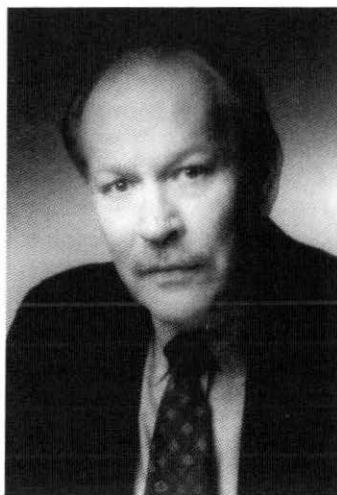


In Memoriam

December deaths,
 one abrupt in
 tropic heat,
 a shock felt
 'round the world.
 His PR man
 in languished fight
 grown pale and pale
 now joins his friend,
 his mentor,
 in clouds unknown.

by

Christine Jensen Hogan



ROBERT E. DAGGY
 1940–1997

Dr. Robert E. Daggy, 57, founding member of the International Thomas Merton Society and former director of the Thomas Merton Center of Bellarmine College, died Monday, Dec. 15, from complications connected with a rare blood disease, systemic mastocytosis. Funeral services were held in the guest chapel at the Abbey of Gethsemani on Dec. 17, with burial in the monastery cemetery. Abbot Timothy Kelly, who presided at the funeral, noted in his opening remarks that “twenty-nine years ago, on a cold dreary day on this same date, we buried Thomas Merton.”

At the funeral, ITMS treasurer Erlinda Paguio read Daggy’s essay “Water, Woods, and Walnuts” (*Merton Seasonal*, Autumn 1992), which, she said, “captured all that he did and experienced in his life as director of the Merton Center.” In a “ceremony of lights,” family and friends came forward to light a candle and share a memory of Daggy. As the abbot incensed the casket, Brothers Luke Armour, Patrick Hart, and Paul Quenon sang the plain chant hymn “Christ, Having Risen from the Dead.”

Daggy was born in Newcastle, Indiana, on July 28, 1940. His family lived in neighboring Knightstown, where they attended the nondenominational Knightstown Christian Church. After Robert completed junior high, the family moved to Newcastle so that he could attend the high school there, making him eligible for a Yale University scholarship funded by a local philanthropist. He won the scholarship and graduated from Yale with a bachelor’s degree in 1962. He then spent a year at Columbia University studying oriental cultures, followed by two years back at Yale working as an archival assistant. He pursued graduate work in history at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where he received his M.A. in 1968 and his Ph.D. in 1971.

Daggy's involvement with Merton studies began in 1974, when he was appointed consultant to the Merton Legacy Trust and associate director of the Thomas Merton Center of Bellarmine College. In 1980 he was promoted to director of the Center, a position he held until his debilitating illness forced him to resign in the spring of 1997. He edited *The Merton Seasonal* for 20 years. He also helped establish the Thomas Merton Center Foundation, an independent, not-for-profit corporation created in 1995 to assist the Center by providing it with financial and human resources.

During his 23 years at the Merton Center, Daggy attained international prominence as a Merton scholar. He lectured on Merton to audiences around the world, published numerous articles on Merton, and edited eight major works by Merton: *Day of a Stranger*, *Introductions East and West*, *The Alaskan Journal*, *Encounter*, *Honorable Reader*, *Monks Pond*, *The Road to Joy*, and volume five of Merton's private journals, *Dancing in the Water of Life*. He co-authored *Thomas Merton: A Comprehensive Bibliography* and co-edited the first five volumes of the *Merton Annual*.

Daggy was one of the 14 Merton scholars who gathered at Bellarmine College in 1986 to found the International Thomas Merton Society. He was the Society's first vice president and second president. In 1993 the ITMS presented him with a "Louie" award for distinguished service. His enduring devotion to the Society found expression in one of his last wishes, when he designated the ITMS as the recipient of donations in his memory. Memorial contributions may be sent to the International Thomas Merton Society, Bellarmine College, 2001 Newburg Road, Louisville, KY 40205.

Survivors include two sisters, Nancy Kuester and Joan Webb; five nieces and nephews; and six great nieces and nephews. A memorial service will be held at Bellarmine College on the first weekend of June to coincide with the ITMS board meeting June 5-7.

ITMS Names Scholarship After Daggy

The ITMS Board and Officers, in a decision made prior to Daggy's death, named the ITMS Youth Scholarship after Daggy in recognition of the extraordinary support he provided for new and seasoned Merton scholars. In announcing the decision, ITMS president Thomas Del Prete said, "Like the Shannon Fellowship, the Daggy Youth Scholarship will symbolize and help preserve the spirit, good will, and scholarly work of the ITMS. This is but one small way for us to recognize and in some sense continue Bob's great contribution to the Society and to Merton studies in general."

Merton Society Pays Tribute to Daggy on Web Site

The Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain and Ireland recently paid tribute to the memory of Dr. Robert E. Daggy by dedicating a page on its web site to him. The page includes a brief biography of Daggy and a listing of the Merton works he edited. Dr. Paul M. Pearson, author of the page, writes in the tribute that Daggy "became an international force in the Merton world through his own writings, the books he edited, those scholars he encouraged and guided, and the love and friendship he brought to all those interested in Thomas Merton." The site also contains the full text of Daggy's essay "Question and Revelation: Merton's Recovery of the Ground of Birth," which he presented at the Society's first general meeting in Southampton, England, in May 1996. Visitors to the site may leave a tribute of their own or an account of a memory of Daggy by writing to p.pearson@ucl.ac.uk. The web site address is <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/~ucylpmp/home.htm>.