

TWO POEMS

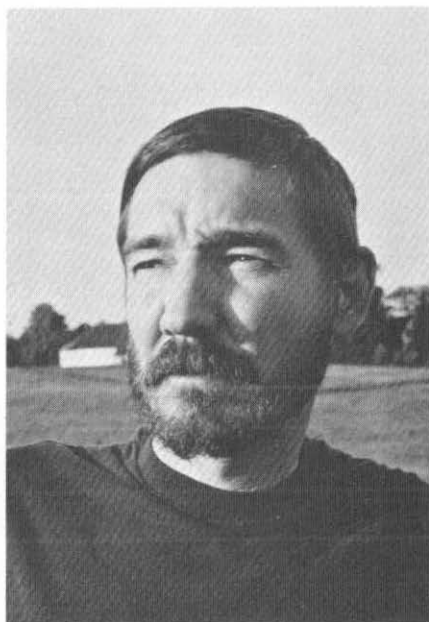
— by Joe Pounder

Homage to Monks Pond: A Celebration

Woke up in the middle of the nite to pray —
 Where am I?
 Traveller — bothering the Abbey again.
 Hot on the trail of Thomas Merton — Who?
 Running around the contemplative countryside
 Looking in every Catholic “Kirk”
 Taking ‘metanoia’ notes
 A hundred lines a day
 Seven offices to pray
 Frater Louie would have done it just that way . . . ?
 “Not on your life baby” — he had
 better ways to say — “Live!”
 “Be birds!”
 Peace.
 And here comes me,
 Another seeker seeking
 A nervous noter noting —
 Anybody heard from Bob Lax — Who?
 Are the bio-graphers still mad at Dom James — Why?
 Which one is Brother Patrick???
 With all the brothers smiling their monastic disguise —
 Certainly not their fault that we can’t see
 Love.
 A vocation is more than two weeks in July!
 A monastic calling?
 Must be a wrong number.
 If only Grace would give me a ring.
 Fr. Kelty says the darndest things,
 And Brother Paul the strangest —
 The Abbot don’t say much,
 But he knows Someone!

The Guestmasters have had it —
 Who wouldn't with their lot!
 Can I bring my girlfriend — why not?
 Ever heard of Vatican Two!
 And then there's Bellarmine —
 Just down the road 'a piece'
 A Studies Center yet —
 And Dr. Daggy's the one with the Pepsi-cola,
 He'll show you where it's at
 And take all kinds of calls — On
 Merton this and Merton that
 And Ron Seitz says the best "Thank You!"
 (The Courier-Journal, Dec. 4, 1983)
 A good picture of Tom
 "If its come to that . . ."
 Somehow very Zen?
 "Wash out your mouth!"
 And all my "papers" fly
 Between me and the message
 Hope.
 I'm the myth, the illusion,
 Seeking a Merton transfusion —
 Won't work from ghosts you know
 Gotta get into the Real.
 Can't live unless you feel!
 But what about the pain?
 "You think I got no angst. Man,
 think again. I got angst up to the eyes."
 Not very romantic that.
 Congratulations Jose — You're awake
 That's the Real Prayer!
 From Tom and all the gang —
 We just might make it.

Joe Pounder
 Christmas, 1983
 Abbey of Gethsemani



JOE POUNDER

My Students

(On teaching Thomas Merton)

My students said who?
 My students said yes!
 Then we quietly disappeared.

Joe Pounder, 1983
 Introduction to Thomas Merton
 Silver Lake College
 Manitowoc, Wisconsin