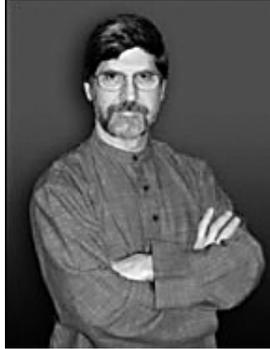


IN MEMORIAM
JAMES S. CUTSINGER
(May 4, 1953 – February 19, 2020)



‘A Serious Seeker and Socratic Teacher’

A gifted and compassionate teacher of the perennial wisdom, Professor Cutsinger possessed a penetrating insight that he brought to bear on issues of faith and modernity, challenging false assumptions prevalent within academia about the nature of man and the limits of knowledge.

He was the author of *The Form of Transformed Vision: Coleridge and the Knowledge of God* (1986) (Owen Barfield, who wrote the book’s foreword, praised Cutsinger’s ‘meticulous, unhurried, superabundantly documented exegesis of what Coleridge thought’); *Advice to the Serious Seeker: Meditations on the Teaching of Frithjof Schuon* (1997) (the book, which has influenced many a ‘serious seeker,’ explored the ideas of Frithjof Schuon and the perennialists); and three anthologies of Schuon’s writings: *The Fullness of God: Frithjof Schuon on Christianity* (2004), *Prayer Fashions Man: Frithjof Schuon on the Spiritual Life* (2005), and *Splendor of the True: A Frithjof Schuon Reader* (2013). Besides editing several of Schuon’s books and letters, he has also edited and produced several anthologies, notably the proceedings of two conferences that he organized [*Reclaiming the Great Tradition: Evangelicals, Catholics, and Orthodox in Dialogue* (1997) and *Paths to the Heart: Sufism and the Christian East* (2002)] as well as *Not of This World: A Treasury of Christian Mysticism* (2003).

A Wayfarer on a Path of Return

By Samuel Bendeck Sotillos

It was a stunningly beautiful day in September 2006 at the initial Sacred Web Conference in Edmonton, Canada where I met Professor James S. Cutsinger or Brother James as he was known to many. I had first learned of Brother James through his well-known work, *Advice to the Serious Seeker: Meditations on the Teaching of Frithjof Schuon* (1997). I was very pleased to be personally introduced to him by Michael Oren Fitzgerald, the proprietor of the publishing house World Wisdom. Brother James kindly greeted me and was generous to take time to explain the intricacies of the perennial philosophy, its recognition of Ultimate Reality or the Absolute and the need to follow one of the divinely revealed paths. He was exceptionally present, insightful, articulate and yet firmly rooted in his perspective and emphasized that traveling the spiritual path is arduous and not for the faint of heart. He stressed that the traveler is continuously tested, that there would be an ordeal and deliberate obstacles placed by God on the path to actualize oneself in the Divine and prove his or her sincerity and dedication. This process was an educational and spiritual therapy to complete the human state. During our meeting, I remember the quality of time slowing down and space opening as the conference and its participants appeared to gradually fade and disappear into the background. It was as if we were in a still point where everything had paused amidst the swirling activity. When our time together came to an end I thought long and hard about what was discussed, and I continue to contemplate his 'advice to a serious seeker' and our moments together.

After the conference ended, we continued our occasional correspondence, but many years had passed when we reconnected in mid-December 2019. With this said, although we had not been directly in contact for some time, I had been updated about Brother James and his health condition, his metastatic lung cancer, by mutual friends. When he responded through electronic correspondence to a message I had sent him, he was much more heartfelt and compassionate in his tone than I had previously known him to be. It was as if he was more aware

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