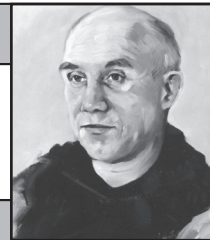


INTERNATIONAL THOMAS MERTON SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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A Quarter-Century of *Annals*

With the appearance of Volume 25 (2012), *The Merton Annual* marks its silver jubilee of a quarter-century of scholarly publication. Initial planning for the *Annual*, with its original subtitle “Studies in Thomas Merton, Religion, Culture, Literature & Social Concerns,” began in 1986 on the initiative of Merton scholar Victor A. Kramer, who was joined by Robert E. Daggy, Brother Patrick Hart, OCSO and Dewey Weiss Kramer as co-editors. The first volume was issued in 1988, marking the twentieth anniversary of Merton’s death. It was conceived as an independent, refereed scholarly journal of articles, reviews and interviews on Thomas Merton and on topics of interest to Merton; though the four co-editors were all founding members of the International Thomas Merton Society, which came into existence in 1987 simultaneously with editorial work on the initial volume of the journal, there was no official connection between the Society and the *Annual* through the first decade of their existence.

The purpose of the journal, as presented in the first volume and repeated in all subsequent volumes, was to “enhance Merton’s reputation as a writer and monk, to continue to develop his message for our times, and to provide a regular outlet for substantial Merton-related scholarship.” According to the editors’ statement of purpose at the beginning of Volume 1, “The *Annual*’s most important function will be to provide a carefully edited and refereed organ for scholarship related to Thomas Merton’s accomplishments as monk and artist” (ix). Along with articles and book reviews, the first volume included a piece of original writing by Merton (“The Zen Insight of Shen Hui”) not previously available,

an interview with a person closely connected with Merton (Matthew Kelty, OCSO) and an extensive bibliographical review of the previous year’s work in Merton studies, a pattern that has continued through subsequent volumes up to the present.

The first series of five volumes was published in cloth editions by AMS Press of New York. With Volume 6, three of the original co-editors retired and Michael Downey and George Kilcourse joined Victor Kramer as co-editors, with Dr. Downey continuing in that role through Volume 10 and Fr. Kilcourse through Volume 16. The next set of five volumes were issued in paper by Liturgical Press of Collegeville, MN with the more streamlined subtitle “Studies in Culture, Spirituality, and Social Concerns,” which has continued to be used subsequently through the current volume. The first volume under the new editorial team included a majority of articles on “issues of interest to Merton” rather than on Merton himself, but subsequent volumes returned to collections of articles mainly or exclusively focused on Merton’s own life and work. Alternate years of the *Annual* from about this time were largely devoted to publication of papers presented at ITMS General Meetings, fostering a closer though still informal relationship with the ITMS.

In 1998, with Volume 11, Sheffield Academic Press took over publication of the *Annual*, under the joint editorship of Kramer and Kilcourse, and when Sheffield became part of the more commercially oriented Continuum Publishing Group in 2001, the new entity continued issuing the *Annual* through Volume 16 (2003), when it closed the Sheffield office and decided that it would no longer publish the journal. At that point, it appeared that the *Annual*

had come to the end of its existence, and both the editors wrote valedictory pieces included at the end of Volume 16.

However, through the efforts of the International Thomas Merton Society and Fons Vitae Press, the *Annual* underwent an unexpected resurrection without missing an issue. As early as Volume 11 (1998), the ITMS Board of Directors had approved a proposal to provide a substantial subsidy for the *Annual*, financed principally by reduced-rate subscriptions available exclusively to ITMS members. With volume 17 (2004), the Merton Society took over primary responsibility for the journal, initially on a two-year trial basis, which proved financially viable and led to an ongoing commitment. Now published by Fons Vitae Press of Louisville, the *Annual* is available to ITMS members at a reduced price as an optional part of their membership. Victor Kramer continued as editor, assisted by various guest editors, through Volume 20. Beginning with Volume 21 (2008), David Belcastro and Gray Matthews became co-editors, appointed by the ITMS president after consultation with the Publications Committee and the Board of Directors, for a four-year term. In 2012, with Volume 25, Gray Matthews retired and Joseph Quinn Raab became co-editor with David Belcastro.

The current issue of the *Annual*, which will be available in mid-April, features articles based on presentations made at the ITMS Twelfth General Meeting at Loyola University, Chicago in 2011, along with related pieces on the conference theme "The Desert and the City," as well as a transcription of a Merton novitiate conference on the Birmingham, Alabama nonviolence movement, an interview with historian Martin E. Marty and Joseph Raab's bibliographical review. Also included is a comprehensive index of Volumes 17-25, a sequel to Patricia Burton's index of Volumes 1-16, originally conceived as incorporating the complete run of *The Merton Annual* but then included in the revived Volume 17. Lists of the contents of the present and previous individual volumes of the *Annual* are also available online at <http://merton.org/ITMS/Annual/annualarchive.aspx>.

Merton and Dalai Lama Exhibit at Bellarmine

In conjunction with the forthcoming visit of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama to Louisville, KY, from April 29 through June 2, 2013 the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University will present a special exhibit of artifacts relating to Thomas Merton's meetings with the leader of Tibetan Buddhism in Dharamsala, India in November 1968, a month before Merton's death. Included in the exhibit will be Merton's handwritten personal journal in which he recorded his meetings with the Dalai Lama, available for public view for the first time by special permission of the Thomas Merton Legacy Trust. Also on display will be other artifacts relating to Merton's meetings with the Dalai Lama along with additional items in the Merton Center archives from the final months of Merton's life, including notebooks, photographs and correspondence. Along with the exhibit, the Merton Center will also feature the photographic display entitled "A Hidden Wholeness: The Zen Photography of Thomas Merton," a series of 35 photographs by Merton, in the McGrath Art Gallery at Bellarmine, from May 7 through June 2, 2013.

Louisville's Tibetan Buddhist Center, the Drepung Gomang Institute, and the City of Louisville will host His Holiness the Dalai Lama May 19-21, 2013 for a three-day event entitled "Engaging Compassion," which will include a public talk on Sunday, May 19 at the Louisville Yum! Center to an expected audience of 16,000, a two-part public presentation on Buddhist teaching in the same venue on Monday, May 20, and an address to middle school and high school students on Tuesday, May 21 at the Kentucky Center for the Arts.

Merton Institute Closes

On December 31, 2012, the Merton Institute for Contemplative Living, located in Louisville, KY, ended operations after seventeen years, due to financial difficulties. Originally incorporated as the Thomas Merton Center Foundation in September 1995, and intended primarily to raise funds to help support the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University, the organization soon began sponsoring

its own programs, including a number of retreats for influential thought leaders from around the world, including Merton Retreat 2000: Spirituality and Leadership and Merton Retreat 2002: Spirituality and the Environment, as well as conferences on Merton and Sufism (1999), Merton and the Spirituality of the Eastern Church (2001), Merton and Judaism (2002) and Merton and Buddhism (2005), each of which led to an edited volume published by Fons Vitae Press. Initially sponsored by Bellarmine University, the Abbey of Gethsemani and the Thomas Merton Legacy Trust, the Foundation ended its affiliation with the university and with the Merton Center and moved off-campus to quarters elsewhere in Louisville in 2001, taking the name The Thomas Merton Foundation. In 2006, it became the Merton Institute and refocused its mission to emphasize the central role of contemplative living in bringing about a more just and peaceful world.

Among its many projects were study guides such as the Thomas Merton Curriculum (2002) for elementary and secondary school students, and the eight-part “Bridges to Contemplative Living” pamphlet series, published by Ave Maria Press (2006-2008); it also sponsored publication of the *Merton Vade Mecum: A Quick-Reference Bibliographical Guide*, compiled by Patricia Burton (1999, 2001) and ‘*about Merton*’: *Secondary Sources 1945-2000*, compiled by Marquita Breit, Patricia Burton and Paul M. Pearson (2002). The Institute also sponsored the annual Thomas Merton Prize for Poetry of the Sacred contest, which drew up to 1300 entries, and was judged by such well-known literary figures as Wendell Berry, Kathleen Norris, Mary Oliver and Robert Pinsky. It organized an annual “Epiphany Project” encouraging people to share their own stories of spiritual awakening, named after Merton’s famous “Fourth and Walnut Epiphany”; it also provided financial support for the historical marker placed at that site in downtown Louisville in March 1998. In announcing the closing of the Institute, Director Vanessa Hurst wrote: “Thomas Merton reminds us that now, since all things have their season, there is a time to be unborn. Although

the Institute has provided a wealth of resources, it is not able to financially sustain itself.” Hurst also announced that the Abbey of Gethsemani will help operate the Institute’s former retreat center, Bethany Spring, located in New Haven, KY, less than a mile from the monastery, which the Institute had acquired in 2006.

With the closure of the Institute, the International Thomas Merton Society has received a number of requests from donors wishing to add the ITMS to their estate plans in place of the Merton Institute for Contemplative Living. For further information about this possibility, contact ITMS Resident Secretary Paul M. Pearson at pmpearson@bellarmine.edu.

Alfred McCartney, OCSO (1926-2013)

Br. Alfred McCartney, a monk of the Abbey of Gethsemani for nearly 66 years, died January 15, 2013 at the age of 87. Born in Kansas City, MO in 1926, he lived for most of his early life in New Orleans and entered Gethsemani as a lay-brother in February, 1948. He made simple profession on October, 15, 1950 and took his final vows on November 15, 1953. Among his many duties at the monastery, Br. Alfred was secretary to Abbot James Fox for some years and also served for a time as an assistant to Thomas Merton, helping him with his correspondence. He also worked as forestry manager on the abbey grounds. He spent time in the 1960s at Gethsemani’s daughter house in Mepkin, SC, and lived for a time as a hermit. More recently, he was the Gethsemani archivist. The Gethsemani online chronicle memorialized Br. Alfred as “a genteel monk, impeccable in his manners and deep in his prayer.”

Merton Lenten Series at Corpus Christi

In commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary year of Thomas Merton’s baptism at Corpus Christi Church in New York City, the parish sponsored a Lenten Vespers Series focused on Merton’s life and work. On February 17, the preacher was Union Theological Seminary student Matthew Vaughn on “An Evangelical Reads Merton,” with

music provided by the Barnard/Columbia Chamber Choir. On February 24, the preacher was ITMS President Kathleen Deignan, CND on “Transforming Deserts: Thomas Merton’s Lenten Wisdom,” with music by guitarist Will Cassatt. On March 3, the preacher was author Daniel Horan, OFM on “A Desert Cry, a Prophet’s Call: Merton’s Model for Christian Life,” with music by the Riverside Chamber Singers. On March 10, the preacher was Orthodox Fr. Michael Plekon on “Mercy within Mercy within Mercy: The God of Jonah and Thomas Merton,” with music by the Choir of Corpus Christi Church. On March 17, the preacher was Corpus Christi Pastor Rev. Raymond Rafferty on “Tom Merton’s Parish,” with music by baroque violinist Jeremy Rhizor.

Merton at CEA

Six Merton scholars are scheduled to give presentations at the 2013 College English Association annual meeting in Savannah, GA April 4–6. The International Thomas Merton Society is an affiliated organization to the CEA. On Thursday, April 4, Christine M. Bochen will speak on “Thomas Merton’s Letters to Peace Activists: A Way to Clarify His Own Vision” in “The Peace of Nature” session; on Friday, April 13, John P. Collins will discuss “Thomas Merton and Flannery O’Connor: A Kinship with Nature” as part of the “Landscapes of Race and Religion” session; on Saturday, April 6, a session entitled “Merton: Natures of Wisdom, Reverence and Responsibility” will include four presentations: Malcolm Cash, “‘I Have Called You by Your Name’: Thomas Merton and the Black Experience”; J. Patrick Mahon, “The Nature of Mysticism: Hildegard of Bingen and Thomas Merton”; Paul M. Pearson, “Wisdom Cries the Dawn Deacon: Thomas Merton and the Ox Mountain Parable”; and session leader Monica Weis, SSJ, “From Reverence to Responsibility: Nature’s Impact on Thomas Merton.”

Gethsemani Retreat Scheduled

On November 8-11, 2013, Tony Russo will lead the twelfth annual pilgrimage retreat at the Abbey of Gethsemani. The theme of the retreat, sponsored

by the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky ITMS Chapter, will be “Merton’s Search for Wisdom and Wholeness.” Merton ends *The Seven Storey Mountain* by stating “Let this be the end of the book, but not the searching.” In preparation for the retreat, Tony Russo will author periodic letters studying Merton’s on-going search for wisdom and the whole/true self. Retreatants will be invited to respond to Elena Malits’ description of encountering Merton: “the reader who takes Merton seriously will be personally challenged to confront his or her own life.” Merton texts such as *New Seeds of Contemplation*, *The Inner Experience*, *Contemplative Prayer*, *Contemplation in a World of Action* and others, along with works of such Merton scholars as Elena Malits, Anne Carr, James Finley, William Shannon, Monica Weis, Christopher Pramuk and others will serve as resources. The stipend for the presenter is \$70 for those with e-mail, \$80 for those without e-mail; \$35 is refundable to anyone canceling by September 8, 2013. Registrants should mail a check payable to Tony Russo at 8087 Bridgetown Road, Cleves, OH 45002 and include postal address, daytime phone number and e-mail address with the check. Tony Russo will handle all room registrations at the Abbey Guest House, which has private rooms with toilet/shower. A donation for room and board at The Abbey Guest House is payable at the time of check-out. For further information, contact Tony Russo at trusso@fuse.net or by phone at 513-941-5219.

ITMS Authors

Lawrence S. Cunningham has recently published *The Seven Deadly Sins: A Visitor’s Guide* (Ave Maria Press, 2012; \$12.95 paperback), in which he traces the roots of the tradition of the “deadly sins” to the mystic experiences of the desert fathers, who first identified these corrupt inner desires as forces that twist us away from God and offers examples and insights from scripture, Christian tradition and modern life to assist readers to meet each of the seven deadly sins with a corresponding virtue.

Michael Higgins has recently written, with

Kevin Burns, *Genius Born of Anguish: The Life and Legacy of Henri Nouwen* (Paulist, 2012; \$17.95 paperback). Higgins is author/narrator and Burns is producer of the related three-part Canadian Broadcasting Company series on Nouwen of the same title, aired on January 9, 16 and 23, 2013. Nouwen, Dutch-born priest/psychologist, was the author of dozens of books on Christian life and spirituality, including *Pray to Live: Thomas Merton, Contemplative Critic* (1972), and spent the last years of his life as chaplain at the L'Arche Daybreak community in Toronto.

Michael Higgins has also edited, with Anthony Ciorra, *Vatican II: A Universal Call to Holiness* (Paulist, 2012; \$16.95 paperback), a collection of presentations from the "Vatican II Conference, A Universal Call to Holiness," held at Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT, and features presentations by nine outstanding experts on the Council and on the modern Church. Seven of the presentations are based on the seven speeches given by several cardinals at the conclusion of the council on December 8, 1965.

David Hodges, OCSO, a monk of Caldey Abbey, located on an island off the coast of Wales, has just published his sixth book of poetry, entitled *The Music of the Ocean*. The new collection reflects the monastic life of prayer, seascapes, island flora and fauna, the flight of birds, the liturgy and memories. Author Esther de Waal has called his poetry "both accessible and profound," and Taras Miles has described him as "an outstanding poet with wide appeal." Two of the poems in this volume have appeared in *The Merton Seasonal*. The book is available through the Caldey Abbey website: www.caldey-island.co.uk, and it is expected that it soon will be offered in the US through Cistercian Publications.

A new edition of Greg Ryan's *Our Hearts Burned Within Us: Reading the New Testament with John Main OSB* (Medio Media), with a new introduction by Fr. Laurence Freeman OSB, is now available. It is based on a correlation of passages

marked by John Main in his personal copy of the New Testament with extracts from John Main's own writings on the same verses that illuminate his teaching on contemplative prayer.

In *Hope Sings, So Beautiful: Graced Encounters Across the Color Line* (Liturgical Press, 2013; \$19.95 paper), Christopher Pramuk offers a series of theological, pastoral and spiritual reflections on racial justice and injustice, a mosaic of images and sketches for thinking and praying through difficult questions about race drawing on the perspectives of artists, poets and theologians from many different ethnic and racial communities. The book features a Foreword by M. Shawn Copeland and an Afterword by Edward Kaplan.

A second, corrected edition of William Shannon's final book, *How to Be a Christian Even If You Already Are One*, is now available through the Gift Shop of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, 150 French Road, Rochester NY 14618. The book has been called the final spiritual testament of the founding president of the International Thomas Merton Society, and the first edition sold out almost immediately after its appearance just before his death on April 29, 2012. The cost is \$14.95 + \$5 shipping/handling.

Award for Children's Book

Jim Forest's storybook *St. George and the Dragon*, illustrated by Vladislav Andrejev in iconographic style (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press) was awarded a gold medal for the 2012 Moonbeam Spirit Award from the Jenkins Group of Traverse City, MI, which bestows the award "for dedication to children's books and literacy and for inspired writing, illustrating and publishing." According to Jim Barnes, awards director at the Jenkins Group, "The Moonbeam Children's Book Awards are intended to bring increased recognition to exemplary children's books and their creators, and to support childhood literacy and life-long reading. The awards recognize and reward the best of these books and

bring them to the attention of parents, booksellers, librarians – and to children themselves.” The award was presented on November 12, 2012 at the Traverse City Children’s Book Festival.

Lax Lecture Week in Olean

On March 4-8 a Robert Lax Lecture Week was held at St. Bonaventure University, Olean, NY, in partnership with The Olean Public Library, Olean High School and members of the local community, funded by the University and by Marcia Marcus Kelly, Lax’s niece, on behalf of the Marcus family. This was the first extended event devoted to Lax (1915-2000), an Olean native and close friend of Thomas Merton, and a notable poet, hermit and sage in his own right. Lax scholar and friend Steve Georgiou of the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA gave three lectures: “An Introduction to Robert Lax” on Monday, March 4; “Robert Lax: Poet and Contemplative” on Tuesday, March 5; and “Robert Lax: Mentor and Peacemaker” on Wednesday, March 6. The first two presentations were held at St. Bonaventure, the third at the Olean Public Library. On Thursday, March 7, Dr. Georgiou gave presentations in St. Bonaventure classes. The event also featured an archive exhibit mounted by Friesdam Memorial Library Director Paul Spaeth and a performance on Friday, March 8 of “The Circus of Creation,” an original musical piece for narrator, brass quintet and percussion by composer Gwyneth Walker inspired by the poetry of Lax.

Merton Happenings

On October 14, 2012, Wayne Simsic led an afternoon of reflection entitled “Thomas Merton: An Invitation to the Contemplative Life” at the Jesuit Retreat House, Parma, OH.

On November 17-18, Dan Phillips led a Thomas Merton Retreat entitled “Bringing Light to the Darkness” at Mount Saint Joseph Retreat Center, Maple Mount, KY.

On December 9, Jonathan Montaldo gave a

presentation entitled “Enter the School of Your Own Experience” at the inauguration of The Merton Contemplative Initiative at Iona College, New Rochelle, NY, with the dedication of The Merton Wisdom Collection in the Ryan Library of the college, a gift of the Quinlan Family.

On December 9, Peter Savastano gave a presentation entitled “Day of a Stranger: Thomas Merton for the Strange Times in Which We Live” at the Interweave Institute (www.interweave.org) in Summit, NJ.

On March 1, 2013, James Finley gave a presentation entitled “The Wisdom of Thomas Merton” at First Community Church, Columbus, OH.

On March 2, the Friends of St. Benedict and St. David’s Episcopal Church sponsored a Morning of Prayer and a Lecture by Esther de Waal entitled “Thomas Merton: The Celtic Connection” at St. David’s Church in Washington, DC.

On March 9, Gray Matthews gave a presentation entitled “Centering in the Midst of Commotion: Thomas Merton, Contemplation and the Living Life” at the Annual Conference of Contemplative Outreach Birmingham at Saint Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Birmingham, AL.

The Spring 2013 Road Scholar [elderhostel] “Week with Thomas Merton” was held March 17-22, 2013 at the Thomas Merton Center, Bellarmine University, Louisville, KY. The Fall 2013 Road Scholar Week will take place Sunday October 13 through Friday October 18 at Bellarmine. For further details, contact Linda Bailey: phone: 502-272- 8161; e-mail: lbailey@bellarmine.edu.

On March 21, Canon David Scott and Stephen Dunhill presented “An Exploration of Thomas Merton’s Poetry” at the Monastery of Our Lady of Hyning, Warton, nr Carnforth, Lancashire, UK.

During the Spring 2013 semester, Peter Savastano's course at Seton Hall University on "Thomas Merton, Religion and Culture" is focusing on the theme: "Merton and Technology."

Upcoming Events

Upcoming events at the Bethany Spring Retreat Center in New Haven, KY include a Holy Week/Easter retreat: March 27-31; Blessings of the Celtic Wheel, with Theresa O'Bryan: April 5-7; Seeing with New Eyes, with Kim Manley Ort: April 19-21. Bethany Spring, located one mile from the Abbey of Gethsemani, is now under the sponsorship of the abbey. For further information, contact center director Sr. Kelly O'Mahony: 502-549-8277; email: kellyscn@bethanyspring.org.

On April 10, Paul M. Pearson will give a presentation entitled: "'Sentinels upon the World's Frontier': Thomas Merton and Celtic Monasticism" at 7 p.m. in Romita Auditorium, Iona College, New Rochelle, NY. For further information contact Kathleen Deignan, CND: KPDeignan@aol.com.

On May 4, 2013, a study day entitled "Can't Live with Them; Can't Live without Them – Representations of Community: Images of Living in Community in the Writings and Visual Texts of Thomas Merton," facilitated by Dr Anthony Purvis, will take place at The Well at Willen, UK. For further details, see the website: www.thewellatwillen.org.uk.

On May 18, 2013, the St. Theosevia Centre for Christian Spirituality in Oxford, UK is sponsoring a study day devoted to Thomas Merton and Alexander Men, Russian Orthodox priest and author murdered in 1900. Among the presenters will be Fiona Gardner, editor of *The Merton Journal* and former chair of the Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain and Ireland. For further details, see the St. Theosevia Centre website: www.theosevia.org.

Chapter and Affiliate News

The Arizona ITMS Chapter discussed the Bridg-

es to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton series at its January 5 meeting; the February 2 and March 2 meetings focused on Merton's *The Inner Experience*. For further information contact Duncan McCauley at 602-826-1982; duncanofthedesert@gmail.com; blog: AZMerton.blogspot.com.

On April 13, 2013, the Washington, DC Chapter of the ITMS will sponsor a presentation by Monica Weis, SSJ on "The Landscape of Prayer: Thomas Merton's Interaction with Nature" at St Anselm's School. The chapter discussion group continues to meet monthly and is presently reading *The Springs of Contemplation*, discussing a chapter each month. For further information contact Maryle Ashley at: tmsociety@fastmail.fm; or Betsy O'Brien at: tm-contemplation@gmail.com.

On October 16, the topic of the meeting of the Cleveland Chapter of the ITMS was "Merton, Lax and Beauty." On January 29, the chapter celebrated Thomas Merton's birthday and viewed a film entitled *Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer*, continuing a focus on contemplative prayer begun at the September meeting. On March 19, Mary McDonald spoke about her new book on Merton, *It Draws Me: The Art of Contemplation*. For further information, contact Sr. Donna Kristoff, OSU, 440-449-1200, ext. 314; dkristoff@ursulinesisters.org.

On October 21, the Chicago ITMS Chapter heard a presentation by Rev. Daniel P. Coughlin entitled "How Serving as Chaplain to the U.S. House of Representatives Changed My Prayer Life." On November 18, Sr. Suzanne Zuercher, OSB spoke on "Thomas Merton and the Contemplative Life." Penny Jaworski led the group in an afternoon of reflection on "Merton and the Lenten Journey" on February 17. On March 17, Bob Raccuglia gave a presentation entitled "Wendell Berry and Thomas Merton: Kentuckians and Kindred Spirits." On April 21, Frank Cunningham will give a presentation entitled "The Vesper Time of Life: Aging as a Spiritual Exercise." The chapter reading group is

currently discussing Merton's *The Sign of Jonas*. For more information, contact Chapter Coordinator Mike Brennan at 773-685-4736; email: cc.itms@gmail.com; web page: www.chicagomerton.org.

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On November 18, the Northern California Chapter of the ITMS finished their discussion of *The Asian Journal*. At its January 27 meeting, the group read and discussed Merton's play *The Tower of Babel*. On March 24, the chapter met at the Trappist Abbey in Vina, CA with Fr. Paul Jerome. For further information, contact John Berger, 916-482-69756; email: bergerjh@rcip.clm.

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At its fall meeting, the Corpus Christi (NYC) Chapter of the ITMS sponsored a presentation entitled "Thomas Merton's Dialogue with Judaism: Merton & the Rabbis on Scripture and Vatican II" with Edward Kaplan and Brenda Fitch Fairaday. On April 27 Sidney H. Griffith, ST & Daniel A. Madigan, SJ will speak on "Merton and the Challenge of Islam/Sufism." For further information contact Teresa Scott: 212-666-9350; mertonnyc@yahoo.com; www.corpus-christi-nyc.org/MertonSociety.htm.

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The Wall, NJ ITMS Chapter concluded its discussion of Michael Mott's *The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton* on November 14, and discussed Merton's *Thoughts in Solitude* on December 19 and January 16 and *The Living Bread* at its February 13 and March 20 meetings. Tentatively planned for the April 17 meeting is a discussion of Merton's *The Wisdom of the Desert*, and for the May 15 and June 12 meetings a discussion of the book *Why Go to Church? The Drama of the Eucharist* by Timothy Radcliffe, OP, a more contemporary treatment of the Eucharist as a follow-up to Merton's 1956 volume *The Living Bread*. For further information contact Greg Ryan: 732-681-6238; GJRyan@wccm.org.

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On November 10, the Thomas Merton Society of Canada sponsored a one-day retreat entitled "Thomas Merton and Leonard Cohen: Going Home," led by Donald Grayston and Judith Hardcastle, at

St. Andrew's United Church in Vancouver, BC. On November 22, the Society celebrated the publication of *Thomas Merton: Monk on the Edge*, a collection of essays by Canadian Merton scholars, with a wine & cheese reception at the Thomas Merton Reading Room in the H. R. MacMillan Library, Vancouver School of Theology. On March 8, James Douglass presented a public lecture entitled "Thomas Merton and the Unspeakable in 2013" at the Canadian Memorial United Church in Vancouver. On the following day, March 9, James Douglass and Paul Schrade presented a day-long workshop entitled "JFK, RFK and the Unspeakable" at the Canadian Memorial Centre for Peace in Vancouver, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the assassination of President Kennedy and the forty-fifth anniversary of the assassination of Robert Kennedy; Schrade was shot and wounded in the attack on RFK. The workshop is co-sponsored by the Thomas Merton Society of Canada and Canadian Memorial United Church & Centre for Peace. For further information, contact Susan Cowan, Community Relations Director, at tmssc@telus.net or 604-988-8835, or see the TMSC website: www.merton.ca.

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On April 13, the Associazione Thomas Merton Italia, the Italian Merton Society, will commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the promulgation of Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* with a presentation by Agostino Giovagnoli of the Catholic University of Milan entitled "La Pacem in Terris e gli Scritti di Thomas Merton" (*Pacem in Terris* and the Writings of Thomas Merton). For further information see the Society website: <http://www.thomasmerton.eu>.

Send all Merton-related news to:

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