



## ~ SPIRIT ~

*Monthly notes and inspiration from Louisiana Spiritual Directors, Inc.*  
**February 2015**



### **“Awakening to Wisdom: Thomas Merton And The Long Art of Contemplation” Facilitated by Dr. Gray Matthews**

**Louisiana Spiritual Directors Annual  
Conference  
May 22-23-24, 2015  
The Wesley Center  
Woodworth, Louisiana**



*The life and writings of Thomas Merton [1915-1968] revolve around the recovery of the long art of contemplation in a modern era in which we hasten to manage and control our lives for*

*ourselves, short-circuiting our inner capacity to listen deeply to Sophia, Holy Wisdom, the Sacred Word—Life speaking to life. Merton serves as a contemplative guide who awakens our spiritual senses and soul's deep yearning to live in wisdom rather than in commotion.*

*Merton teaches us how to resume an open, living life, and thereby how to avoid the deadening ends of a restless life. During the conference, we will use Merton's poem, "Hagia Sophia" (Greek for "holy wisdom") as an orientation point from which to cultivate reflection and dialogue as we pursue what it means to truly "recognize" Hagia Sophia in our lives today.*

Gray Matthews, Ph.D. is an Asst. Professor of Communication at the University of Memphis where he teaches courses in Listening, Dialogue, Communication Ethics, Communication & Conflict, Place & Community. Gray has taught for the U of M since 1990; he has also taught as an adjunct for the Memphis Theological Seminary, and regularly offers courses on the Christian mystical tradition for the West Tennessee Catholic diocesan Institute for Liturgy and Spirituality. Gray is an active member of the International Thomas Merton Society, for whom he has served as board member, editor and conference coordinator, and has served as the local coordinator of the Memphis Chapter of the ITMS since 2001. His most recent publication regarding Merton is an essay, "Reverdurance in the Wind," in *We Are Not Alone* (Fons Vitae, 2015), a collection of reflective essays from Merton scholars celebrating the 100th anniversary of Merton's birth. Gray was the keynote speaker at the 2015 Central Florida Contemplative Outreach Conference in February. His wife, Lynne, and their two daughters, Carol and Ellen, live in Memphis.



**READER'S CORNER**  
*How Do You Pray?*  
**Inspiring Responses from Religious Leaders, Spiritual Guides, Healers, Activists & Other Lovers of Humanity**

The vision and central question in *How Do you Pray?* came as a moment of grace to minister, spiritual coach, and healer Celeste Jacoboni, just as the sun came up one morning in 2008. Her simple question yielded an extraordinary collection from 129 spiritual teachers, guides, healers, and leaders from a multitude of spiritual voices, perspectives, and practices.



**SOMETHING TO PONDER . . .**

*May we live the Mystery, and love the Mystery, and be caught up and held secure in the Mystery, whose wisdom exceeds all human knowledge, whose ways surpass all understanding, whose blessing fulfills every hope, now and forever. Amen.*

- from *Woman Prayer, Woman Song* by Miriam Thoraco Wintor



**TAKE NOTE**

**SDI Webinar: Making Connections: Outreach Strategies for Spiritual Directors**

As a spiritual director, do you find it challenging to describe your ministry and service with potential spiritual seekers? Are you looking for a way to express your unique voice in the ever changing landscaping of spiritual companionship? What marketing



outreach efforts? Explore these questions and more in the SDI Webinar, *Making Connections: Outreach Strategies for Spiritual Directors* led by Rita Perea, MA, EdS, from Iowa, USA. Join spiritual directors around the world and across traditions as together we learn how to raise awareness of the value of spiritual direction for today. Register now!

*Making Connections: Outreach Strategies for Spiritual Directors*  
24 March, 1:00 p.m. EDT; 5:00 p.m. GMT/UTC  
24 March, 8:00 p.m. EDT; 12:00 a.m. GMT/UTC  
(following morning, 25 March)



Comments? Questions? Suggestions for future articles?  
Want information on membership?



**Louisiana Spiritual Directors, Inc. (LASD)** is an association of trained Spiritual Directors formed to promote continuing education, fellowship and information for Spiritual Directors within Louisiana.



<http://www.louisianaspiritualdirectors.org/>

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