

Thomas Merton's Journey to the Undivided Church

by
Jim Forest

I speak as an Orthodox Christian who sometimes answers the question, "What led you to the Orthodox Church?", with the response, "My Catholic mentors, Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton." I would hardly have known of the existence of the Orthodox Church had it not been for these two people. In the case of Thomas Merton, I believe his interest was fired by the passion to find the undivided Church.

It would be a useful project for a Merton scholar in pursuit of a doctoral topic to search out and organize all the Merton texts that have some bearing on the theme of the undivided Church – what it is and what keeps us from coming closer to it. The hunt would be no small undertaking nor would the findings be scanty. To our great joy and at times utter dismay, Thomas Merton was an amazingly prolific writer. I have three shelves of books by him plus another shelf of writings about him, not to mention a collection of several journals devoted to him. Even thirty years after his death, new books by him continue to appear. Not long ago there was the final installment of the seven-volume edition of his journals, and there is still unpublished material, such as "Art and Worship", which I hope we will one day see in print, if only the Merton literary trustees will at last allow it.

I am now in sight of my 58th birthday – several years older than Merton when he died – and have been reading him ever since I was 17. Thanks be to God, I've changed a good deal since my first reading of *The Seven Storey Mountain* – and so has Merton. Even in death he is a moving object. If the games of "tag" or "catch me if you can" are in need of a patron saint, Merton would be a good choice. Indeed he and I seem to play tag with each other endlessly. Every time I imagine I have taken a turn that might elude him (not that I am trying to do so), there he is, grinning at me like a Cheshire cat who has just dined on canary.

There was a time in my life when I took Merton's writings, especially his letters, nearly as much to heart as the Bible, and perhaps moments when the Bible had second place. We often corresponded during the last seven years of his life. Some of his letters were carried in my shirt pocket till the folded edges had to be taped to keep the

pages from falling apart. These pieces of paper that had issued from his typewriter were as dear to me as manuscript pages of *The Canterbury Tales* in the author's own hand would be to a Chaucer scholar, though in the case of the Merton letters, it took me years to really understand what he was saying. Not that Merton was anything but clear. I was too young.

It is burdensome for any author to have his writing placed on the altar side by side with the Gospels. Certainly in Merton's case, we need to see much of his writing as provisional, notes along the way of an endless search, and most of the time only a step removed from the first draft. He is the very last person we should use for proof-texting pet theories, for within a few pages we're likely to find him renouncing an earlier enthusiasm still warm in the ear.

Preparing this lecture, I came upon a typical example of this in the last of the Journals, *The Other Side of the Mountain*. On page 74 we find him beside himself with enthusiasm for one of the most controversial comedians of the sixties. Merton writes that the previous evening he had been reading *The Essential Lenny Bruce* and that it "almost blew" his mind. "Completely gone in laughter, the kind that doubles you up and almost makes you roll on the floor. Surely that is some indication of the healthiness, the sanity of this satire which so many people regard as 'obscene'." Merton says that Bruce is actually "one of the few who are really clean."¹ That was on March 30, 1968. Eighteen days later, on Thursday of Easter week, his ardor has taken a nose dive. "Last evening I finished Lenny Bruce. Sometimes he is really inspired – sometimes just dull. And though he is in some sense a kind of 'martyr' for honesty, yet I think his gospel of excess was delusive and self-destroying."²

It is a typical pattern in Merton – an initial burst of wild, unchecked enthusiasm followed by a sharply critical assessment often followed by a sober recognition of the pluses and minuses of the particular author or movement or whatever it was that had caught his eye.

This was not only a pattern in the minor elements of his life but the major as well. Perhaps most notably it is reflected in his view of his Church. His main autobiographical work, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, is a love letter to the Catholic Church. Within the Church's enclosed garden, we find the tree of Benedictine monasticism, with no branch on it so green and fair as the Trappist limb. Yet as you know, in later writings, especially in uncensored journal entries and correspondence, the Catholic Church is occasionally the object of fierce criticism, while the Trappist order, no

longer fairest of the fair, is frequently seen as the plainest of the plain. So unrelenting were his accusations that one might wonder what in heaven kept him not just a Trappist monk but a Catholic Christian. There are certain letters so hot that the reader could fry eggs on them. Many like to think that Merton, having at last seen the Christian darkness, was on the fast track to Buddhism, an exodus prevented only by his sudden death. There is an icon-like painting by Robert Lentz of Merton shown as the *bodhisattva* he might have become, given a little more time, sitting in the lotus posture, graced with a Buddha-like smile.

It isn't that there is nothing to the buddhification of Merton. He was utterly fascinated by the varieties of religious life and practice, and most of all with various schools of Buddhism. In Asia, just over a month before his death, he had a dream, of himself back at Gethsemani "dressed in a Buddhist monk's habit, but with more black and red and gold, a 'Zen habit' . . ." In his dream he was on his way to the kitchen to let Brother Donald know he would be there for supper.³ My own guess is that "supper" in this case is a eucharistic metaphor.

Yet in the actual practice of his life, Merton neither sat in the lotus posture nor do we hear him aspiring to do so. He memorized no sutras and acquired no meditation cushion. His engagement with Buddhism was profound but intellectual. He was not a potential convert in search of a new religious starting point. His arguments with his Church and religious order had nothing to do with the Creed or ordinary Christian spiritual practice but with scholasticism, institutionalization, superficiality, assembly-line approaches, ecclesiastical pride and vanity, the church's non-prophetic relationship with the world and its structures. How often in his letters and journals do we hear his exasperation with legalisms that seem to put God on a leash or his voice raised against the taming of monasticism? His deep opening to varieties of non-Catholic Christianity and to non-Christian religion reveal not a post-Christian looking for the exit door but a contemplative poised on a fire tower on the lookout for whatever might help him be a better follower of Christ, a better master of novices, a better monk, a better occupant of a hermitage, a truer human being, or help him widen the space between his eyelids in order to keep astonishment alive.

No matter how struck we may be by his absorption in Cargo Cults, Sufi mysticism, Zen or Tibetan Buddhism, always bear in mind that this is someone living in the Christian sacraments. His religious life from the time he was a catechumen right down to its conclusion in this world had the Liturgy at its center, something so basic, so

ordinary, so daily that while it is often mentioned, it is almost always in passing. Notably, the very last paragraph in his Journals, written in Bangkok on the 8th of December, is this:

Today is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. In a little while I leave the hotel. I'm going to say Mass at St. Louis Church [St. Louis was his patron saint], have lunch at the Apostolic Delegation, and then to go on to the Red Cross place this afternoon [for the conference].⁴

Day after day as he travelled in India, Sri Lanka and Thailand, meeting Buddhists and Hindus wherever he went and visiting sacred sites of other religions, he noted in his journal where he had celebrated Mass. In his pocket was a rosary. Wherever he went, his breviary went with him, including with the coffin in which his body was returned to Kentucky. In the same small box of personal effects was an icon painted on wood of the Mother of God and Saviour.

What was on his mind as he traveled in Asia? While one needs to read the Journals and his letters from those weeks to follow his roller-coasting thought in detail, over-absorption in minutia can obliterate the underlying theme. What theme? I find it summed up in a luminous sentence written the year before his great journey, in a letter to the poet, philosopher and scholar Amiya Chakravarty, whom he was to meet in India:

"By being attentive, by learning to listen . . . we can find ourself engulfed in such happiness that it cannot be explained: the happiness of the being at one with everything in the hidden ground of Love for which there can be no explanations."⁵

Nothing was more obvious to Merton than the simple truth that we all stand on the hidden ground of love. This is to say that God is inescapably present and no one and nothing can possibly exist apart from God, a God who is not only Truth (which sounds at times very chilly in the ear) but Love, a love which of its nature connects us even though all we are conscious of is division. We all exist in God and nowhere else and there is no one alive or dead, from a newborn child to the saint whose icon shines brightest in your thoughts to such monsters of history as Josef Stalin, who in some way doesn't open a window on the Face of God.

It is a theme we hear again in an informal talk Merton gave at an inter-religious conference in Calcutta in October 1968, just a few

weeks before his death. Here he identifies himself first of all as a monk, defining monks as people living at the margins of society, statusless people, deliberately irrelevant, people living in the presence of death, and only because of their intimacy with death able to be witnesses to life. It is something like, he points out, the intimate relationship between doubt and faith. "The man of faith who has not experienced doubt," he says in Calcutta, "is not a man of faith." Doubt is the furnace of faith, as death gives life its cutting edge.

In that same brief talk, he affirms that "the only ultimate reality is God," adding that "God lives and dwells in us." Certainly Merton, always in search of verbal meeting points, was aware that there would be those in the audience who would find the word "God" hugely problematic if not offensive. In such a setting its more striking that he didn't resort entirely to metaphors or euphemisms in referring to God, but says, "We are called by the voice of God, by the power of that ultimate being, to pierce through the irrelevance of our life . . . in order to find relevance in Him."⁶

It was not only Merton's belief but his experience that we are in communion with each other whether we know it or not and even though we may do everything in our power to deny and destroy communion. As he said at the end of his Calcutta talk: "The deepest level of communication is . . . communion. . . It is beyond words, and it is beyond speech, and it is beyond concept. . . . My brothers, we are already one. But we imagine that we are not. What we have to recover is our original unity."

The Orthodox theologian Fr. Thomas Hopko – one of Merton's correspondents, by the way – made a similar declaration in an interview a few years ago: "My task is not to decide whether or not I will be in relationship with you but to realize that I *am* in communion with you: my life is yours, and your life is mine. Without this, there is no way that we are going to be able to carry on."⁷

There are those for whom Merton's friendly encounters with people from other religions are troubling, even scandalous. They much prefer "the early Merton." But even that early Merton readers encountered in *The Seven Storey Mountain* devoted enthusiastic pages to the Hindu monk, Bramachari, whom Merton met through friends in Manhattan, one of whom claimed Bramachari levitated while meditating and could walk on water. Merton discovered the actual Bramachari walked on earth in a pair of white sneakers. It was Bramachari who got Merton to read Augustine's *Confessions* and Thomas a Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*.

Of course it would have been legitimate for a Christian monk at an interreligious conference in India to refer to some of the substantial differences between Christianity and other religious traditions, but the last thing Merton wanted to do in Asia was to play religious warrior or engage in theological debate. Even so, it was always clear to those he met that he was a deeply rooted Christian – as one notices, for example, in what the Dalai Lama has to say of Merton whenever he describes their encounters. At the end of their third and last meeting, the Dalai Lama told Merton he was a "Catholic *geshe*" – that is a high lama.

For Merton the issue was obvious: If we are all God's children connected to each other at the roots of being, if our communion with each other is more real than the metal of a frying pan or the coins in my pocket, then why not let the branches touch? Do we not after all have something to say to each other and, perhaps the more important, something to hear? And, after so many centuries of religious differences being made into the tinder of hatred, conquest and war, is it not best to begin dialogue with a handshake and recognition of what we have in common and what holds us together?

The word "ecumenical" has for many come to mean top-heavy institutions which arrange formal discussions held on certain topics of theology or ethics. These official encounters have their value. At the very least, people from different churches, or even different religions, meet each other face to face. But there is another sort of ecumenism. Merton represents an intimate, noninstitutional ecumenism which probably does more to repair the rips in the human fabric than large conferences producing enough hot air to raise a brace of balloons and issuing texts in the graceless jargon of EcuSpeak.

It was unusual enough for a Trappist monk to take such an interest in other religions, but what surprises me equally is Merton's encounter with non-Catholic Christianity – not only a wide range of Protestants – Baptists, Anglicans, Quakers and others – all near at hand and familiar, but also Orthodox Christianity. This was at a time when the vast majority of western Christians, even theologians and historians, showed little or no interest in the Orthodox Church. If Christianity was a kind of zoo, the Orthodox were among the odder creatures kept at the zoo's remote east end. One could easily find histories of Christianity by both Catholic and Protestant authors in which the Orthodox Church vanished without a trace after the 11th century. Even that small part of the Roman Catholic Church which uses the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom was little heard of, treated by higher Church authorities with suspicion and condescension, and

urged if not coerced to adapt itself to western Catholic norms. "We'll have none of these married priests in the west, thank you !" But for Merton the east side of the Christian zoo was where his mind often travelled.

An outward sign of that connection in his life was the icon. The visitor to Merton's hermitage today will no longer be surprised to find icons on the chapel wall – in recent years these have gradually made their way back into the western Church, figure in the daily spiritual life of countless non-Orthodox people, and are found in many of our parish churches and cathedrals. Back in the sixties – a sixties in which bridges to the past were being burned as fast as matches could be lit – icons were the last thing one might expect to find in a church or chapel unless one played archeologist and made a lucky find in the attic.

A small book Merton wrote in the late fifties – "Art and Worship" – was set in type and was to be published in 1959 but never reached print because readers of the galley proofs found Merton's taste in religious art embarrassingly out-of-date. One reader of the manuscript, Eloise Spaeth, could not bear Merton's "sacred artist" who keeps creeping in with his frightful icons."⁸

It was not only his taste for icons. We see his opening to the Christian east reflected in the small library Merton kept in his hermitage, such titles as *Early Fathers from the Philokalia*, *Writings from the Philokalia on the Prayer of the Heart*, *Treasury of Russian Spirituality*, and *Manual of Eastern Orthodox Prayers*. In the last is a slip of paper with a copy of the Jesus Prayer in Slavonic with phonetic interlinear transliteration.⁹

The sixties were, we now realize, intoxicating but shallow times, a time less of conversion than disconnection. Yet in the midst of all that, we find this odd Trappist monk struggling to find the undivided Church and live in it.

There is the famous passage – famous at least among members of such a society as this one – that Merton entered in his journal on April 28, 1957:

If I can unite *in myself*, in my own spiritual life, the thought of the East and the West, of the Greek and Latin Fathers, I will create in myself a union of the divided Church and from that unity in myself can come the exterior and visible unity of the Church. For if we want to bring together East and West, we cannot do it by imposing one upon the other. We must contain both in ourselves and transcend both in Christ.¹⁰

This passage was expanded slightly when published in *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*. Here he mentioned not only the Greek and the Latin Fathers but the Russian and the Spanish mystics and developed the passage on unity to read:

From that secret and unspoken unity in myself can eventually come a visible and manifest unity of all Christians.¹¹

The longing for such a visible and manifest unity is at heart of Merton's life. If there is controversy about Merton to this day, it is chiefly connected to his efforts in reduce division. Yet seeking to preserve unity, or when lost, to recover it, is supposed to be a normal Christian discipline. We are required, wrote St. Paul to the Ephesians, "to maintain unity of spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph 4:3)

Merton spent much of his life seeking to maintain unity of spirit in the bond of peace, and not just on his own but to encourage others to participate in the same pilgrimage.

I said earlier that Orthodoxy was little known or thought about by western Christians in the fifties and sixties, and in general this is true. But there is an interesting exception to which Merton had a special connection. Two years ago I was visiting the Franciscan college where Merton was teaching just before he became a monk, St. Bonaventure's in Olean, New York, a place about as far from Manhattan as you can go and still be in the State of New York: an area of huge, thickly wooded hills and agricultural valleys which seems to have changed very little in the past sixty years. Thanks to librarian Paul Spaeth (no relation to Eloise Spaeth), during my visit I had time to explore the library's substantial Merton collection – his early journals and much else. One of the things that caught my eye was a complete set of back issues of *Jubilee*, a Catholic magazine launched in 1953 which Merton wrote for fairly often. It had been founded and was edited by his friend and godfather, Ed Rice, assisted by the poet and born contemplative, Bob Lax, another of the classmates from Columbia who had been present for Merton's baptism. Perhaps because Ed Rice is such a gifted photographer, *Jubilee* offered not only fine writing but outstanding photo features. Among religious magazines, there has been nothing like it before or since. Unfortunately *Jubilee* finally drowned in red ink about 1967. If I should find a chest of gold coins buried in our backyard, I'd love to start it up again.

It was one of the publications I read faithfully from the time I entered the Catholic Church – I was 18 when I crossed that border – until it folded. What I had forgotten in the three decades since the last Jubilee was mailed out was the consistent interest the magazine took in the Orthodox Church. In the hundred or so issues I looked through, there was hardly one that didn't have something in it about eastern Christianity. It might be a photo portrait of life in St. Catherine's monastery on the Sinai or a text about the Desert Fathers or something as small as an ad promoting the sale, by *Jubilee*, of icon reproductions or recordings of Byzantine chant. A question I cannot yet answer is what inspired Jubilee's passionate engagement in what must have seemed to many readers a somewhat esoteric form of Christianity. Was *Jubilee* helping fuel Merton's interest in the Orthodox Church, or was it mirroring his interest?

In any event, Merton was deeply moved by photos of Orthodox monastic life that would appear in *Jubilee*. I recall Merton showing me a photo in *Jubilee* of an Athonite monk, a man who looked older than Abraham. He was standing behind a long battered table in the refectory while in the background was a huge fresco of the Last Judgement. The monk's head was bowed slightly. His eyes seemed to contain the cosmos. "Look at him," Merton said. "This guy has been kissed by God!"

It might have been during that visit that he gave me his recently published collection of Desert Fathers stories, *The Wisdom of the Desert*. The monks of the Egyptian desert, whose communal life was much less structured than is familiar to us in the west, greatly appealed to Merton.

It was thanks to Merton that I went on from his book to Helen Waddell's *The Desert Fathers*, probably the first book in English on this subject, having been published in 1936. Her collection includes one of my favourite Desert Father stories.

It concerns a young brother who went to an elder and confessed he was constantly enduring sexual fantasies. The older monk, who himself had been spared such temptations, told his visitor that he was not fit for monastic life. Agreeing that he was unworthy, the young man set out to return to the world. Providentially, Abbot Apollo happened to be coming toward him, saw his despair, and questioned him about its cause. "Think it no strange thing, my son, and do not despair, for I too, even at my age and in this way of life, am hard pressed by just such thoughts as these," Abbot Apollo confessed. "Therefore do not give up when tested in this way. The remedy is not

in our anxious thoughts but in God's compassion." The young monk took heart and returned to monastic life.

But the story goes further. Abbot Apollo walked directly to the cell of the monk who had been lacking in compassion and stood silently outside his dwelling, praying that the elder would be visited by the same temptations the young man had suffered. Before long the elder ran from his cell, walking as if he were drunk, going down the same road the young man had taken, convinced he could no longer be a monk. But Abbot Apollo stopped him, saying, "Go back to your cell, recognize your weakness, and look to yourself, for either the devil had forgotten you until now or was contemptuous of you, not finding in you someone worthy of battle. Did I say battle? You could not even withstand attack for a single day. But all this has befallen you because when the young man came to you for help against our common adversary, instead of anointing him with words of comfort, you sent him away in desperation."¹²

Few Desert Father stories are so long, yet this is typical in its emphasis on the priority of compassion over asceticism.

For Merton these original monks of the east were both a personal inspiration and also a challenge to modern monasticism. As he wrote in introducing *The Wisdom of the Desert*, he would not compare the monastic life he knew first hand with the Egyptian example:

With us it is often rather a case of men leaving the society of the 'world' in order to fit themselves into another kind of society, that of the religious family which they enter. They exchange the values, concepts and rites of the one for those of the other. And since we now have centuries of monasticism behind us, this puts the whole thing in a different light. The social 'norms' of the monastic family are apt to be conventional, and to live by them does not involve a leap into the void – only a radical change of customs and standards. The words and examples of the Desert Fathers have . . . been turned into stereotypes for us, and we no longer notice their fabulous originality. We have buried them, so to speak, in our own routines . . .¹³

This touches on another aspect of Merton's search for the undivided Church. It is a search not to escape from tradition but to purify traditions which have over time been distorted or calcified. As he puts it in an as-yet-unpublished text entitled "Monastic Spirituality and the

Early Fathers, from the Apostolic Fathers to Evagrius Ponticus," written for his fellow monks:

If for some reason it were necessary for you to drink a pint of water taken out of the Mississippi River and you could choose where it was to be drawn out of the river – would you take a pint from the source of the river in Minnesota or from the estuary in New Orleans? The example is perhaps not perfect. Christian tradition and spirituality does not [necessarily] become polluted with development. That is not the idea at all. Nevertheless, tradition and spirituality are all the more pure and genuine in proportion as they are in contact with the original source and retain the same content.¹⁴

One can say the Desert Fathers are at the Minnesota rather than New Orleans end of the river and that they provide a prophetic example of certain aspects of basic Christian life for our own day: for example, a simpler, poorer, less institutional monastic witness. At the same time, their example of prayer-centred life, poverty, labour, hospitality, repentance and forgiveness is relevant to each of us, whatever our vocation and no matter how far from the desert we live, even if we live in downtown New Orleans.

It was in his exploration of the living monastic tradition of the eastern Church, which to this day is far less structured than in the west, that Merton came upon the Jesus Prayer and began to practice it himself. One gets a glimpse of his own use of the Jesus Prayer in a 1959 letter to a correspondent in England, John Harris:

I heartily recommend, as a form of prayer, the Russian and Greek business where you get off somewhere quiet . . . breathe quietly and rhythmically with the diaphragm, holding your breath for a bit each time and letting it out easily: and while holding it, saying 'in your heart' (aware of the place of your heart, as if the words were spoken in the very center of your being with all the sincerity you can muster): 'Lord Jesus Christ Son of God have mercy on me a sinner.' Just keep saying this for a while, of course with faith, and the awareness of the indwelling, etc. It is a simple form of prayer, and fundamental, and the breathing part makes it easier to keep your mind on what you are doing. That's about as far as I go with methods. After that, pray as the Spirit moves you, but of course I would say follow the Mass in a missal unless there is a good reason for doing

something else, like floating suspended ten feet above the congregation.

He goes on in the same letter to recommend the rosary and other forms of devotion to the Mother of God:

I like the rosary, too. Because, though I am not very articulate about her, I am pretty much wound up in Our Lady, and have some Russian ideas about her too: that she is the most perfect expression of the mystery of the Wisdom of God. That in some way she is the Wisdom of God. (See the eighth chapter of Proverbs, for instance, the part about 'playing before Him at all times, playing in the world.') I find a lot of this 'Sophianism' in Pasternak . . .¹⁵

In this same letter, it happens, Merton mentions *Jubilee* magazine, telling Harris that it's a magazine "you ought to know about," edited, he adds, "by my godfather, Ed Rice, who lives in a slum with his wonderful wife and kids, in order to put everything he has in producing [the] one decent Catholic magazine in this country."

Let's return to the main theme of this lecture. Clearly neither Merton nor any of us live in the undivided Church in a visible sense. In fact the shores between East and West in Christianity currently seem to be growing further apart. Nonetheless Merton helps us see that we can participate mystically in the undivided Church and in so doing help to heal the divisions in the Church by holding together in our own prayer life those things which are best and by letting the Church Fathers become our teachers, as they were Merton's. He also shows us that this journey is not at all easy. We see in his life how many years of preparation went into his dialogue with people on the other side of various religious and political walls. We also see how important it was in his life not to throw everything into the blender and become Top Lama and Abbot General of the Unified-Catholic-Orthodox-Buddhist-Baptist-Sufi-Hasidic-and-Miscellaneous-Zen-Dharma-Church. No shortcuts, no magic tricks, no pretending that chasms don't exist which we don't know how to cross. Yet, if we work at it, we can pray and listen our way a little closer to each other, and to God.

Notes and References

1. Thomas Merton: *The Journals of Thomas Merton, Volume 7: The Other Side of the Mountain*, ed. Patrick Hart, San Francisco, HarperSanFrancisco, 1998, p. 74
2. Op. cit., p.82
3. Op.cit., p.255
4. Op.cit., p.329
5. Thomas Merton: *The Hidden Ground of Love*, ed. W.H.Shannon, London, Collins Flame, 1990, p.115.
6. Thomas Merton: *The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton*, ed. Burton, Hart & Laughlin, New York, New Directions, 1973, pp.305-308
7. Published in the first issue of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship journal, *In Communion*, February, 1995; posted on the web at www.incommunion.org/hopko.htm.
8. For a summary of Art and Worship, see Donna Kristoff's essay, "Light That is Not Light," *The Merton Annual*, nr. 2, 1989, pp.93-97.
9. Noted in *A Retreat with Thomas Merton* by M. Basil Pennington, Warwick NY, Amity House, 1988, p.34
10. Thomas Merton: *The Journals of Thomas Merton, Volume 3: A Search for Solitude*, ed. Lawrence Cunningham, San Francisco, Harper SanFrancisco, 1996, p. 87
11. Thomas Merton; *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, New York, Doubleday Image, 1966, p 21
12. Helen Waddell, *The Desert Fathers*, pp 75-76
13. Thomas Merton: *Wisdom of the Desert*, London, Darley Anderson, 1988, pp. 9-10
14. 'Monastic Origins', p 250, volume 18, a manuscript collection of Merton's essays, at the Thomas Merton Study Center at Bellarmine College, Louisville, Kentucky.
15. Op.cit. *Hidden Ground of Love* p. 392

[This paper was delivered by Jim Forest at the October 1999 Conference of the TMS of GB & I at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies]