

AT MERTON'S GRAVE

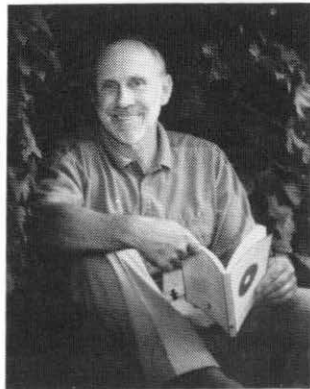
by **Tim Cronley**

We Christians still gather up
the dust of Jerusalem
and cart it away
believing it will make us holy.

We still believe
that we can seize by force
what is sacred
and bear it away
in our purse
or stash it in our hip pocket
like greenbacks
or toss it in the bed
of our pickup truck
like a sack of potatoes
and then head off for Disney World
confident that we are then 'protected'
by these 'holy' talismans.

I think
the pebble
upon which Merton trod
serves its cosmic purpose
better there
on the path he walked
than it does hidden away
in some dusty drawer.

I think
the blade of grass
sings its song better
growing there
in the soil
which covers his bones
than it can
pressed between the pages of
The Seven Storey Mountain.



Tim Cronley lives in Columbus, Ohio. He is a member of The International Thomas Merton Society and attended the Third General Meeting in 1993. He belongs to several environmental organizations, including the Appalachian Trail Conference, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, and the Wilderness Society.

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