

PAUL M. PEARSON

Greetings from Kentucky

As Resident Secretary of the International Thomas Merton Society I send you greetings from the Directors, the Board, and the members of the International Thomas Merton Society; from the Faculty, Staff and Students at Bellarmine University, the home of the Thomas Merton Center, the official repository of Merton's literary estate; and from the Trustees of the Merton Legacy Trust.

As you gather this weekend at the Benedictine Abbey of Münsterschwarzach recalling Merton's words from *Raids on the Unspeakable* – “To be human in this most inhuman of ages” – I’m reminded both of the challenge Merton presents to us and the message of hope he gives us, reminding us that, “Christian hope begins where every other hope stands frozen stiff before the face of the Unspeakable [...] The goodness of the world, stricken or not, is incontestable and definitive. If it is stricken, it is also healed in Christ.” It is our responsibility to “guard the human image for it is the image of God”, to keep our focus on that spark of God in creation, and to never lose sight of that “cosmic dance which [...] beats in our very blood”, of the hidden ground of love within every one of us.

May Thomas Merton’s message of hope be enkindled in the hearts and minds of each of you this weekend.

*Paul M. Pearson
January 2019*