

# Call for Dialogue

by **Pierre D. Van Groll**

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At exactly 5:10 a.m.  
 on day one of the Elderhostel on Thomas Merton  
 at Nazareth College, Rochester, NY,  
 a solitary crow invaded my sleep.  
 At first the caws were singular, seemingly spontaneous and casual.  
 But soon their cadence doubled in insistence  
 until there was response from another anonymous crow  
 who perhaps, too, had been sleeping  
 as I had been sleeping.  
 Was Tom behind it all? I wondered.  
 (The early hour would have suited him.)  
 Was this dissonant song all his doing?  
 Was this dialogue of birds  
 symbol and setting for what was to come —  
 a call for dialogue?  
 Or was this the embodiment of *Zen and the Birds of Appetite*?  
 Although I tried very hard,  
 I could not get comfortable enough  
 to fall back to sleep.