

3. An endnote on endnotes: One of the pleasures of this volume are its endnotes, several of which amount to mini-discourses on important topics. Bourgeault has the gift of focusing in on the essential elements of complex issues, such as the Cistercian (Trappist) method of transformation (pp. 214-215) and her characterization of the Celtic, Wisdom-oriented spirituality contrasted with the Roman style of Catholic Christianity (p. 229). She also includes extensive bibliographical references for further exploration as well as results of personal experience of the topics under discussion.

Dewey W. Kramer

DRISCOLL, Jeremy, *A Monk's Alphabet: Moments of Stillness in a Turning World* (Boston: New Seeds, 2006), pp. 210. ISBN-10: 1-59030-3733-3. (Hardcover) \$19.95.

One must search far and wide in monastic writing to find a book such as this—one that speaks not *about* monasticism, but *out of* monasticism as a daily experience—a book of a monk going about being a monk—albeit in some circumstances outside a monastery. We accompany the fertile and subtle mind of Jeremy Driscoll inside his monastery of Mt. Angel in Oregon, and follow him to Rome, where he teaches at San Anselmo, to Paris and elsewhere. All is written with a sense of place, and love for community and its characters. Unforgettable is “Bonnie,” his late Abbot, who loved to reenact ham scenes from the worst movies, and did so on his death bed, in a role of a sheriff who had been shot.

More intriguing still are visits to Driscoll’s own inner thoughts—not didactic expositions, but subtle questioning, a mind puzzled with life: “Nothing that exists is necessary. But everything that exists, does. Tell me why, and I shall be much relieved.”

While theology is a serious part of his life, Driscoll thinks in the context of prayer and speaks out of silence. His aim is “to think clearly and deeply and to do so with love.” His willingness to write tentatively gives one a gentle nudge along in one’s own hesitant search:

There must be a way of being tentative that could be beautiful, helpful, that could move us closer to some greater grasp of things. So here is a goal for words proffered: humble speech in which the silence from which the speaker emerges and soon returns is also heard as a living, life-giving space.

These explorative, broadly diverse and sometimes whimsical *Pensees* are arranged alphabetically, so strive for no logical or chronological order. How could they? Here is a mind at play that often brings a smile, one salted with wisdom. In trying to shape thoughts about, for instance, the Risen Christ, he finds himself left with *nothing*: "...in that nothing I have this hope: that he is somewhere between the lines of it." The lines are open enough to be not a trap but web behind which one might sense a presence.

One carries away as well, a sense of what it is like to *be* a monk; one sees contemplative living from inside—or simply, what it is to be a human being in the midst of it all:

I am undone by the Mystery of it all: the mystery of our human living in the monastery, of our time in the world and in the Church.

Br. Paul Quenon

AU, Wilkie and Noreen Cannon Au, *The Discerning Heart: Exploring the Christian Path* (New York/Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press), pp. 248. ISBN 0-8091-4372-0 (paperback). \$18.95.

The authors of *The Discerning Heart*, husband and wife team Wilkie and Noreen Cannon Au, aim in this study to present a holistic, adult vision of the practice of spiritual discernment. Before marriage both were longtime members of Catholic religious communities in which spiritual formation in the Ignatian mode was taken seriously. Presently Au teaches in the area of the pastoral ministry and spirituality at Loyola Marymount University while Noreen Cannon Au is in practice as a Jungian psychoanalyst. They pool their expertise to present a view of discernment that takes seriously the rich Ignatian heritage of Christianity while being cognizant of the wisdom of various schools of psychology as they relate to the development of an individually informed and inspired conscience. On occasion the complaint has been raised in Christian circles that the language of therapeutic psychology has invaded and even co-opted the traditional language of Christianity. These authors have managed to avoid this and give us instead a refreshing and wise guidebook in which the insights of psychology serve as important tools to facilitate inner freedom so that the Spirit has room to work.

The Discerning Heart reveals itself from the outset to be firmly planted in the theological tradition of Ignatian Christian human-