

PREVIEW:

Five Merton Publications

— by **Robert E. Daggy**

Five significant publications will be released in the near future, headed by the “official” biography of Thomas Merton, *The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton*, by Michael Mott. We take this occasion to call attention to these five publications for our readers.

THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS OF THOMAS MERTON, by Michael Mott: This is the first biography of Thomas Merton written with the full cooperation of the Merton Legacy Trust and the Abbey of Gethsemani under the terms laid down by Merton himself in his Trust Agreement. It means, basically, that Michael Mott has had access to materials which have been closed to other scholars pending the completion and publication of what has come to be called the “official” biography. Publication is set for November. On November 8, at a reception in the Thomas Merton Studies Center at Bellarmine College, the “official” biography of Thomas Merton will officially be presented to the public. The Winter-Spring issue of the *Merton Seasonal* will be devoted to a review-symposium of Professor Mott’s *The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton*. Participants in the review-symposium will be: The Rev. Canon A. M. Allchin of Canterbury, England; The Rev. Clyde F. Crews of Bellarmine College; James F. Forest of Alkmaar, Holland; Rosemary Haughton of Well Spring House, Massachusetts; Dr. Ross Labrie of the University of Vancouver; and Edward Rice of New York. The authorized biography will sell for \$24.95.

LETTERS OF THOMAS MERTON: THE HIDDEN GROUND OF LOVE; selected and edited by William H. Shannon: This, the first volume of letters chosen from Merton’s vast correspondence, has been edited by Father Shannon, General Editor of the Merton Letters, subtitled “Letters on Religious Experience and Social Concerns.” It will be followed by Letters to Family and Lay Friends (edited by Robert E. Daggy); Letters on Monastic Experience (edited by Brother Patrick Hart); and Letters to Writers and Literary Figures (edited by Michael Mott). This first volume, scheduled by Farrar, Straus and Giroux for publication in November, includes correspondence with Dorothy Day, Erich Fromm, Aldous Huxley, Pope John XXIII, Ethel Kennedy, Coretta King, Pope Paul VI, Karl Rahner, Rosemary Ruether, D. T. Suzuki and Paul Tillich. The letters will sell for \$19.95.

MERTON: BY THOSE WHO KNEW HIM BEST; edited with an introduction by Paul Wilkes; Paul Wilkes, one of the producers of the recent television documentary *MERTON: a Film Biography of Thomas Merton*, which premiered on June 5, 1984, has collected and edited the interviews conducted during the preparation of the documentary. The publishers, Harper & Row, say: “Such diverse figures as James Laughlin, Joan Baez, John Eudes Bamberger, Ernesto Cardenal, The Dalai Lama, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and Robert Giroux reveal the “many, many, Thomas Mertons” as they recall touching, amusing, surprising, and profoundly illuminating shared moments. These reflections touch on all aspects of the committed, obedient monk; the brilliant, observant writer who was deeply serious about God, mysticism, prayer and urgent social issues; and the charming worldly man fully open to the ebb and flow of life around him.” The book sells for \$12.95.

WINTER RAIN: SIX IMAGES OF THOMAS MERTON, by Anthony T. Padovano: This one-actor play, written by Tony Padovano, author of *The Human Journey: Thomas Merton, Symbol of a Century*, has been video-taped and is available on video cassette from Paulist Press. The play is divided into six scenes: Merton in the train station on his way to Gethsemani; Merton as the author of the best-selling *The Seven Storey Mountain*; Merton at his meeting with D. T. Suzuki; Merton as he moves to the Hermitage; Merton as he confronts the situation with the nurse; and Merton at his own funeral. Merton is portrayed by Michael Moriarty, the well-known performer of stage, screen and television, who has won Emmys for *The Glass Menagerie* and *Holocaust* and a Tony Award for *Find Your Way Home*. *Winter Rain* is reviewed on pp. 12-13 of this issue. The video cassette sells for \$159.

THOMAS MERTON, by Victor A. Kramer: After a number of years, Professor Kramer's book, the Merton entry in Twayne's United States Authors Series (TUSAS 462), will be released this Fall. Designed for students and for those interested in Merton as a writer, the book is described by Kramer in the preface: "In the opening chapter an overview of the life is provided, and in the two chapters which follow examination of early works of prose and poetry reveal how Merton structured his art. In the fourth chapter books of a devotional nature which range from the historical and biographical to the personal, such as meditations and journals, are treated. In the middle chapter several later books of poetry are examined as they reveal Merton's own development toward more experimental writing. The sixth chapter treats books which approach a range of problems in the world, but through varieties of prose which clearly demonstrate Merton's fascination with the East, and the literary benefits he derived from such an interest and his exuberant development of new varieties of "antipoetry," are traced. The final chapter is an analysis of some of the most important writings which were posthumously published." The book sells for \$17.95.

