

Pausing to Listen: A Bibliographic Review of 2022

Bernadette McNary-Zak

Merton is challenging self-identified Christians to evaluate their own understanding of their faith tradition, and consider how it does and does not inform their views and actions in the world.¹

We return to Merton – or at least I do, over and over again – because even if he doesn't solve the world's problems, he at least correctly diagnoses what's causing them. Too often, it is a lack of wisdom and humility.²

Among the things audiences of Thomas Merton continue to appreciate is that he paused to listen – to himself, to his brothers in the monastery, to those in the world around him, to creation, to God. The selection of books and articles reviewed here celebrate the gift of listening in all its multiplicity. We see that listening is not a passive exercise – rather, it is fraught with space for consideration and discernment.

The bibliographic review essay typically begins with publications of primary source material by Merton, and then turns to a selection of secondary works that engage new topics or renewed themes in Merton studies. With this framework in mind, we begin with works that demonstrate Merton listening, and then turn to selected works in which others listen to, with and alongside Merton. For some, Merton serves as a companion, for others a guide, for others a fellow interlocutor. In total, the works surveyed here highlight consistent engagement with Merton's life and teachings in a wide range of contexts.

Merton Listens

Merton studies benefit greatly from the ongoing publication of primary source material housed in the archives of the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University. Showcased here are two items published in 2022; both feature Merton exercising his capacity for close listening. In the

1. Daniel P. Horan, OFM, "What Thomas Merton Tells Us about the Gospel's Logic vs. Our Society's," *National Catholic Reporter* (10 August 2022); available at: <https://www.nronline.org/news/opinion/what-thomas-merton-tells-us-about-gospels-logic-vs-our-societys>.

2. Matt Labash, "Truth Bombs from a Trappist Monk: How Thomas Merton Brings Sanity to Our Insane Times," *The Boston Globe* (14 April 2022) K1; available at: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/04/14/opinion/truth-bombs-trappist-monk>.

first item, award-winning sound artist Brian Harnetty invites audiences into the natural and constructed worlds of Merton's hermitage in *Words and Silences: From the Hermitage Tapes of Thomas Merton*.³ Tracks foreground tape recordings made by Merton on the hermitage grounds; Merton's observations and reflections, his musings and considerations, are enhanced with instrumentation. In her review of this work, Julianne E. Wallace observes that this "'sonic portrait' of Merton . . . consists of a delightful conversation between Merton and the music, where both work together to help bring the listener into a deeper reflection of God in the world" (43).⁴ Indeed, Harnetty's work offers an auditory gift to contemporary listeners.

We see Merton listening in a different way in the third and final volume of the groundbreaking series *Novitiate Conferences on Scripture and Liturgy*, introduced and edited by Patrick F. O'Connell.⁵ Like the earlier volumes in this series, *Liturgical Feasts and Seasons* marks a substantive and foundational contribution to Merton studies as readers gain access to a discrete time in Merton's life, in monastic formation at the abbey and in contemporary ecclesiology.⁶ For the novices who received Merton's instruction – and for contemporary readers who seek to learn from him today – Merton enlivens the liturgical calendar at the heart of the Christian and the monastic life. Brother Paul Quenon, OSCO provides a foreword in which he contends that, unlike Merton's other writings, these novitiate conferences supply "an extended demonstration of the hermeneutical approach [Merton] took in commenting on Scripture" which included the habit of reading "the liturgy's scriptural passages" (x). O'Connell's thorough introduction situates the conferences as we see Merton at work and in correspondence with Sister Thérèse Lentfoehr who provided him

3. Brian Harnetty, *Words and Silences: From the Hermitage Tapes of Thomas Merton* (Columbus, OH: Winesap Records, 2022).

4. See the review by Julianne E. Wallace, "A Harmonious Collaboration," *The Merton Seasonal* 47.4 (Winter 2022) 43-45.

5. Earlier volumes in the series include Thomas Merton, *A Monastic Introduction to Sacred Scripture: Novitiate Conferences on Scripture and Liturgy* 1, edited with an introduction by Patrick F. O'Connell, Foreword by Bonnie Bowman Thurston (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2020) and Thomas Merton, *Notes on Genesis and Exodus: Novitiate Conferences on Scripture and Liturgy* 2, edited with an introduction by Patrick F. O'Connell, Foreword by Pauline A. Viviano (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2021).

6. Thomas Merton, *Liturgical Feasts and Seasons: Novitiate Conferences on Scripture and Liturgy* 3, edited with an introduction by Patrick F. O'Connell, Foreword by Brother Paul Quenon, OSCO (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2022). See the review of Volume 2 by Jim Robinson in *The Merton Annual* 35 (2022) 231-36; Volume 1 was reviewed by Peter Vale in *The Merton Annual* 34 (2021) 232-35.

with secretarial assistance. Covering the period from Advent (1955) to Epiphany (1958) these conferences were delivered on the occasion of liturgical feast days and celebrations; by carefully, meticulously, attending to details in the five versions of the text, O'Connell makes it possible for readers to consider the development of the text and to Merton's close listening to biblical, patristic, liturgical and theological sources – ancient and contemporary – that inform Merton's instruction as he guides the novices to listen anew. For further discussion, see Archbishop Rowan Williams' review in this volume of *The Merton Annual*.

Listening with Merton

A number of books in 2022 feature Merton as a prominent conversation partner. These works give close attention to the reception of Merton and his works in particular contexts. Jung Eun Sophia Park engages Merton as a substantial interlocutor for a lifelong journey of self-reflection in *An Asian Woman's Religious Journey with Thomas Merton: A Journey to the East / A Journey to the West*.⁷ As Park grapples with Merton and his works from her particular social location, she effectively employs an approach raising questions not only about her own religious identity but about the extent to which Merton can serve as a conversation partner for her. Emphasizing the significance of telling one's story, she encourages readers "to engage in their own journeys of self-reflection and pursuits of contemplation" (8). Individual chapters chronicle Park's story in dialogue with facets of Merton's life and thought. Park's efforts bear insightful truth when she comes to realize that "the more I read and examine Merton's life with caution, the more I felt myself standing in front of a mirror of a vulnerable yet courageous seeker. Merton's writing extended my horizon of otherness from ethnicity, race, and gender into the existential level of otherness" (139).

Merton is a different sort of companion for Gerard (Gerry) Straub in *Reading Thomas Merton and Longing for God in Haiti: Learning Wisdom in the School of My Life*.⁸ Straub engages with Merton and with Jonathan Montaldo, former director of the Merton Center and co-general editor of the Fons Vitae Merton series. Straub pays close attention to social location and, in particular, to geographical location and consistent relocation as he moves between the United States and the orphanage he founded

7. Jung Eun Sophia Park, *An Asian Woman's Religious Journey with Thomas Merton: A Journey to the East / A Journey to the West* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022).

8. Gerard Thomas Straub, *Reading Thomas Merton and Longing for God in Haiti: Learning Wisdom in the School of My Life* (Ft. Pierce, FL: Pax et Bonum Communications, 2022).

in Haiti. Such (dis)placement supplies a distinct lens as Straub contends that “Reading Merton in Haiti was very different than reading the monk in the peaceful tranquility of my home in America” (14). The location of Haiti opens a new perspective on Merton – in some ways familiar and in others unfamiliar – to Straub. Here, too, Merton is a companion in a search for self-knowledge and self-understanding. Straub’s book receives additional consideration in Paul Dekar’s review in this volume of *The Merton Annual*.

David E. Orberon weighs Merton’s observations and teachings directly in *Thomas Merton and the Individual Witness: Kingdom Making in a Post-Christian, Post-Truth World*.⁹ Specifically, Orberon aims to “explore how Thomas Merton can provide a message of hope and a step toward unity in these chaotic times” by considering “[his] writings and how he lived to provide a path for Christians working to build God’s kingdom in the world today” (3-4). Opening chapters frame and establish contexts into which Merton’s life and work can assist readers seeking to locate their own gospel witness. David Goleboski gives further commentary on this book in this volume of *The Merton Annual*.

Using the tree of life as a foundational metaphor, Donald St. John brings his expertise as a scholar of religion to explore the contours of Merton’s radical ecology in *Thomas Merton’s Tree of Life: The Growth of a Radical Ecologist*.¹⁰ St. John explores evidence from Merton’s life and works in context, including an examination of Merton’s letter to Rachel Carson following his reading of *Silent Spring*.

Acts of listening from inside the monastery occupy *Awake and Alive: Thomas Merton According to His Novices*, edited by Jon Sweeney. This book complements ongoing study of Merton as pedagogue (and more specifically, as Novice Master, 1955-1965).¹¹ The book supplies reflections from select former students; their observations address the mundane to the sublime and cover a range of perspectives and insights not only on Merton but on the monastic life in this period of Gethsemani’s history and pre-Vatican Council II context. More information about this book can be found in my review below.

Turning to the world outside the monastery, *Thomas Merton, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and the Protection of All Beings: The Correspondence*,

9. David E. Orberon, *Thomas Merton and the Individual Witness: Kingdom Making in a Post-Christian, Post-Truth World* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2022).

10. Donald P. St. John, *Thomas Merton’s Tree of Life: The Growth of a Radical Ecologist* (2022); available at: <https://www.donaldstjohn.com>.

11. Jon M. Sweeney, editor, *Awake and Alive: Thomas Merton According to His Novices* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2022).

by Bill Morgan, tells a story of the interactions between Ferlinghetti and Merton (from 1961 onward).¹² Their correspondence centered initially on the proposed publication of Merton's poem *Original Child Bomb* and subsequently on the actual appearance of "A Chant to Be Used in Processions around a Site with Furnaces." Morgan reveals the story of the latter poem's publication as it records the pair's mutual engagement with peace issues at the time. Jim Robinson provides a solid review of this book in this volume of *The Merton Annual*.

Dominiek Lootens considers Merton's role as a pastoral minister and his capacity to serve as a conversation partner for those currently engaged in pastoral theology in *Open to the Full Dimension: Thomas Merton, Practical Theology and Pastoral Practice*.¹³ Chapters are scaffolded to showcase interconnections and to make space for broad application. For example, in chapter five, Lootens centers on the topic of civil rights and demonstrates "how the Black feminist approach of Septima Clark and the contemplative perspective of Thomas Merton dovetail strongly with each other" (86). Alan Kolp provides readers with more information about this book in his review for *The Merton Annual*.

William D. Glenn hearkens to Merton's early novel *My Argument with the Gestapo*¹⁴ in his book *I Came Here Seeking a Person: A Vital Story of Grace*.¹⁵ Glenn opens this "memory book" (xv) by reflecting on a series of early childhood events that frame a context of dislocation and relocation. These features of Glenn's journey and self-reflection are explored over the course of the book. For more about this book, see Gray Matthews' thoughtful review in the present volume of the *The Merton Annual*.

This section of the bibliographic review closes with a book that invites readers to listen again to a significant event in Merton's life. John Smelcer revisits the events of December 10, 1968 in *Enacting Love: How Thomas Merton Died for Peace*.¹⁶ Smelcer investigates old and new evidence for Merton's death as an assassination.

12. Bill Morgan, *Thomas Merton, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and the Protection of All Beings: The Correspondence* (Temple, PA: Beatdom Books, 2022).

13. Dominiek Lootens, *Open to the Full Dimension: Thomas Merton, Practical Theology and Pastoral Practice* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2022).

14. Thomas Merton, *My Argument with the Gestapo: A Macaronic Journal* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969).

15. William D. Glenn, *I Came Here Seeking a Person: A Vital Story of Grace* (New York: Paulist Press, 2022).

16. John Smelcer, *Enacting Love: How Thomas Merton Died for Peace* (Kirksville, MO: Naciketas Press, 2022). For a recent, thorough review, see Christine M. Bochen, "New Discovery, Newer Speculation," *The Merton Seasonal* 48.2 (Summer 2023) 34-43.

Listening to Merton

Several books published in 2022 devote a portion of their focus to Merton and his works. A number of these books center on Merton's capacity to assist authors and readers seeking to listen with an ear toward social justice. Daniel Cosacchi's recent book, *Great American Prophets: Pope Francis's Models of Christian Life*, underscores various forms and dimensions of prophecy.¹⁷ Cosacchi gives close attention to the four individuals – Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton – identified by the pope in 2015 for their prophetic witness. Specifically, Cosacchi draws on Merton's capacity for conversion over the course of his entire life.¹⁸

Merton and his teachings are threaded throughout *A Field Guide to Christian Nonviolence: Key Thinkers, Activists, and Movements for the Gospel of Peace* by David C. Cramer and Myles Werntz.¹⁹ Written for a broad audience, the authors examine nonviolence from the work of select contemporary perspectives as it relates to discipleship, virtue, mysticism and violence, among other topics.

In a similar way, Merton is included in *Unlearning White Supremacy: A Spirituality for Racial Liberation*.²⁰ The book cover, depicting two hands of different skin tones clasped, is appropriately chosen. Author Alex Mikulich contends that “For people who believe they are white to begin to love Black people and Blackness involves two interdependent, interconnected conditions: unlearning how we have internalized anti-black white supremacy and learning how to dwell with and for Black people” (4). This book falls into two parts: the first part is titled, “The Colonial Context of Anti-Black White Supremacy,” which includes a section devoted to Roman Catholic colonialism; and the second part, titled “Living Decolonially,” which includes a section headed “A Franciscan Vision of Ecological Intimacy.” Further discussion about this book can be found in Cassidy Hall's close review in this volume of *The Merton Annual*.

In his essay “Camus and the Church,” Merton asserts that “By reason of his personal integrity, his genius, his eloquence, and his own record in

17. Daniel Cosacchi, *Great American Prophets: Pope Francis's Models of Christian Life* (New York: Paulist, 2022).

18. See the review by Kathleen Deignan, “Survival of Prophecy,” *The Merton Seasonal* 48.1 (Spring 2023) 29-35.

19. David C. Cramer and Myles Werntz, *A Field Guide to Christian Nonviolence: Key Thinkers, Activists, and Movements for the Gospel of Peace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2022).

20. Alex Mikulich, *Unlearning White Supremacy: A Spirituality for Racial Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2022).

protest and resistance, Camus still speaks to our world with resounding authority.”²¹ Gene Fendt examines *The Plague* as “the myth of our time” (31) – citing Merton and his ideas about the book, as well as the multi-dimensionality of “plague” – in *Camus’ Plague: Myth for Our World*.²²

Correspondence initiates and fuels the friendship between Sr. Wendy Beckett and Robert Ellsberg as recounted in *Dearest Sister Wendy: A Surprising Story of Faith and Friendship*.²³ Originating in a long-running email exchange, the two communicated about a range of topics and figures, including Thomas Merton, over the course of several years. Judith Valente covers this book extensively in her review for *The Merton Annual*.

Several books published in 2022 devote chapters or sections of chapters to listening in the context of contemplation and prayer. *An Invincible Summer Within: Contemplative Practice* is a book of guided meditations that draws on Merton’s teachings about contemplation.²⁴ Author Padraic O’Hare draws deeply from experience and employs a wide range of sources of wisdom.

Paul R. Dekar employs a similar structure and approach in *Journeying with Hope into a New Year: Reflections for Advent and Christmas*.²⁵ This book offers daily meditations for the season of Advent (drawing on biblical text, short meditation and prayer); it consists of 31 chapters and a list of further reading as well as several photographs. Dekar concludes his introduction to *Journeying with Hope into a New Year* with the “Merton Prayer,” located in Merton’s book *Thoughts in Solitude*.²⁶

This same prayer is the focus of Steven A. Denny’s book, *The Merton Prayer: An Exercise in Authenticity*.²⁷ Denny acknowledges the foundational and formative role of the “Merton Prayer” in his own life and then evaluates it with thoughtful care, providing space for readers to encounter and explore the dimensions of this prayer in their own lives. See a more

21. Thomas Merton, *The Literary Essays of Thomas Merton*, ed. Patrick Hart, OCSO (New York: New Directions, 1981) 263.

22. Gene Fendt, *Camus’ Plague: Myth for Our World* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2022).

23. Sr. Wendy Beckett and Robert Ellsberg, *Dearest Sister Wendy: A Surprising Story of Faith and Friendship* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2022).

24. Padraic O’Hare, *An Invincible Summer Within: Contemplative Practice* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2022).

25. Paul R. Dekar, *Journeying with Hope into a New Year: Reflections for Advent and Christmas* (Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2022).

26. Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1958) 83.

27. Steven A. Denny. *The Merton Prayer: An Exercise in Authenticity* (Chicago: ACTA, 2022).

extensive discussion of this book by Patrick F. O’Connell in this volume of *The Merton Annual*.

Robert Inchausti invites readers to consider the distinction between “the false self” and “the true self” in their own lives in *The Way of Thomas Merton: A Prayer Journey through Lent*.²⁸ Each chapter concludes with questions for reflection and discussion to facilitate individual and small-group reading. The scope of this beautiful book bears relevance not only in but beyond the Lenten season.

Like the other books in this section of the bibliographic review, *The Way of Love: Readings for a Meaningful Life*, edited by Michael Leach, Doris Goodnough and Maria Angelini can inform opportunities for reflection. *The Way of Love* includes Merton’s reflection “Love Sails Me around the House” (chapter seventeen) from *The Sign of Jonas*²⁹ alongside other works on this topic.³⁰

To close this section of the bibliographic review, Cynthia Bourgeault contributes *The Corner of Fourth and Nondual* to the My Theology series.³¹ Bourgeault recounts features of her spiritual journey including the influence of Benedictine monasticism and Centering Prayer.

Listening Alongside Merton: Articles and Lyrics

Several articles published in 2022 make historical contributions to Merton studies. While working on his book about John Paul Merton, Thomas Merton’s younger brother, William Meegan took the time to reconstruct the life of Ruth Calvert Jenkins (1887-1931). In “A Precis of the Life of Ruth Calvert Jenkins,” Meegan offers a brief biographical snapshot highlighting Jenkins’ early life in Harlem, her academic pursuits at Bradford Academy and her early interest and skills as a writer.³² Following a family vacation in France, Ruth lived in Paris where she studied skills needed for interior design. There she met Owen Merton; the pair married in 1914 and relocated to New York City shortly after the start of World War I.

Patrick F. O’Connell expands this area of Merton studies with three distinct articles presented here in order of publication. “Lortz v. Eras-

28. Robert Inchausti, *The Way of Thomas Merton: A Prayer Journey through Lent* (London: SPCK, 2022); see the review by Chris McDonnell, “Merton as Guide for the Lenten Journey,” in *The Merton Seasonal* 48.4 (Winter 2023) 35-37.

29. Thomas Merton, *The Sign of Jonas* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1953) 120-21.

30. *The Way of Love: Readings for a Meaningful Life* edited by Michael Leach, Doris Goodnough and Maria Angelini (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2022).

31. Cynthia Bourgeault, *The Corner of Fourth and Nondual* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2022).

32. William J. Meegan, “A Precis of the Life of Ruth Calvert Jenkins,” *Bradford Alumni Times* 40 (Fall 2022) 1-4.

mus: One Juror’s Verdict” offers a close examination of the content and consequences of Merton’s February 22, 1964 journal entry in which he reconsiders the Dutch humanist Erasmus after reading the critique of the ecclesiastical historian Joseph Lortz (d. 1975).³³ O’Connell demonstrates convincingly how Merton maintains a viable space for Erasmus and his thought in response to Lortz and other contemporary detractors. “Across the Invisible Frontier: Thomas Merton’s ‘Two Desert Fathers’” focuses on this 1946 poem about St. Jerome and St. Paul the Hermit. O’Connell argues that Merton’s examination of these early monastic fathers in this early stage in Merton’s own monastic formation proves foundational for his evolving views.³⁴ O’Connell signals areas for future study when he writes that Merton’s “respect and admiration for the early fathers of the desert was remarkably resilient, continuing to develop through his reading, study, translations, teaching and writing throughout his life” (225). In “Thomas Merton’s Two Cities: The Augustinian Framework of *The Tower of Babel*,”³⁵ O’Connell considers Merton’s 1955 work, eventually titled *The Tower of Babel: A Morality*, as an extended reflection on themes he addressed previously in his introduction to Augustine’s *City of God*.³⁶ Geared toward application in the present, Merton’s juxtaposition between the heavenly city and the earthly city bears resonance in the present. O’Connell shows that, for Merton, “the final opposition between the two cities is not between time and eternity but between pride and love, illusion and reality, a reality that is always present, if not always clearly perceived, within history, even as its source and its destiny transcends history” (65-66).

Social justice is a central theme in a number of other articles and media focusing on Merton in 2022. Singer-songwriter Judy Collins crafts lyrics that situate Merton as a peacemaker in a broad, interreligious context and alongside a number of other peacemakers in *Spellbound*.³⁷ In the seventh track, “Thomas Merton,” Collins acknowledges Merton’s prayer and activism. The song considers the story of Merton’s death – and its afterlife – in this context. Leslye Colvin explores resonance with Merton

33. Patrick F. O’Connell, “Lortz v. Erasmus: One Juror’s Verdict,” *Cithara* 61.2 (May 2022) 37-47.

34. Patrick F. O’Connell, “Across the Invisible Frontier: Thomas Merton’s ‘Two Desert Fathers,’” *American Benedictine Review* 73.2 (June 2022) 204-26.

35. Patrick F. O’Connell, “Thomas Merton’s Two Cities: The Augustinian Framework of *The Tower of Babel*,” *Cithara* 62.1 (November 2022) 60-69.

36. Thomas Merton, “Introduction” in St. Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods (New York: Modern Library, 1950) ix-xv.

37. Judy Collins, “Thomas Merton,” *Spellbound* [CD] (Los Angeles: Cleopatra Records, 2022).

as a man of prayer, and an anti-racist in “Seeking Thomas Merton: In the Wake of Tragic Loss, a Holy Presence Emerges.”³⁸ Colvin writes of Merton: “My brothers and sisters in white bodies can use him as a model in moving beyond fear and privilege into humility and courage. We are blessed to witness how one man questioned the certitudes of his time” (16). Marshall Soules considers Merton’s works from the 1960s through the lens of improvisation and the category of the trickster in “Thomas Merton’s Blues.”³⁹ Soules contends that “Merton, the trickster, reminds us with his adventures that without positive change and proper attention, cultures atrophy and decline” (182).

Contemplation and action is a central focus in two additional articles. In her article “(Re-)Learning How to See,”⁴⁰ Susanne Jennings writes about how Merton’s camera served “as a contemplative ‘tool’ by which the Word might be seen in created things” (43). Jennings also includes a number of photographs by Merton in this work. In “Reflections on *He Is Risen*” Anthony Purvis gives close examination to one of Merton’s homilies.⁴¹ *He Is Risen*, based on Mark 16:6-7, was recorded in 1967. Purvis attends to the position of the women and Merton’s consideration of their discernment: “Both suffering and redemption are produced in the same *kairos*, which is at once the occasion for the act of faith” (32).

We see Merton in dialogue in a number of other articles published in 2022. Fiona Gardner connects readers to the events of a single day in Merton’s life in “Lessons from Hawk’s Diner.”⁴² On April 4, 1968, the day that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, Merton was with Donald Allchin visiting a Shaker village. Gardner considers how the pair’s “visit to Hawk’s Diner that took place after the two had heard the news of the murder acted as a way of containing these two opposite and immediate experiences of good and evil” (3). Gardner argues convincingly that Hawk’s Diner and its inhabitants, including Colonel Hawk, served as a powerful site for reflection in dialogue with others. For me, this article gave new meaning to Dr. King’s statement that “We must use time

38. Leslye Colvin, “Seeking Thomas Merton: In the Wake of Tragic Loss, a Holy Presence Emerges,” *U.S. Catholic* 87.10 (Oct. 2022) 15-16.

39. Marshall Soules, “Thomas Merton’s Blues,” *New Explorations: Studies in Culture & Communication* 2.2 (Spring 2022) 182-222.

40. Susanne Jennings, “(Re-)Learning How to See,” *The Merton Journal* 29.2 (Advent 2022) 40-46.

41. Anthony Purvis, “Reflections on *He Is Risen*,” *The Merton Journal* 29.1 (Eastertide 2022) 26-39.

42. Fiona Gardner, “Lessons from Hawk’s Diner,” *The Merton Journal* 29.2 (Advent 2022) 3-13.

creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.”⁴³

The article “Ripples in Spiritual Space: Hopkins and Merton” by Jill Robson considers this pair from a number of angles.⁴⁴ Robson traces Merton’s introduction to Gerard Manley Hopkins and interest in the poet over the course of his life, highlighting evidence from several sources, including Merton’s journals. Robson makes “clear there was not just a coincidence of conversions between the two writers, there was a meeting of hearts too” (14).

In “Redeeming Holy Leisure: Leclercq, Merton and *Otia Monastica*,”⁴⁵ Dermot Tredget demonstrates how the concept of *otia monastica* (monastic leisure) presents in the lives of both monks and highlights a core distinction that “Merton wanted to deepen his experience of sacred leisure whereas Leclercq wanted to write about it” (64).

Xiaoyan Xu returns to the relationship between Merton and D. T. Suzuki in “From Sacramental Ontology to Metaphysical Intuition: Inter-religious Dialogue between Thomas Merton and D. T. Suzuki Revisited.”⁴⁶ Xu proposes an approach that examines Merton’s inter-religious dialogue with Suzuki in the context of a changing American Catholic landscape yielding new insights.

Finally, Gordon Oyer observes a connection between Merton’s social and economic commentary in “Finding Hope in the ‘Sacramental’ Economics of Thomas Merton & Walter Weisskopf.”⁴⁷ Oyer offers an initial examination of the topic that draws on a wide range of sources, including correspondence between the two men and reference to Merton in the work of Eugene McCarragher and opens areas for further investigation.

To conclude this bibliographic review, the works surveyed here as well as the many others not included remind us of the potential to be, in the words of Jim Forest, “seriously blessed” with the gift of Merton’s listening and with the ongoing capacity for our own.⁴⁸ In a 2007 interview for this

43. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in his “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”; available at: <https://www.nlnrac.org>.

44. Jill Robson, “Ripples in Spiritual Space: Hopkins and Merton,” *The Merton Journal* 29.1 (Eastertide 2022) 3-16.

45. Dermot Tredget, “Redeeming Holy Leisure: Leclercq, Merton and *Otia Monastica*,” *The Merton Journal* 29.1 (Eastertide 2022) 56-68.

46. Xiaoyan Xu, “From Sacramental Ontology to Metaphysical Intuition: Inter-religious Dialogue between Thomas Merton and D. T. Suzuki Revisited,” *Sino-Christian Studies: An International Journal of Bible, Theology & Philosophy* 33 (June 2022) 163-91.

47. Gordon Oyer, “Finding Hope in the ‘Sacramental’ Economics of Thomas Merton & Walter Weisskopf,” *The Merton Journal* 29.2 (Advent 2022) 20-28.

48. See Paul M. Pearson, “Meeting Forest – Meeting Merton,” *The Merton Journal* 29.1 (Eastertide 2022) 43.

journal,⁴⁹ Victor A. Kramer – a founding editor of *The Merton Annual* to whom the present volume is dedicated – was asked what keeps people from living an authentic life. He responded with the following statement:

At the base is our Western sense of individualism. Deeply seated is our culture's ill-founded rationalization that we should, or worse can, control our lives. Merton learned to celebrate the mystery of living in community, and as the sense of mystery deepened, his understanding of Church and community opened up. His life endorsed the wonder of an ever-changing world to be celebrated. For many today, who seem to be driven by their own narrow desires, or who apparently are afraid to admit to much mystery, life remains a narrow matter of limited and fixed choices which seem to allow such persons to build a private portfolio without regard to others. In so much of what Merton observed and celebrated it becomes most fundamentally a matter of sharing in the goodness of creation and praising God's gifts. (298)

49. "Living and Learning with Merton for Decades: An Interview with Victor A. Kramer, Editor," conducted and edited by Glenn Crider, *The Merton Annual* 20 (2007) 292-98.