

Thomas Merton Essential Writings Modern Spiritual Masters Series

Essays, meditations, parables, and verse offer insights into the absurdities and disorders of the modern world, the human crisis, and the benefits of Christian hope. Dom Helder Camara (1909-1999) was one of the great prophets of the Catholic church in the twentieth century. As archbishop of Recife, Brazil he gained an international reputation as a champion of human rights during the era of military dictatorship and for his dedication to the poor. Banned from the media in his own country, he toured the world denouncing oppression in the Third World and making the link between the gospel and liberation. In his many books he communicated a joy-filled, mystical love of God and creation. These selections from his writings highlight his distinctive blend of spirituality and social vision.

Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897) a French Carmelite nun who died at the age of 24 was known during her life to only a few of her fellow nuns. Through the posthumous publication of her autobiography she quickly became the most popular saint of modern times. On the basis of her spiritual path, which she called "the Little Way," she was recently declared a Doctor of the Church. Her admirers have included Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, and Edith Stein. Book jacket. Thomas Merton wrote *The Silent Life* a decade after he took orders. In his Prologue, Merton describes the book as "a meditation on the monastic life by one who,

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without any merit of his own, is privileged to know that life on the inside . . . who seeks only to speak as the mouthpiece of a tradition centuries old." It is a remarkable work-one that combines a lucid and informative description of the nature and forms of monasticism, communal and solitary, with a passionate defense of the contemplative's quest for God. The intense beauty of Merton's meditation, radiating from beneath its surface calm, makes *The Silent Life* a classic of its kind.

Merton, Berrigan, Yoder, and Muste at the Gethsemani Abbey Peacemakers Retreat
A Life of Thomas Merton

Pursuing the Spiritual Roots of Protest

Joyce Rupp

Modern Spiritual Masters

*"With a substantial introduction Thomas Merton includes a broad range of Merton's writings, including his letters, and highlights his threefold call: to prayer, to compassion, and to unity. It offers the essential writings of one of the greatest spiritual teachers of our time."--BOOK JACKET.*Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

A great introduction to the religions of the East by a monk from the West. Merton's biographer, George Woodcock, once wrote that "almost from the beginning of his monastic career, Thomas Merton tentatively began to discover the great Asian religions of Buddhism and Taoism." Merton, a longtime social justice advocate, first

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approached Eastern theology as an admirer of Gandhi's beliefs on non-violence. Through Gandhi, Merton came to know the great Hindu text the Bhagavad Gita and in time came to have dialogues with the Dalai Lama and Taoist leader D. T. Suzuki. Merton then became deeply interested in Chuang Tzu and Zen thought. On Eastern Meditation, edited by Bonnie Thurston (author of Merton and Buddhism), gathers the best of his Eastern theological writings into a gorgeously designed gift book edition.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty (1896-1985), a Russian-born aristocrat who has recently been proposed for canonization, emigrated to North America, dedicated her life to promoting "the gospel without compromise." Her vision combined a deep spirituality with a commitment to social justice. One of her early projects was the Harlem-based Friendship House, which attracted a young Thomas Merton. Later, with her second husband, Eddie Doherty, she established Madonna House in Combermere, Ontario. Though Roman Catholic, Catherine drew on her Russian roots and helped popularize the concept of Poustinia (the Russian word for desert) a place where a person meets God through solitude, prayer, and fasting. These writings, drawn from 25 books, highlight her distinctive spirituality, with its emphasis on the presence of God, the practice of prayer, a love for the church, and a deep apprehension of the social dimension of the gospel.

Now in paperback, revised and redesigned: This is Thomas Merton's last book, in

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which he draws on both Eastern and Western traditions to explore the hot topic of contemplation/meditation in depth and to show how we can practice true contemplation in everyday life. Never before published except as a series of articles (one per chapter) in an academic journal, this book on contemplation was revised by Merton shortly before his untimely death. The material bridges Merton's early work on Catholic monasticism, mysticism, and contemplation with his later writing on Eastern, especially Buddhist, traditions of meditation and spirituality. This book thus provides a comprehensive understanding of contemplation that draws on the best of Western and Eastern traditions. Merton was still tinkering with this book when he died; it was the book he struggled with most during his career as a writer. But now the Merton Legacy Trust and experts have determined that the book makes such a valuable contribution as his major comprehensive presentation of contemplation that they have allowed its publication.

Dom Helder Camara

Raids on the Unspeakable

A Book of Hours

Merton's Palace of Nowhere

Caryll Houselander

This diary of a monastic life is "a continuation of The Seven Storey Mountain . . . Astonishing" (Commonweal). Chronicling six years of

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Thomas Merton's life in a Trappist monastery, *The Sign of Jonas* takes us through his day-to-day experiences at the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, where he lived in silence and prayer for much of his life. Concluding with the account of Merton's ordination as a priest, this diary documents his growing acceptance of his vocation—and the greater meaning he found within his private world of contemplation. “This book is made unmistakably real and almost, at times, unbearably poignant by the fact that the exuberance of youth so often wells up through it with rapture, impatience, and even bluster.” —*The New York Times* “A stirring book—the most readable and on the whole, most illuminating of the author's writings.” —*Catholic World*

For forty years, James Finley's *Merton's Palace of Nowhere* has been the standard text for exploring, reflecting on, and understanding the rich vein of Thomas Merton's thought. Spiritual identity is the quest to know who we are, to find meaning, to overcome that sense of “Is this all there is?” Merton's message cuts to the heart of this universal quest, and Finley illuminates that message as no one else can. As a young man of eighteen, Finley left home for an unlikely destination: the Abbey of Gethsemani, where Thomas Merton lived as a contemplative. Finley stayed at the monastery for six maturing years and later wrote this *Merton's Palace of Nowhere* in order to share a taste of what he had learned on his spiritual journey under the

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guidance of one of the great religious figures of our time. At the heart of the quest for spiritual identity are Merton's illuminating insights—leading from an awareness of the false and illusory self to a realization of the true self. Dog-eared, tattered, underlined copies of this book are found on the bookshelves of retreat centers, parish libraries, and the homes of spiritual seekers everywhere. This anniversary edition brings a classic to a new generation and includes a new preface by Finley.

In this series of notes, opinions, experiences, and reflections, Thomas Merton examines some of the most urgent questions of our age. With his characteristic forcefulness and candor, he brings the reader face-to-face with such provocative and controversial issues as the “death of God,” politics, modern life and values, and racial strife—issues that are as relevant today as they were fifty years ago. Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander is Merton at his best—detached but not unpassionate, humorous yet sensitive, at all times alive and searching, with a gift for language which has made him one of the most widely read and influential spiritual writers of our time.

Includes excerpts from "Seven storey mountain", "Conjectures of a guilty bystander" and many other works including a chronology of Merton's life.

The Inner Experience

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On Eastern Meditation

Thich Nhat Hanh: Essential Writings

Notes on Contemplation

Living with Wisdom

"Caryll Houselander (1901-54) an English Catholic laywoman, artist, and visionary best known for works such as A Rocking Horse Catholic, The Reed of God, and The Way of the Cross was driven by a strong identification with the poor that enabled her, in fresh and insightful ways, to proclaim the "Christing of the World." Wendy Wright interweaves Houselander's words and images into an intimate encounter with this fascinating woman, a "divine eccentric," and a gifted reader of souls." --Book Jacket.

Pedro Arrupe, a Basque Jesuit, was superior general of the Society of Jesus from 1965 until 1983. He was instrumental in promoting a new mission for the Jesuits in terms of "faith that does justice." The readings here, beginning with his shattering eye-witness account of the bombing of Hiroshima, reveal profound faith, deep compassion, and an almost mystical devotion to Jesus. Book jacket.

Ruth Burrows is the pen name of Sister Rachel, OCD, a nun in the Carmelite monastery in Quidenham, England, and the author of more than a dozen books on prayer and the mystical life. Describing the central theme that runs throughout her work, she writes: "God offers himself in total love to each one of us. Our part is to open our hearts to receive the gift." That theme is reflected in the writings assembled here.

This clear and comprehensive anthology, culled from the vast corpus of Christian mystical literature by the renowned theologian and historian Bernard McGinn, presents nearly one

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hundred selections, from the writings of Origen of Alexandria in the third century to the work of twentieth-century mystics such as Thomas Merton. Uniquely organized by subject rather than by author, The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism explores how human life is transformed through the search for direct contact with God. Part one examines the preparation for encountering God through biblical interpretation and prayer; the second part focuses on the mystics' actual encounters with God; and part three addresses the implications of the mystical life, showing how mystics have been received over time, and how they practice their faith through private contemplation and public actions. In addition to his illuminating Introduction, Bernard McGinn provides accessible headnotes for each section, as well as numerous biographical sketches and a selected bibliography. Praise for The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism "No one is better equipped than Bernard McGinn to provide a thorough and balanced guide to this vast literature....This is an anthology which deserves to be read not only by those who study Christian history and theology, but by believers who long to deepen their own lives of prayer and service." -- Anglican Theological Review "Bernard McGinn, a preeminent historian and interpreter of the Christian mystical tradition, has edited this fine collection of mystical writings, organizing them thematically....McGinn offers helpful introductions to each thematic section, author and entry, as well as a brief critical bibliography on mysticism. Published in the Modern Library Classic series, this is a great value." -- Christian Century "No-one is better equipped than Professor McGinn to provide a thorough and balanced guide to this vast literature. A first-class selection, by a first-class scholar." -- Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury "This accessible anthology by the scholarly world's leading historian of the Western Christian mystical tradition easily outstrips all others in its comprehensiveness,

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the aptness of its selection of texts, and in the intelligent manner of its organization.” -- Denys Turner, Horace Tracy Pitkin Professor of Historical Theology, Yale Divinity School “An immensely rich anthology, assembled and introduced by our foremost student of mysticism. Both the scholar and the disciple will find God’s plenty here.” -- Barbara Newman, Professor of English, Religion, and Classics, John Evans Professor of Latin, Northwestern University “An unusually clear and insightful exposition of major texts selected by one of the greatest scholars in the field of Christian mysticism, based on his vast erudition and uniquely sensitive interpretation. Like his other books, this one too is destined to become a classic.” -- Professor Moshe Idel, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Contemplative Prayer

St. Thérèse of Lisieux

The Sign of Jonas

Pedro Arrupe

The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism

Thomas Merton's lectures to the young monastics at the Abbey of Gethsemani provide a good look at Merton the scholar. A Course in Christian Mysticism gathers together, for the first time, the best of these talks into a spiritual, historical, and theological survey of Christian mysticism—from St. John's gospel to St. John of the Cross. Sixteen centuries are covered over thirteen lectures. A general introduction sets the scene for when and how the talks were

prepared and for the perennial themes one finds in them, making them relevant for spiritual seekers today. This compact volume allows anyone to learn from one of the twentieth century's greatest Catholic spiritual teachers. The study materials at the back of the book, including additional primary source readings and thoughtful questions for reflection and discussion, make this an essential text for any student of Christian mysticism.

"Through biographical reflections and selected writings, this anthology highlights the essential teachings of a dozen modern spiritual masters, each of whom embodied a form of engaged spirituality - attuned both to God and the needs of a wounded world. Each opposed a style of spirituality focused entirely on the inner life, while at the same time stressing the importance of prayer and silence as the foundation for service and activism. Balancing contemplation and compassion, these figures - including some of the world's best-known spiritual writers - represent a model of spirituality sensitive to tradition as well as the challenges of our time."--BOOK JACKET.

In this classic text, Thomas Merton offers valuable guidance for prayer. He brings together a wealth of meditative and mystical

influences-from John of the Cross to Eastern desert monasticism-to create a spiritual path for today. Most important, he shows how the peace contacted through meditation should not be sought in order to evade the problems of contemporary life, but can instead be directed back out into the world to affect positive change.

Contemplative Prayer is one of the most well-known works of spirituality of the last one hundred years, and it is a must-read for all seeking to live a life of purpose in today's world. In a moving and profound introduction, Thich Nhat Hanh offers his personal recollections of Merton and compares the contemplative traditions of East and West.

G. K. Chesterton (1874-1936), was one of the great Catholic writers of the twentieth century. He brought a distinctive Catholic perspective to scores of books and articles even to the genre of detective novels in the famous Father Brown mysteries. As this collection shows, Chesterton s writing contains a spiritual dimension. In his ability to combine matters of great seriousness with great humor the contours of his distinctive and paradoxical spirituality emerge.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty

Life and Holiness

A Course in Christian Mysticism

Seeds

The Silent Life

From the best-selling novelist and memoirist: a deeply personal view of her discovery of the celebrated modern monk and thinker through his writings. “If Thomas Merton had been a writer and not a monk, we would never have heard of him. If Thomas Merton had been a monk and not a writer, we would never have heard of him.” So begins acclaimed author Mary Gordon in this probing, candid exploration of the man who became the face and voice of mid-twentieth-century American Catholicism. Approaching Merton “writer to writer,” Gordon illuminates his life and work through his letters, journals, autobiography, and fiction. Pope Francis has celebrated Merton as “a man of dialogue,” and here Gordon shows that the dialogue was as much internal as external—an unending conversation, and at times a heated conflict, between Merton the monk and Merton the writer. Rich with excerpts from Merton’s own writing, *On Thomas Merton* produces an intimate portrait of a man who “lived life in all its imperfectability, reaching toward it in exaltation, pulling back in anguish, but insisting on the primacy of his praise as a man of God.”

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In the fall of 1964, Trappist monk Thomas Merton prepared to host an unprecedented gathering of peace activists. "About all we have is a great need for roots," he observed, "but to know this is already something." His remark anticipated their agenda--a search for spiritual roots to nurture sound motives for "protest." This event's originality lay in the varied religious commitments present. Convened in an era of well-kept faith boundaries, members of Catholic (lay and clergy), mainline Protestant, historic peace church, and Unitarian traditions participated. Ages also varied, ranging from twenty-three to seventy-nine. Several among the fourteen who gathered are well known today among faith-based peace advocates: the Berrigan brothers, Jim Forest, Tom Cornell, John Howard Yoder, A. J. Muste, and Merton himself. During their three days together, insights and wisdom from these traditions would intersect and nourish each other. By the time they parted, their effort had set down solid roots and modeled interreligious collaboration for peace work that would blossom in coming decades. Here for the first time, the details of those vital discussions have been reconstructed and made accessible to again inspire and challenge followers of Christ to confront the powers and injustices of today.

This volume provides a broad cross-section of Merton's work as an essayist,

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collecting pieces that are characteristic examples of his astonishing output and the fantastic breadth of his interests. The essays range from the wisdom of the desert fathers to the novels of Faulkner and Camus, from interreligious dialogue to racial justice.

Yves Congar (1904-1995), a French Dominican theologian, was a prophet in the church of the mid-20th century, persecuted in the 1950s only to become perhaps the single most formative influence on Vatican II. This volume provides real insight and fresh hope for those concerned to breathe new life into the church of the 21st century.

The Way of Chuang-Tzū

Essential Writings

Etty Hillesum

Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander

The Seven Storey Mountain

Poet, Trappist monk, religious philosopher, translator, social critic: the late Thomas Merton was all these things. This classic selection from his great body of poetry affords a comprehensive view of his varied and progressively innovative work. Selected by Mark Van Doren and James Laughlin, this slim volume is now available again as a wonderful showcase of Thomas Merton's

splendid poetry.

Thomas Merton was the most popular proponent of the Christian contemplative tradition in the twentieth century. Now, for the first time, some of his most lyrical and prayerful writings have been arranged into A Book of Hours, a rich resource for daily prayer and contemplation that imitates the increasingly popular ancient monastic practice of "praying the hours." Editor Kathleen Deignan mined Merton's voluminous writings, arranging prayers for Dawn, Day, Dusk, and Dark for each of the days of the week. A Book of Hours allows for a slice of monastic contemplation in the midst of hectic modern life, with psalms, prayers, readings, and reflections.

Mother Maria Skobtsova (1891-1945) has emerged as one of the most fascinating religious figures of the twentieth century. As an Orthodox nun in Paris her home was at once a soup kitchen for the needy, a center for the renewal of Orthodox thought, and - under Nazi occupation - a haven for the rescue of Jews. For the latter cause she ended her life in a concentration camp. Like Dorothy Day, her writings reflect her deep commitment to the gospel mandate that unites love of God and love of neighbor.

Thomas Merton (1915-1968) was one of the most influential spiritual writers of modern times. A Trappist monk, peace and civil rights activist, and widely-praised literary figure, Merton was renowned for his pioneering work in

contemplative spirituality, his quest to understand Eastern thought and integrate it with Western spirituality, and his firm belief in Christian activism. His autobiography, The Seven Storey Mountain, is the defining spiritual memoir of its time, selling over one million copies and translating into over fifteen languages. Merton was also one of the most prolific and provocative letter writers of the twentieth century. His letters (those written both by him and to him), archived at the Thomas Merton Studies Center at Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky, number more than ten thousand. For Merton, letters were not just a vehicle for exchanging information, but his primary means for initiating, maintaining, and deepening relationships. Letter-writing was a personal act of self-revelation and communication. His letters offer a unique lens through which we relive the spiritual and social upheavals of the twentieth century, while offering wisdom that is still relevant for our world today.

The Essential Writings

Thomas Merton

Selected Essays

Writings on Contemplation and Compassion

The Literary Essays of Thomas Merton

For the first time, Etty Hillesum's diary and letters appear together to give us the fullest possible portrait of this extraordinary woman. In the darkest years of Nazi occupation

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and genocide, Etty Hillesum remained a celebrant of life whose lucid intelligence, sympathy, and almost impossible gallantry were themselves a form of inner resistance. The adult counterpart to Anne Frank, Hillesum testifies to the possibility of awareness and compassion in the face of the most devastating challenge to one's humanity. She died at Auschwitz in 1943 at the age of twenty-nine.

The complete and unedited edition of Thomas Merton's famous autobiography, one of the greatest works of spiritual pilgrimage ever written.

Free renderings of selections from the works of Chuang-tz?, taken from various translations.

Discusses Blake, Joyce, Pasternak, Faulkner, Styron, O'Connor, Camus, symbolism, creativity, alienation, contemplation, and freedom

On Thomas Merton

Mother Maria Skobtsova

Thomas Merton, Spiritual Master

Ruth Burrows

James Martin

The essence of Merton's thought and its relevance for today, presented in a collection of short readings from a broad selection of his work.

Simple text and photographs depict types of flower seeds, how they travel, and what happens when they are planted.

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This is intended to be a very simple book, an elementary treatment of a few basic ideas in Christian spirituality. Hence it should be useful to any Christian, and indeed to anyone who wants to acquaint himself with some principles of the interior life as it is understood in the Catholic Church. Nothing is here said of such subjects as "contemplation" or even "mental prayer." And yet the book emphasizes what is at once the most common and the most mysterious aspect in the Christian life: grace, the power and the light of God in us, purifying our hearts, transforming us in Christ, making us true sons of God, enabling us to act in the world as his instruments for the good of all men and for his glory. This is therefore a meditation on some fundamental themes appropriate to the active life. It must be said at once that the active life is essential to every Christian. Clearly the active life must mean more than the life which is led in religious institutes of men and women who teach, care for the sick, and so on. (When one is talking of the "active life" as opposed to the

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“contemplative life,” this is the usual reference.) Here action is not looked at in opposition to contemplation, but as an expression of charity and as a necessary consequence of union with God by baptism.

The Essential Collection

Thomas Merton: A Life in Letters

Selected Poems of Thomas Merton