



# RELIGIOUS STUDIES INSIDERS

Fall 2019



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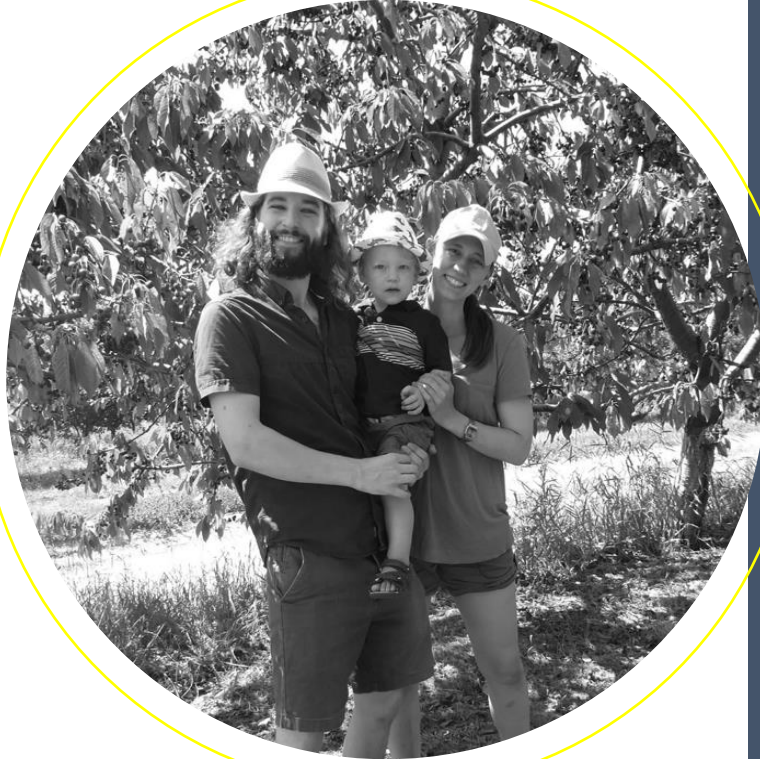
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## PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S CORNER

It's advising season!

I hope the first weeks of the semester have allowed you to reunite with old friends, make some new ones, and come to know yourself in new ways too. I hope some of your classes are hard – not so much in the way they are graded, but in the ways they are making you think.

While we are perhaps still finding our footing in our current classes, it is already time to start looking ahead. Which Winter 2020 courses will become a small piece (or maybe a big piece) in shaping who you are becoming?

I hope this newsletter can become a part of that process also. In each issue (one per semester) I'll be giving you the inside scoop on what's happening in the religious studies department including upcoming course offerings, events, and short articles. Be sure to let me know what you'd like to see!

-Dr. Crosby

## WHAT'S A RELIGIOUS STUDIES INSIDER?

Religious Studies Insiders get the inside scoop on everything coming up in the Religious Studies department. You're an insider if you are:

- A Religious Studies Major
- A Religious Studies Minor
- A Theology Minor
- A Catholic Studies Minor
- An Education Major with a Religious Studies Concentration
- A Member of Theta Alpha Kappa





## WINTER 2020 COURSES

Our courses for Winter 2020 are published and ready to go. Please remember to talk to your advisor about your degree plan.

RST 102: Introduction to Christian Theology – Crosby

– **Online for the first time!**

RST 103: Catholicism Today – Raab

RST 104: Introduction to the Bible – Bell

– **Brand new course!**

RST 314: World Religions – Raab

RST 321: Women and Religion – Crosby

– **Use toward Gender/Ethnic Studies Minor**

RST 326: Christian Spirituality – Raab

– **Focused on Thomas Merton, Dr. Raab's specialty (in other words: you DON'T want to miss this course!)**

## Also needed for Winter 2020:

- Wool socks
- Really warm winter coat
- Boots, Mittens, and Hat
- Enough snacks in your room to survive a polar vortex with wind chills of -40 ☹️





## WHERE'S DR. RAAB?

Well, he's actually still in his office most of the time – but he's not teaching this semester at all! Dr. Raab is taking a *sabbatical*. A sabbatical is a paid semester off from both teaching and administrative duties (like meetings). During the sabbatical semester, professors are usually working on researching and writing a book.

That's what Dr. Raab is doing. Dr. Raab has been researching and writing a book on Thomas Merton, a 20<sup>th</sup> century American Catholic Trappist monk, tentatively called *Searching a New Horizon: Seeds for a Contemplative Theology of Religious Pluralism in Thomas Merton's Dialogue with D. T. Suzuki*. Back in graduate school Dr. Raab wrote his dissertation on Merton and his interest in him persists. Merton was a leader in interreligious dialogue, especially between Catholics and Zen Buddhists. He also wrote about spirituality, how contemplation and action are related, and the negative effects that racism, propaganda, and sometimes technology can have on our society. If that weren't enough, his (accidental??) death has been the source of numerous conspiracy theories.

If you want to hear more about Merton, you could wait for the book to be published, or you can register for Dr. Raab's course on Merton in the Winter semester. **RST 326: Christian Spirituality** will focus on the life, writings, and spirituality of Thomas Merton – as well as the lessons he holds for us today. This course isn't regularly offered, and when it is, it's not always about Merton. So, this is your chance to take a really great course from an expert. While the topic may seem narrow, the influence of Merton on Catholic thinking is broad. In 2015 when Pope Francis visited the United States, Thomas Merton was one of four Americans (alongside Dorothy Day, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King, Jr.) that he called a source of wisdom for us today. Don't miss out on this course!

## Upcoming Events

**Dec ?:** Holiday Party with Philosophy

(Exact date/time TBA)

**March 12:** Annual Ethics Dinner and Lecture

**April 15:** Scholarship Symposium

(Watch for presentations from our graduating seniors)

**April 24:** Department Awards and TAK  
Induction