

## **Merton, Monasticism and Religious Pluralism CM05705 June 2007 Paul R. Dekar**

**Description:** an introduction to the writings of Thomas Merton and to the monastic life. Lectures focus Thomas Merton (1915-68); western monasticism; and issues with which Merton wrestled: feminism, race, peace, technology and Buddhism.

### **Texts**

1. Chittister, Joan, *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily. Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today* (SanFrancisco: Harper, 1991)
2. Cunningham, Lawrence S. ed., *Thomas Merton, Spiritual Master. The Essential Writings* (New York: Paulist, 1992)
3. Merton, Thomas, *The Intimate Merton. His Life from His Journals*, ed. Patrick Hart and Jonathan Montaldo (SanFrancisco: Harper, 1999)
4. **Optional:** Chittister, Joan *The Rule of Benedict. Insights for the Ages* (New York: Crossroad, 1996)

### **Assignments**

1. Participation in classes June 4-6. Students will come to class having completed a 2-page reaction to each of the three texts.
2. Participation in the 10<sup>th</sup> International Thomas Merton Society meetings June 7-10 (go to <http://www.merton.org/>; there is a link at the right for the International Thomas Merton Society which enables students to download the conference brochure and register). Students will complete a reflection paper of no more than ten pages on the conference due by the end of June.
3. A retreat to be set up at either the Abbey of Gethsemani in Trappist, Kentucky, Knob's Haven, the Sisters of Loretto Mother House in Nerinx, Kentucky; or another monastery, at the students' convenience in June. Students will undertake a reflection on their experience, in writing, or through the arts due by the end of June.

Thursday, February 22, 2007