfolio features interviews with six of the monks by two-time National Book Award finalist Carolyn Coman; twelve original 8" x 10" photographs by internationally recognized graphic designer Lance Hidy; and contributions by Thomas Merton, from his essay "Conversatio Morum," along with his poem "All Theology Is a Kind of Birthday"; Abbot Flavian Burns; and portfolio editor Br. Benedict Simmonds of the Berryville community. The edition is limited to 250 numbered and 50 lettered copies, in a handmade portfolio box by Andrew and Ellen Eddy of Élan Bindery. The portfolio is available for a contribution of \$1500, a portion of which is tax-deductible. Further information can be found at www.conversatio.org.

Hinson Lecture Series Inaugurated

The inaugural event of the E. Glenn Hinson Annual Lecture Series, which will feature Dr. Hinson himself as the speaker, will take place March 6, 2009 at the Baptist Seminary of Kentucky in Lexington, to commemorate Dr. Hinson's fiftieth year of teaching.

Dr. Hinson was a friend and correspondent of Thomas Merton, and is a founding member and former vice president of the International Thomas Merton Society. One of the outstanding Church historians in America, he has authored or edited more than two dozen books and written hundreds of articles and reviews, including contributions to *The Merton Annual* and other publications on Merton.

Dr. Hinson will present two lectures. The first, entitled "What I Have Learned in My Fifty Years of Teaching," will be followed by a panel discussion led by former students and colleagues. The second, "What I See for the Future of Theological Education," will take place following dinner. On the following day, Dr. Hinson will lead a visit to the Abbey of Gethsemani.

Cost of the dinner is \$25, and of the visit to Gethsemani is \$20. A response is due by February 27, 2009. For further information, contact Johnny Sears at johnnysears@gmail.com or call the seminary at: 859-455-8191.

Thompson New Aquinas Center Director

The Board of Directors of the Aquinas Center of Theology at Emory University has appointed Dr. Phillip M. Thompson as executive director of the Center, beginning in August 2008. Dr. Thompson has published on Merton and technology in The Merton Annual, The Merton Seasonal and elsewhere. He was previously Director of the Leadership Program in Public Policy at Georgia Tech University and Patricia A. Hayes Professor of Ethics and Director of the Center for Ethics and Leadership at St. Edward's University, Austin, TX. His book, *Between Science and Religion: How Catholic Intellectuals Engaged Science and Technology in the Twentieth Century*, is forthcoming from Rowman and Littlefield. He is the second Merton scholar to lead the Center; Victor A. Kramer, founding editor of The Merton Annual, is a former director.

New Edition Available

An expanded edition of Ron Dart's *Thomas Merton and the Beats of the North Cascades* (reviewed in the Summer 2006 issue of the Seasonal) has recently been published by Prospect Press. The new edition includes two additional chapters, as well as more illustrations by Arnold Shives. For further information see the publisher's web site: www.prospectpress.ca.

Merton Happenings

On April 8, Frank Tuoti gave a presentation on "Thomas Merton: The Jesus Lama" at the Episcopal Church of the Apostles in Tucson.

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On April 11, Kathleen Deignan, CND spoke on "The Spiritual Legacy of Thomas Merton" at the Milltown Institute for Theology, Philosophy and Applied Spirituality in Dublin, Ireland.

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On April 15, Nathan Gunn, baritone, and Julie Gunn, pianist, joined by colleagues in video and dance, presented a multi-media concert on the life of monks which included the world premiere of "Merton

Songs," settings of five poems by Thomas Merton, composed by Frank Ferko, as well as the Ferko setting of Merton's "For My Brother: Reported Missing in Action, 1943." The concert took place in Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York City, and was preceded by a pre-concert talk with Jeremy Geffen.

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On May 6-8, a retreat entitled "Thomas Merton: Contemplative and Prophet," led by Gordon Matthews and Andrew Spurr, was held at the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, Birmingham, UK.

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On May 15, Robert Whalley gave a presentation entitled "Thomas Merton: Postmodern Monk" at the Carleton Library in Melbourne, Australia, sponsored by the Melbourne Sea of Faith Network.

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On June 14, Keith Griffin led reflections and thoughts on the writings of Thomas Merton at the Mirfield Centre, Community of the Resurrection, Near Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, UK.

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On June 21, Sr. Colleen O'Sullivan directed a day-long program on "Thomas Merton and the Contemplative Way" for the John Main group in Newcastle, New South Wales.

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On June 30-July 2, Esther de Waal led a retreat on "Thomas Merton: Poet and Prophet, Teacher and Contemplative," at the Launde Abbey Retreat House and Conference Centre, East Norton, Leicestershire, UK.

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On July 7-11, a course entitled "Thomas Merton: Poet, Monk, Prophet" was presented at the Chalmers Institute of Vancouver School of Theology, by Paul M. Pearson, with the assistance of Ron Dart and Lynn Szabo.

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On August 21, a program entitled "A Summer Evening: Merton by Heart" was held at Still Point Farm near Madison, WI, sponsored by the Wisdom's Well Interfaith Spirituality Center, led by center co-director Alita Lisbeth, OP, with the assistance of her co-directors Paula Hirschboeck & Maureen McDonnell, OP.

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On Sept. 14, Paul Pearson spoke to the Greater St. Louis Chapter of the Catholic Library Association at

the Kenrick-Glennon Seminary Library in St. Louis on the Merton Center at Bellarmine University, other archival collections of Merton's material and Merton's concern with preserving his own legacy.

On September 15, Kathleen Deignan, CND spoke on "The Spiritual Legacy of Thomas Merton" to the Merton Community of Palo Alto, CA.

On Sept. 19-21, Esther de Waal led a retreat on "Thomas Merton: Artist and Monk," at the Ammerdown Centre, Ammerdown Park, Radstock, Somerset, UK.

On September 21, Kathleen Deignan, CNS gave a presentation on "Thomas Merton and the Benedictine Charism in the Ecological Age" at the Benedictine Grange, Redding, CT.

On September 22, Kathleen Deignan, CND led a retreat on "The Spiritual Legacy of Thomas Merton" at the Mariandale Spirituality Center, Ossining, NY.

On September 24, Professor Robert Imperato led a discussion of the movie Soul Searching: The Journey of Thomas Merton at the Cannon Memorial Library of Saint Leo University, Saint Leo, FL.

Upcoming Events

"Bridges to Contemplative Living" retreats at Bethany Spring, The Merton Institute Retreat Center in New Haven, Kentucky, will be held September 29-October 1, October 6-8, 17-19, 27-29, November 3-5, 7-9, 10-12, 17-19, December 1-3, 5-7, 8-10, 12-14, 15-17. Other programs include "Karl Barth Had a Dream about Mozart: Dreams, Dreamwork, and Contemplative Living" on October 31-November 2; "Creativity, Contemplation and Intuition" on November 14-16; "There Are No Strangers: Contemplative Living and Solidarity with the World's Poor" on November 21-23; "Thanksgiving at Bethany Spring with Jonathan Montaldo" on November 25-28; "Christmas at Bethany Spring Retreat with Jonathan Montaldo" on December 23-26. For further information, phone: 502-899-1991; email: contactus@mertoninstitute.org; website: www.mertoninstitute.org.

A program entitled "Thomas Merton: A Contem-

plative Prophet for Interfaith Dialogue," sponsored by the Wisdom's Well Interfaith Spirituality Center, will be held on three evenings this fall to explore the interfaith contributions of Thomas Merton, in recognition of the fortieth anniversary of his death. On Sept. 25, the topic is "Merton's Call to Prayer and Contemplation"; on Oct. 16, the focus will be "Merton's Call for Peace and Justice"; on Nov. 13, the final meeting will be on "Merton's Vision of the Divine Feminine." Each evening will include a presentation, time for silent meditation, dialogue and social sharing of light refreshments. The program will be held at the Friends Meeting House in Madison, WI. The cost is \$20 for a single evening; \$50 for the series. For more information, contact Paula Hirschboeck at: Hirsch@edgewood.edu.

On October 22, Gerald Schiffhorst will lead a day of recollection on "Finding Our True Selves: The Legacy of Thomas Merton" at the Duncan Retreat Center, Delray Beach, FL. For further information, phone: 561-496-4130; email: duncancenter@duncan-center.org.

On November 2, Kathleen Deignan, CND will speak on "Thomas Merton and Creation Spirituality" at St. Luke Parish, Westport, CT; for further information, phone: 203-227-7245; fax: 203-226-8063.

On November 6, Joyce Hollyday will speak on "Truth and Reconciliation: The Witness of Thomas Merton" at Frazier Hall, Bellarmine University, Louisville, KY, sponsored by the Thomas Merton Center. For further information, see www.merton.org.

On November 9-11, Kathleen Deignan, CND will lead a weekend program on "The Spiritual Legacy of Thomas Merton" for the Office of Justice and Peace of Appalachia; for further information, contact Sr. Jackie Hanrahan, CND: phone: 276-762-5050; email: jhanrahan@richmondidiocese.org.

On November 14-15, a conference entitled "Reading Thomas Merton: The Atlanta Fortieth Anniversary Celebration" will be held at Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Atlanta, GA. Speakers will include: Glenn Crider, Emile Farge, Fr. Tom Francis, Victor and Dewey Kramer, Paul Pearson and others. For further information contact Glenn Crider:

glennrcrider@yahoo.com.

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On November 16, Tony Russo will make a presentation entitled "The Seven Storey Mountain and Beyond" at the Mary Ann Mongan Branch of the Kenton County Public Library, 502 Scott Blvd., Covington, KY 41011; for further information, contact library Adult Services Coordinator John Graham: phone: 859-962-4076; email: john.graham@kentonlibrary.org.

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On Nov. 21-22, Gerald Schiffhorst will lead a retreat entitled "The Way of Silence: An Advent Retreat with Thomas Merton" at the Canterbury Retreat Center, Oviedo, FL. For further information, phone: 407-365-5571; email: tmedeiros@canterburyretreat.org.

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An exhibit entitled, "Thomas Merton after Forty Years," featuring Merton photographs and material from the Special Collections Library of the University of Kentucky will be held at the library, in Lexington, KY, beginning on November 23 and continuing through the end of the year. The opening reception will feature a lecture by Paul M. Pearson entitled "A Hidden Wholeness: The Zen Photography of Thomas Merton."

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On November 23, James Finley will speak on "Falling into Silence: An Exploration of Thomas Merton's Relevance for Our Time" at Westminster Cathedral Hall in London. For further information, see: www.silenceinthecity.org.uk/booking-info.htm.

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The Fifth Lake Erie Merton Celebration will be held on the four Sunday evenings of Advent at Gannon University, Erie, PA. Speakers will include J. S. Porter on November 30, Mary Anne Rivera on December 7, Patrick F. O'Connell on December 14, and Bonnie Thurston on December 21. For further information contact Pat O'Connell: phone: 814-871-5497; email: oconnell001@gannon.edu.

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On December 5-6, Joseph Chamberlin will lead a retreat entitled "Living Your Deepest Desires: Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton" at the Bon Secours Spiritual Center, Marriottsville, MD. For further information, phone: 410-442-1320; website: www.bonsecoursspiritualcenter.org.

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On December 8, Kathleen Deignan, CND will lead an Advent retreat day on "Thomas Merton and Magnificat Spirituality" at Holy Family Parish, New Rochelle, NY; for further information phone: 914-632-0673.

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On December 10, Patrick Collins will present a lecture on "Thomas Merton as Social Critic" at the Dominican Center at Marywood, Grand Rapids, MI; for further information, phone: 616-454-1241; website: www.dominicancenter.com.

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On December 10, Bill Leonard will give a presentation on "Why Thomas Merton Still Matters" at the Episcopal Cathedral of All Souls, Asheville, NC; for further information contact Brian Cole: brian@allsoulscathedral.org.

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On December 10, Archbishop Rowan Williams and Dr. Paul M. Pearson will give a presentation commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the death of Thomas Merton at St. Cyprian's Church, Glentworth Street, London; for further information, see www.thomasmertonsociety.org.

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On December 10, a conference will take place at the Cistercian Abbey of Fiastra, Italy, in commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the death of Thomas Merton and the sixtieth anniversary of the publication of The Seven Storey Mountain. The morning program will include a presentation by Jim Forest entitled "Thomas Merton: Monk of the Undivided Church," as well as discussion and readings from The Seven Storey Mountain by Matteo Giardini. The afternoon session will feature a presentation by Guido Dotti, monk of Bose, or by the Abbot of the Tre Fontane Monastery in Rome, along with readings from Merton on peace, social issues, Buddhism and other topics by Prof. Giardini, information on the Italian chapter of the ITMS presented by Maurizio Renzini, and concluding celebration of vespers. Coordinator of the conference is Father Mario Zaninelli. For further information, contact Maurizio Renzini, Via Ombrone 13, 06034 Foligno (PG), Italia; phone: 0742.44737; cell: 338.1642693; e-mail : maurizio.renzini@libero.it.

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On December 11, Kathleen Deignan, CND will speak on her book Thomas Merton: A Book of Hours at St. Paul's Parish, Ramsey, NJ; for further informa-

tion, phone: 201-327-0976.

On December 12, Kathleen Deignan, CND will present “Magnificat – An Advent Evening of Reflection” at St. Jean Baptiste High School, New York City; for further information, phone: 212-288-1645.

On January 16-17, 2009, Gerald Schiffhorst will direct a retreat entitled “Encountering Silence: A Retreat with Thomas Merton” at the San Pedro Spiritual Development Center, Winter Park, FL; for further information, phone: 407-671-6322; email: info@sanpedrocenter.org.

On January 25, 2009, Morgan Atkinson will screen his documentary Soul Searching: The Journey of Thomas Merton at the Mary Ann Mongan Branch of the Kenton County Public Library, 502 Scott Blvd., Covington, KY 41011; for further information, contact library Adult Services Coordinator John Graham; phone: 859-962-4076; email: john.graham@kenton-library.org.

On March 3, 2009, Kathleen Deignan, CND will speak on “The Spiritual Legacy of Thomas Merton” at the St. Teresa of Avila Parish Community, Summit, NJ; for further information phone: 908-277-3700; email: liz@st-teresa.org.

On April 23, 2009, Kathleen Deignan, CND will give a presentation on “The Spiritual Legacy of Thomas Merton” at the St. Peter Claver Parish Community, West Hartford, CT; for further information, phone: 860-561-4235; email: st.peterclaver@sbcglobal.net.

Chapter News

The organizational meeting of the new Little Rock, Arkansas Chapter was held September 13 at the Main Library in downtown Little Rock. The group plans to meet quarterly, with the second meeting scheduled on December 6, just before the fortieth anniversary of Merton’s death. For further information contact Barry Burrus, 810 S. Rodney Parham Rd. #19B, Little Rock, AR 72205; phone: 501-224-1306; email: BarryBur@aol.com.

The Northern California Chapter discussed Merton’s Cold War Letters at its September meeting.

Future meetings will be held on November 25 and January 27. For further information contact John Berger: bergerjh@rcip.com.

The San Diego Chapter continues to hold its weekly contemplative prayer meetings on Thursdays at St. Brigid Parish in the Pacific Beach neighborhood of San Diego, along with monthly social/discussion meetings at St. Brigid’s on the second Thursday of each month. The monthly meetings include listening to recorded conferences by Merton and discussion of Merton texts, recently early Merton poetry: six poems from Columbia Poetry 1939, and a handful of poems chosen from Thirty Poems (1944). On February 29, the group sponsored a Lenten soup supper for St. Brigid parishioners. On April 25-27, a retreat was held at Prince of Peace Abbey, a Benedictine monastery north of San Diego. The chapter is currently planning a retreat for January 30-February 1, 2009 at Viña de Lestonnac Retreat Center in Temecula, north of San Diego, led by Fr. William Meninger. For further information, contact John Alexander, 4166 Seri St., San Diego CA 92117-3845; phone: 858-270-2110.

The San Rafael, CA Chapter at the Santa Sabina Retreat Center sponsored a retreat on July 24-29 with Jonathan Montaldo entitled “The Intimate Merton: Bridge to the Contemplative Life” at the Center. The group meets monthly for reading, reflection and contemplation. For further information contact Harriet Hope and Susannah Malarkey, Santa Sabina Retreat Center, 25 Magnolia Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901; phone: 415-457-7727.

The Washington, DC Chapter sponsored a presentation by Christine Bochen on “The Relevance of Merton’s Cold War Letters” at St. Anselm’s Abbey on April 12. For further information contact Fr. John Farrelly, OSB: mjfarrelly547@aol.com.

The Chicago Chapter sponsored a presentation on April 20 by Vaughn Fayle, assisted by Christine Poa and Cuthbert Brennan, OSB, entitled “A Fugue in Three: The Thomas Merton – Alexander Peloquin Correspondence and the Four Freedom Songs.” On May 18, the group heard Steven P. Millies speak on “Thomas Merton: Love and Citizenship.” The Merton Reading Group discussed Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander at its meetings on June 2, June 30, July 28,

August 25 and September 29; future meetings will be held October 27 and November 24. The September 21 meeting featured Sr. Suzanne Zuercher, OSB, who discussed aspects of her latest book, *Using the Enneagram in Prayer – A Contemplative Guide*. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for Oct. 19 and Nov. 16. In remembrance of the fortieth anniversary of Merton's death, the chapter and Loyola University's Institute for Pastoral Studies are co-sponsoring a one-day retreat on Dec. 6 entitled "Remembering Thomas Merton: Contemplative Practice for Today," with James Finley, in the Mundelein Auditorium of Loyola's Lake Shore Campus, 6525 N. Sheridan Road, Chicago; information on the retreat is available at www.luc.edu/ips/pdfs/MertonConference_web_page.pdf. For further information, contact Mike Brennan, phone: 773-447-3989; email: cc.itms@gmail.com; website: www.chicagomerton.org.

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The Louisville, KY Chapter, meets 9 times a year for reading, study and prayer; the group is currently discussing Christine Bochen's *Essential Merton*. For further information contact Mary Somerville, 2116 Woodbourne Avenue, Louisville, KY 40205; phone: 502-459-4169.

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The Mississippi Chapter participated in a prayer retreat at the Abbey of Gethsemani on June 16-20, led by chapter coordinator Dr. John H. Staggs. For further information contact Dr. Staggs, 1146 L-5 C.R. 135E, New Albany, MS 38652; email: merton@netdoor.com.

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The St. Louis Chapter sponsored a retreat on Sept. 30 directed by Paul Pearson, entitled "Wide Open to Heaven and Earth: Contemplation, Community, Culture" at the Old St. Ferdinand Shrine, Florissant, MO. For further information, contact Pauline M. Pearson: paulinewp@hotmail.com.

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The Nebraska Chapter meets four times a year for study, prayer and discussion. Focus in the current year has been on videos of Merton's life, his poetry, and recent books including *Peace in the Post-Christian Era* and *Thomas Merton: Book of Hours*. For further information contact, Kathleen & Jim Harris, 741 Turtle Beach, Marquette, NE 68854; phone: 308-946-3639.

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The Corpus Christi (New York City) Chapter is sponsoring a Retreat/Day of Recollection on Oct. 18 with Fr. James Conner, OCSO, entitled "On Thomas Merton and St. Bernard"; on December 10, the chapter will celebrate a solemn memorial mass for the fortieth anniversary of Merton's death at 7 p.m. at Corpus Christi Church, 529 West 121 Street, New York City; on January 31 the chapter will sponsor a program entitled "The Monk and the Dreamcatcher: An Afternoon with Robert Lax and Thomas Merton." For further information, phone: 212-666-9350; website: corpus-christi-nyc.org/MertonSociety.htm.

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The Capital (NY) Region Chapter sponsored "Thomas Merton in the Mountains," the fourteenth annual contemplative retreat at Pyramid Life Center in Paradox, NY, Sept. 5-7, directed by chapter coordinator Walt Chura. For further information contact Walt Chura: waltchura_sfo@yahoo.com.

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The Wall, New Jersey Chapter sponsored a presentation by James Harford on his book *Merton & Friends: A Joint Biography of Thomas Merton, Robert Lax, and Edward Rice* on June 25 at the St. Rose Parish Center in Belmar. On August 13 the group viewed Morgan Atkinson's film *Soul Searching: The Journey of Thomas Merton*. The monthly Merton Discussion Group met September 17 in the St. Rose Parish Center and began discussion of *The Sign of Jonas*, which will conclude at the October 15 meeting. The group will discuss *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander* at the November and December meetings. For further information contact Greg Ryan: gjryan@optonline.net.

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The Greater Cincinnati Chapter continued its discussion of *Seeking Paradise: The Spirit of the Shakers* by Thomas Merton at its April 17, June 19 and September 18 meetings at Mother of God Church in Covington, KY. For further information, contact Daniel A. Burr, phone: 513-558-5991; email: burrda@uc.edu.

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The Cleveland Chapter meets monthly. On January 29 the group celebrated Merton's birthday and the fiftieth anniversary of his Louisville revelation with a one-person performance of Merton's spiritual journey by member and playwright/poet James Nagle entitled "Fourth & Walnut." On April 15, the group watched

the new Michael Goldberg documentary film *A Zen Life – D.T. Suzuki*, which contains rare footage of Merton (speaking French). For further information, contact Sr. Donna Kristof, OSU: dkristoff@ursuline-sisters.org.

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The spring meeting of the Lafayette, OR Chapter, held May 10 at Guadalupe Abbey, included readings from Merton's journals on the call for peace, and presentations by Mary Sommersett on "Religion & Poetry: Thomas Merton & Andrew Greeley," and by Doug Speers on "Merton and Taoism: The Way of Chuang Tzu." For further information, contact Doug Speers, phone: 503-246-0722; email: dougsp@teleport.com.

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The Memphis Chapter meets monthly on Sunday afternoons for contemplative dialogue focused on readings from Merton's work. The group recently concluded a year-long study of Contemplation in a World of Action and has begun a series of readings focused on Merton and Eastern faith traditions. For further information, contact Gray Matthews, 1193 W. Crestwood Drive, Memphis, TN 38119; phone: 901-682-2265; email: matthews@memphis.edu.

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The Thomas Merton Society of Canada sponsored a conference entitled "Disarming the Heart: Pathways to Peace" March 7-8, with a keynote address entitled "Thomas Merton, Reflections on Peacemaking" by author, peace activist and Nobel Prize nominee, Father John Dear, SJ, co-sponsored by the Canadian Memorial Centre for Peace; other speakers included ITMS President Donald Grayston, Ron Dart, Susan McCaslin, T. J. Shaffer, Bernie Meyer and Sharon Halsey-Hoover. On April 3, Brother Paul Quenon, OCSO gave a presentation entitled "Heart of a Sacred World: Nature and Contemplation"; the following night Br. Paul was featured along with Susan McCaslin, Sheila Rosen and Doug Beardsley in "Sounds of Contemplation," a café-style evening of poetry & music. On April 17 Ron Dart spoke on "Thomas Merton and the Mountains: Contemplative Cartographer" at the Vancouver Library as part of the Thomas Merton's Life & Thought Series. On July 10, Paul Pearson gave a presentation entitled "To Gethsemani and Beyond: Thomas Merton's Spiritual Geography" at the Vancouver School of Theology's Epiphany Chapel. On October 15, Monica Weis, SSJ

will speak on "Thomas Merton and Rachel Carson: Kindred Spirits in Revelation and Revolution" at the Canadian Memorial Centre for Peace in Vancouver. For further information contact Susan Cowan, TMSC Community Relations Director: phone: 604-669-2546; email: tmisc@telus.net.

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The Christchurch, New Zealand Chapter sponsored a four-week series of classes entitled "Prayer – Steps to Meditation" in April and May. In late 2007 the chapter sponsored a well-attended public lecture by Owen Merton biographer Roger Collins. Regular meetings begin with a half-hour period of contemplation followed by discussion on a Merton text or related topic. The chapter has assembled a cabinet of over 100 Merton titles available for borrowing. The chapter is organizing a visit with the Christchurch Buddhist community at their recently opened temple. On December, 10 the chapter will hold a service of remembrance and thanksgiving in the chapel of Christ's College, Christchurch, with Abbot Brian Keogh, OCSO of Kopua Abbey as preacher. For further information, contact Raymond Schmack, Holy Cross Chapel, P.O. Box 485, Christchurch, NZ; phone: (03) 3797227; email: rjschmack@xtra.co.nz.

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The inaugural meeting of the Swedish Chapter of the ITMS was held January 31, 2008, coordinated by Lars Adolfsson. Three prayer and study meetings were held during the spring, and three more, along with a one-day retreat, are planned for the fall. A quarterly pamphlet is also in preparation. For further information contact Lars Adolfsson, Vansö Prästgård 645 92 Strängnäs, Sweden; phone: +46 152 125 95.

Send all Merton-related news to:

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The ITMS Newsletter is also available online at:
www.merton.org/ITMS