

## IN THE SILENCE

(to the memory of Thomas Merton, O.C.S.O.)

by **Kenneth M. Voiles**

*"The soul who is in love with God is a gentle, humble, and patient soul."  
— St. John of the Cross*

in the quiet revelation  
of your severe vocation  
the power of our God  
is easily seen:

All the mystics sang  
And the angels did rejoice  
All their prayers were answered  
In your triumphant choice.

All the foolish riddles  
Whose answers are absurd  
Are easily displaced  
In tranquil knowledge of the Good.

Every hidden irony  
Or politic of faith,  
Is given truer meaning  
By understanding grace.

All the petty whinings  
Of the fatuitous intellect,  
Are healed by a reason  
Which you tried to reflect.

That the greatest thing  
Is to be a saint,  
Is a solemn truth  
The world cannot taint.

The hermitage is at Gethsemani,  
Still standing frozen and alone.  
Though it was your place on earth,  
It was never your true home.

Your leaving was as unsuspected,  
As the calling that you found.  
You proved that when self-will is rejected,  
In ecstasy the soul, to Christ is bound.

All the bridges you tried to build,  
Have not yet fallen down.  
All the persons whose lives you filled,  
Pray for your heavenly crown.

Pray for us who still must struggle,  
Sing your silent prayers.  
Help our hearts out of the rubble,  
And the world's oblique traps and snares.

Thank you, Thomas, for the words you left,  
They were your penance to the end.  
But by them we can more accurately say:  
You, Fr. Louis, are our teacher and our friend.

in the silence  
of gentle defiance  
the love of our God  
is readily seen.

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□ **Kenneth M. Voiles** received a B. A. degree in psychology from Metropolitan State College in Denver, Colorado, and is in the process of entering a graduate program in Moral Theology. He writes: "I am twenty-three years old and have lived in Colorado most all of my life . . . I began an independent study of the life and work of Thomas Merton about two years ago and continue to find it a richly rewarding endeavor. I am a member of the ITMS."

## THE MONK'S WAY

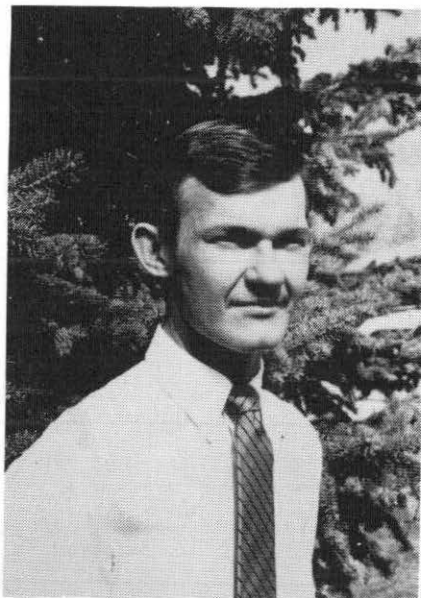
by **Kenneth M. Voiles**

*O beata solitudo!*

Walk softly and speak  
In symbols, not in words.  
Move gently and be calm,  
Cover your head with hood.  
Sleep little and eat less,  
Never hungry with plenty of rest.  
Sing your psalter in choir,  
Pray your prayers of praise.  
Think of the psalms,  
And live in their ways.

Work in your gardens,  
And cultivate your farms.  
Be happy in your wonder,  
About the way of the seed.  
Understand that real passion,  
Is more than mere need.  
Your life is lived in silence,  
But it can be the loudest place.  
Those who scoff at your calling,  
Cannot see the serenity in your face.

*O sola beatitudo!*



KENNETH M. VOILES