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When I began working at New Directions Publishing in 1975, James Laughlin enlisted my help almost immediately in handling his correspondence relating to his role as a Trustee of the Merton Legacy Trust, a role he took very seriously. He had known Brother Patrick Hart from the time Brother Patrick began working closely with Merton as his secretary, but JL and Brother Pat really became close when working on *The Asian Journal* which was published in 1973. So when I came on board, I began corresponding with Brother Pat about various Merton matters relating to JL's work with the Trust, or about new Merton publications proposed by New Directions, or about current ND Merton titles. By the mid-1980s, Brother Pat and I had become firm friends by mail but had never met. Around 1986 or 1987, my late husband (Robert Sennish) and I were planning to visit relatives in Ohio and decided to make a detour to the Abbey of Gethsemani so that I could finally meet Brother Pat. He met us at the guesthouse and immediately ushered us into a delicious southern fried chicken dinner with all the trimmings. He urged us to go back for seconds (we were stuffed) but he eagerly availed himself of the opportunity, saying that the monks didn't normally eat that way, but that when they had guests they were allowed to indulge themselves and he was going to take full opportunity. My late husband, a lapsed Catholic who had been an altar boy, couldn't resist asking Brother Pat which of the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience he found most difficult to

keep. Brother Pat replied that poverty was not a problem, as he had never had much anyway; then he said that chastity wasn't a real problem either, as the urges went away over time; ah, but obedience, now that one was really hard to take. Then we toured the chapel and Brother Pat took us to Merton's hermitage where we were each allowed to sit in his rocking chair, a very special privilege for both of us. Throughout, Brother Pat made us feel that we were the guests he had been waiting for; his gift



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was his undivided attention to the moment he was in. Although we continued to correspond until Brother Pat no longer could, and though I had the great pleasure of his company on several more occasions on visits to the Abbey after I became a Trustee of the Merton Legacy Trust, I still recall that first visit and the impression that Brother Pat left with me of someone who was content and fulfilled by his life and uplifted by grace and the power of his faith.

Peggy Fox is former editor-in-chief at New Directions Publishing Co. and a member of the Thomas Merton Legacy Trust.