

YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL News Release

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University of Chicago theologian to deliver Bainton Lecture

New Haven, CT—Bernard McGinn, the Naomi Shenstone Donnelley Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology and of the History of Christianity at the University of Chicago Divinity School, will deliver the 2007 Bainton Lecture at Yale Divinity School on Oct. 16. His topic will be *The Dynamic Structure of Mystical Consciousness*.

McGinn is currently president of the Medieval Academy of America and editor-in-chief of the 115-volume Paulist Press series *Classics of Western Spirituality*. He is past president of both the American Catholic Historical Association and the American Society of Church History.

He is the author of numerous books including, most recently: *The Doctors of the Church: Thirty-Three Men and Women Who Shaped Christianity*, New York: Crossroad; *Meister Eckhart's Mystical Thought. The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing*, New York: Crossroad; *Early Christian Mystics. The Divine Vision of the Spiritual Masters*, with Patricia Ferris McGinn, New York: Crossroad; *The Harvest of Mysticism in Medieval Germany (1300-1500)*. Vol. 4 of *The Presence of God*, New York: Crossroad.

McGinn began his teaching career as a lecturer at the Catholic University of America in 1968-69, then moved to the University of Chicago Divinity School the following year. He became professor of historical theology and history of Christianity in 1978 and was named the Naomi Shenstone Donnelley Professor in 1992. He earned his B.A. at St. Joseph's Seminary and College, the S.T.L. from the Pontifical Gregorian University, and his Ph.D., in 1970, from Brandeis University.

Among his specialized areas of interest are the history of Christian thought, Western religious traditions, late Medieval and early modern mysticism, monasticism, the apocalyptic tradition, Christian art, the medieval papacy, and heresy and dissent in Medieval culture.

“Modern writing on mysticism has often taken mystical experience as its basic object of study, seeking to determine its nature and cross-cultural applicability,” McGinn said. “This paper will argue for using the term “mystical consciousness” as a more adequate way to describe the full range of the transformation of knowing and loving that takes place through direct and hidden (mystical) encounter with God. Developing aspects of the cognitional theory of Bernard Lonergan, the model of mystical consciousness will be illustrated by a brief examination of the mysticism of Meister Eckhart, Nicholas of Cusa, and John of the Cross.”

The lecture will begin at 5:15 p.m. in Niebuhr Lecture Hall at Yale Divinity School, 409 Prospect St., New Haven. There will be a reception following the lecture in the Sarah Smith Gallery.

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