

Thomas Merton and the Psalms

by Erlinda G. Paguio

In the early years of his monastic life, Thomas Merton's preoccupation with the things that were going on with the community at the Abbey of Gethsemani—the personnel of the house, the faults of character, deficiencies of the monks, the weaknesses of the choir, the way the monks led their life, etc.—bothered him very much. His confessor, knowing Merton's desire to become a Carthusian to be more contemplative, told him that what he was looking for (union with God) was right in front of his nose and he couldn't see it. No amount of work could prevent his union with God provided God willed it. Merton, realizing his great need to be detached from his preoccupations and to wait on God's grace, wrote in his journal dated April 11, 1948: "Good Shepherd, you have a wild and crazy sheep in love with thorns and brambles. But please don't get tired of looking for me. I know you won't, for you have found me. All I have to do is to stay found."¹ What he needed most of all was the grace to really accept God as He gave Himself to him in every situation.

Merton reminds me of King David, the psalmist, who speaks as a sheep addressing Yahweh in Psalm 23:

The Lord is my Shepherd,
I lack nothing.
In meadows of green grass he lets me lie.
To the waters of repose he leads me;
there he revives my soul.

Merton addresses Christ, who in St. John's Gospel declares: "I am the Good Shepherd. As the Father knows me and I know the Father, in the same way I know my sheep and they know me. And I am willing to die for them" (John 10:14–15).

Each sheep owner knows his sheep because he cuts his own distinctive earmark into the ear of his sheep. For Christians it is the Cross that identifies them with Christ. Merton, who calls himself "a wild and crazy sheep in love with thorns and brambles," may be compared to a sheep who is always looking for a loophole it could crawl through to feed on the other side of the pasture. The rest and contentment it seeks, however, is dependent not on itself, but on the care and diligence that the shepherd provides. Merton knows full well that Christ, the Good Shepherd, takes good care of him. To stay found, he must



Erlinda Paguio, bibliographic editor at Ekstrom Library, University of Louisville, is treasurer of the ITMS and secretary of the Thomas Merton Center Foundation. She has presented a number of papers on Merton over the years. The first version of this paper was presented to the Fourth Kansas Thomas Merton Conference in Atchison, Kansas, Nov. 8–10, 1996.

ERLINDA G. PAGUIO

remain always centered in God.

According to Merton, his big problem was to empty himself of useless projects and ideas and to stop complaining.² He was aware that his first trouble was his insistence on wanting to see everything in the interior life and having it under his own control. It was desiring to become a contemplative without depending on God. He knew he had a long way to go to learn patience, humility, and silence.³

In the 1950s, Thomas Merton published two books that dealt specifically with the psalms. *Bread in the Wilderness* (1953) contains Merton's personal notes on the psalter, in which he explores the spiritual nourishment that may be found in the psalms. He wrote the book for those whose vocation it is to chant the psalms, but who are unable to understand why the psalms make up the substance of the divine office that they are obliged to say. In addition to providing reasons why the psalter is considered one of the most valid forms of prayer for men of all times, he also shows that the psalms are more than just literature. He writes: "For the monk who really enters into the full meaning of his vocation, the psalms are the nourishment of his interior life and form the material of his meditations and of his own personal prayer, so that he comes to live them and experience them as if they were his own songs, his own prayers."⁴

In the life of Christ, the miracle of the multiplication of loaves foreshadowed the Sacrament of the Eucharist. For Merton, the psalms are spiritual bread provided by Christ to those who have followed Him in the wilderness of this life. The reality that nourishes us in the psalms is for him the same reality that sustains us in the Eucharist, though in a different form. He believes that in both forms of this reality we are fed by the Word of God: his flesh is food indeed in the Eucharist, and in the Scriptures, the Word is incarnate in human words.

In a pamphlet entitled *Praying the Psalms* (1956), Merton addresses the laity to remind them that the psalter is also a perfect form of prayer for them. They unite us to the praying Church in a less formal and official way. He stresses that the psalms are the songs of men *who knew Who God is*. If we are to pray well, we must be able to discover the Lord to Whom we speak in the psalms, because He makes Himself known to us in them.⁵

The psalms express the deepest inner life of the Church. In them she sings of her experience of God, of her knowledge and of her union with Christ, the Incarnate Word. She recommends them to all people so that they may have "the mind of Christ." "If we really come to know and love the psalms, we will enter into the Church's own experience of divine things. We will begin to know God as we ought." We will be able to praise God in the best possible way.⁶

This paper aims at understanding how John Cassian (365–435 A.D.), who was a monk and writer, influenced Merton in appreciating the psalms. How Merton used the psalms in his own life and how he in turn becomes our guide in contemplating them will form the other part of this paper.

In March 1953, Merton wrote in his journal that it was Cassian who became the "go-between" in his discovery of the psalms. He recalled that when he was a novice he did not know the penitential psalms even though he recited them every afternoon while working. "Through Cassian, I am getting back to everything, or rather, getting for the first time to monastic and Christian values I had dared to write about without knowing them."⁷ In *Bread in the Wilderness*, Merton notes that in the monastic life the prayer of the community is made up above all of psalms. The fulfillment of the obligation to chant the psalms during the canonical hours brings the monks into contact with God Whom they seek. The psalms bring their hearts and minds into the presence of God. Merton is emphatic, however, in differentiating between "saying prayers" and praying. He says: "I can, perhaps, exteriorly

fulfill an obligation by 'saying prayers,' but the reason for my being is *to pray*."⁸ He adds that when the psalms are prayed with faith, God makes Himself known to the faithful, and this is contemplation.

Cassian's teachings, which are contained in the *Institutes* and *Conferences* were an excellent resource for Merton. Cassian was a well-traveled man, a monk who had learned from other monks, and who was himself an excellent teacher of the spiritual life. The *Institutes* was a book for beginners in the monastic life or for those who were planning to establish monasteries. The *Conferences*, which was his greatest and most influential work, was a study of the Egyptian ideal of the monk. Both books reflected the tensions of the late Fourth and the first third of the Fifth centuries, but they speak to any generation who is concerned about the old problem of what to make of the life one has.

The goal of the monk's life, according to Cassian, is the Kingdom of God. He points to developing a clean heart as the way of attaining that end. He writes: "Our objective is purity of heart, which he [St. Paul] so justly describes as sanctification, for without this the goal cannot be reached... Therefore we must follow completely anything that can bring us to this objective, to the purity of heart, and anything which pulls us away from it must be avoided as being dangerous and damaging."⁹

Merton says that the monk attains purity of heart after a long process of transformation in which he practices perfect charity and detachment. Living absorbed in God and penetrated with a deep intuition of God's action in his life, the monk is able to "grasp" God in an intimate experience of Who He is and what He is doing in the world. According to Merton, "the man who is pure in heart not only knows God, the Absolute Being, pure Act, but knows Him as the Father of Lights, the Father of Mercies, Who has so loved the world as to give His only Begotten Son for its redemption. Such a man knows Him not merely by faith, not by theological speculation, but by intimate and incommunicable experience."¹⁰

In a journal entry dated Oct. 25, 1947, Merton writes about a momentary experience of "Pure Love" as expressed by St. Bernard and St. John of the Cross. It was an experience of emptiness and freedom that lasted for only a half-minute, yet it was enough for a lifetime because it was a new life. He said that there was nothing he could compare it with. The next sentences in the entry are full of longing: "When will You come back? Tomorrow on the Feast of Christ the King?"¹¹

Cassian says that the psalms teach us the true way to the spiritual understanding of the Scriptures: the way of active purification and meditation on the law of God. In his First Conference, he says: "To cling always to God and the things of God—this must be our major effort, this must be the road that the heart follows unswervingly."¹² He cites the story of Mary and Martha in which Christ established contemplation as a primary good, as a *gaze in the direction of the things of God*.¹³ The constant singing of the psalms produces a constant compunction within so that the mind may focus on the things of heaven.¹⁴

In the Third Conference, as well as in the Ninth Conference, Cassian provides assurances of God's abiding presence. He tells us that we must pray at every moment, and imitate David, the psalmist, who prays in the psalms: "'Direct my footsteps along Your paths so that my feet do not move astray' (Ps. 16:5); 'He has settled my feet on a rock and guided my footsteps' (Ps. 39:3). Because man's free will needs guidance against its ignorance and passion, it is written in the psalms: 'I was pushed and whirled and about to fall...and the Lord came to my rescue' (Ps. 117:13). When the Lord sees us stumbling, He stretches His hand, rescues us and strengthens us."¹⁵

In Cassian's brief commentary on the "Our Father," he remarks that the person who prays "may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" must be a man of faith. He must believe that God

arranges everything for our benefit, for God's great concern is our salvation and well-being.¹⁶

David, who is a type of Christ, is Cassian's model in praying the psalms. Although God heard him on the very first day of his prayer, He let him wait before showing the outcome of his petition. Cassian reminds us that sometimes God delays His answer to our prayers. Instead of losing hope, we must learn to wait on Him, and believe that He will keep His promise to be with us until the end of time.

In Psalm 39:9, David prays to Yahweh: "I come to do Your will, for this is what I wish, O my God."¹⁷ Christ prayed in the same way. His will was identical to that of His Father. In Matt. 26:36, He addresses His Father in this way: "Father, let this cup pass from me, if it is possible. Yet let it not be as I wish, but as You wish." In John 2:16, we read the statement that God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son so that we may have life everlasting. This union between the Father and the Son is consistent in the Gospels, throughout the life of Christ. Cassian assures us that if we are consistent in doing God's will just as Christ did the Father's will, this perfect love with which God loved us first will come into our hearts. We will be able to fulfill God's commandment of loving Him with all our heart, mind, and soul, and our neighbor as our self.

When Cassian was asked in Conference Ten how to keep God constantly in one's thought, he answered with a device that was handed to him by a Desert Father. He says: "To keep the thought of God always in your mind you must cling totally to this formula for piety: 'Come to my help, O God; Lord, hurry to my rescue'" (Ps. 69:2). These words are well chosen because they carry with them all human feelings. They may be adapted to any situation to ward off temptations. It is a cry of help to God in times of danger. At the same time, it also conveys the assurance of being heard, the confidence that God's assistance is always present.¹⁸

Cassian compares this little verse to food that is nourishing. If we continuously eat it, we absorb it, and we penetrate the psalms when we sing them as if they were our own private prayer, uttered amidst the deepest compunction of heart. Their reality enters our time, and what they express is fulfilled in us.¹⁹

Merton reiterates Cassian's teaching in his book. When we recite the psalms we must learn to recognize in them the sufferings and triumph of the Messiah, for the life of the psalms is none other than Christ, Who is the Center of the Old and the New Testament. Merton encourages us to consider the psalms of the Divine Office as an extension of the Mass. In the Offertory of the Mass we bring our sacrifice. In the psalms, we offer our sorrows, problems, and difficulties. We use the words of the psalms to bring to God our many conflicts, and we identify with Him Who suffers, struggles, labors and triumphs in the psalms.²⁰ Merton believes that a kind of transubstantiation takes place, created by the power of the Holy Spirit. Our fears turn to courage, and we overcome suffering not by escaping it, but by *completely accepting it*. Christ mysteriously comes to us, and we become one with him.

Merton speaks of a living faith that is penetrated with love. It prepares us for contemplation and helps us to recognize God in His inspired words. It makes us aware of His comings and goings in our heart. It brings us directly under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that we are able to penetrate the deepest meanings of the psalms.

Merton also shares with us the experience of coming face to face with the Christ of the psalms. In a split second, the soul enters into the Passion of Christ as it is presented to us by the Holy Spirit, in the psalms. He refers to this outpouring of ourselves, an emptying that is similar to the words found in Psalm 22:1, 12-16:

My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?
 Why are You so far from me, so far from the words of my groaning....
 I am surrounded by a herd of bulls—strong bulls of Bashan closing in
 on me, their mouths, open like lions roaring at their prey.
 I am like water drained out; my bones are out of joint,
 my heart melts like wax.
 My strength is dried up like a potsherd;
 my tongue is stuck to my palate.
 You have laid me down in the dust of death.

Merton considers this the terrible experience of seeing oneself slowly turned inside out. It is a humbling realization of ourselves eviscerated by our own ingratitude, under God's mercy. He explains that this experience will come to a person who believed himself to be virtuous, and who thought he loved God and had attained to a degree of prayer in his life. He says: "This emptiness, this sense of spiritual annihilation, which is due to all as men born in sin and grown old in sin, Christ took upon Himself when it was not due to Him at all and emptied Himself of all power and glory to descend into the freezing depth of darkness where we had crawled to hide ourselves, cowering in blind despair."²¹ Yet it is precisely in this darkness that we find God.

St. John of the Cross speaks about this in his works. Through suffering, God purifies the soul, strengthens it, infuses His wisdom into it as He brings it nearer to Him. He protects and frees it from all that is not God. In *The Living Flame of Love*, he writes: "The very fire of love which afterwards is united with the soul, glorifying it, is that which previously assails by purging it.... Let it suffice to know that the very God Who desires to enter within the soul through the union and transformation of love is He Who first assails and purges it with the light and heat of His Divine Flame."²²

Merton finds this experience well expressed in Psalm 87:

O Lord, my God, I call for help by day;
 Before You I cry out by night.
 May my prayer come to You;
 Incline Your ear to my cry for help.
 My soul is full of trouble, my life draws near to the grave.
 I am a man without strength...
 You have plunged me into the lowest and darkest depths of the pit.
 O Lord, why do You reject me,
 Why do You hide Your face?
 Bereft of loved ones and now alone,
 I have only darkness as my companion.

Merton considers this moment of darkness as an encounter and an identification with Christ Crucified. It is an experience of becoming one with His death. Yet if we die with Him, we also rise with Him. This dark night in which we seem to be lost is actually "the protection of the shadow of God's wings." God brought us into this darkness to guard us with extreme care and tenderness. He leads the soul to a soundless and a vast interior solitude, which is God's own heart. There is no human spectator in His Heart, and the soul does not even see itself. Merton's expression of being protected by the shadow of God's wings is from Psalm 16:6-8:

I call on You, for You will answer, O God;
 incline Your ear to me; hear my word.
 Show Your wonderful love, O Savior of those who flee
 from their persecutors to seek refuge in Your right hand.
 Keep me as the apple of Your eye;
 Under the shadow of Your wings hide me.

St. John of the Cross writes that the most extreme abandonment Christ felt on the Cross was when He suffered annihilation in His soul and felt deprived of His Father's consolation. Such was the aridity of His inmost being that He cried out: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?" Through this experience, Christ was able to accomplish the reconciliation and union of the human race with God through grace. St. John of the Cross says that "the Lord achieved this...that the true spiritual person might understand the mystery of the door and the way (which is Christ) leading to union with God, and that he might realize that his union with God will be measured by the annihilation for God in the sensory and spiritual parts of his soul. When he is brought to nothing, the highest degree of humility, the spiritual union between his soul and God will be effected. This union is the most noble and sublime state attainable in this life. The journey, then, does not consist in recreations, experiences, and spiritual feelings, but in the living, sensory and spiritual, exterior and interior death of the Cross."²³

In Psalm 90:9–16, Merton shows us God's abiding protection in times of trouble:

If you have made the Lord your refuge,
 the most High your stronghold,
 no harm will come upon you,
 no disaster will draw near your tent....
 Because he clings to Me in love,
 I will rescue him, says the Lord.
 I will protect him for He knows My name.
 When he calls to Me, I will answer;
 in time of trouble I will be with him;
 I will deliver and honor him.
 I will satisfy him with long life
 and show him My salvation.

How Merton lived the psalms may be gleaned from the following journal entries in 1947–49 and 1953. These are the years that are closest to his writing *Bread in the Wilderness* and *Praying the Psalms*.

In May 1947, Merton felt that it was a cross trying to write books, being a contemplative, dealing with censors, contracts, royalties, and his correspondences throughout the world. Addressing God in his journal he wrote: "You have made my soul for Your peace and Your silence, and it is wounded with confusion and noise of my sins and desires."²⁴ He reflected on Psalm 29:13, 117:28: "Lord, my God, in You I trust. Let me not be put to shame forever."²⁵ He prayed that his books would be understood by whoever read them: "I leave it all in the hands of God, and I give myself more and more to His guidance." He ended this prayer with a line from Psalm 142:10: "Thy good spirit shall lead me on a straight path."²⁶

In July 1947, we find Merton in complete darkness and confusion about the whole purpose of his life. He writes: "What am I heading for—where am I going? The answer to that one is: I don't need to know. All these troubles come from mistrusting the love of God."²⁷ Eventually he realized that God knew what He wanted to do with him. He wrote: "Rest in His tremendous love...to know the savor and sweetness of God's love expressed from moment to moment to moment in all the contacts between Him and our soul—from outside in events, in His signified will and will of good pleasure, from within myself by the flow of His actual graces. Rest in that union. It will feed you, fill you with life. There is nothing else you need. He will show you the way to increase it and, if necessary, He will lead you into perfect solitude in His own good time. Leave it all to Him. Live in the present."²⁸ On Sept. 26, 1947, Merton wished that he could always say the psalms wisely. When the psalms stayed with him throughout the day he knew that it was a favor and a gift from God.²⁹

In December 1949, prayer in choir became very difficult for Merton again as he rediscovered solitude. Yet he found tremendous meaning in Psalm 54. He felt as if he was chanting something that he himself had written during the night office, that the following verses truly captured what was in the depths of his soul:

My heart is troubled within me and the fear of death is fallen upon me.
Fear and trembling are come upon me; and darkness hath covered me.
And I said: Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly away;
Lo, I have gone far off flying away, and I abide in the wilderness.
I waited for Him that saved me from pusillanimity of spirit and a storm.³⁰

He felt terrified that his heart and imagination wandered away from God. He felt physically faint while distributing communion to the monks, but those lines from the psalm gave him great confidence. This is the secret of the psalms, he said: "Our identity is hidden in them. In them we find ourselves and God. In these fragments He has revealed not only Himself to us but ourselves to Him."³¹

Merton's suffering in the choir is evident in many journal entries prior to his ordination. The entry on Oct. 10, 1948, reflected how the uncomfortable situation was a means of transformation for him: "I am coming to the conclusion that it is an advantage that our choir is so terrible, because since I have been forced to admit my absolute incapacity to do anything about it and have abandoned myself to God, I have been assailed by love in every hour of the Office. So what do I care if God wants me to glorify Him by loving Him in patience and peace through all that cacophony? Who cares about sounds, when there is love to keep you busy and tie you up in the cloud? If God wants glory from our singing, He will know how to get it fast enough."³² It was not enough, he thought, that the choir was a cross. One must also attempt to improve things. Several weeks later, Merton was plagued by the choir again: "In my interior life there is a small area of raw and inflamed and infected thought and emotion, and it concerns the choir and the head cantor."³³ Yet Merton could also write: "How God works on your soul by these obscure and unremarkable sufferings that cleanse and drain your wounds."³⁴

At the beginning of 1949, however, Merton was no longer sub-cantor. He felt that he was more able to tolerate the bad singing because he was not responsible for it. "The block in my mind about the chant in the choir suddenly slipped out of place and I got free again and could pray along without worrying about the flat tone or criticizing the cantor under my breath."³⁵

Merton rediscovered the penitential psalms in March 1953. He says that he did so because he experienced a need for them. He writes that when God tells you that you are poor, you will really know what poverty means. When God tells you of a sickness, it is because He intends to give you a remedy. It is the devil that makes you so helpless by taunting you with your illness. Quoting Psalm 6:7, "My eyes waste away with grief," Merton realized how miserably tense and hard he felt in the last eleven years whenever he recited those psalms. "I recite the words automatically like a nervous and well-oiled machine. If I am still able by some miracle to pray the Office, it must be in spite of the way I recite Latin! That is the part of the fury that has blinded the eye of my soul and kept it from being simple."³⁶

He reflected on how Christ recognized his poverty in Christ's own poverty. Seeing himself in the psalm was for him the beginning of being healed. It was God's grace that he recognized in the wreckage he found in his soul. He wrote: "While I meditated on the *Domine ne in furore* [Lord, not in thy fury (Psalm 6:1)], I caught sight of an unexpected patch of green meadow, along the creek, on our neighbor's land. The green grass under the leafless trees, the pools of water after the storm, lifted my heart to God. He is so easy to come to when even grass and water bear witness to His mercy! *Lacrimis meis stratum meum rigabo*. [I will water my couch with tears (Psalm 6:7).]"³⁷

Merton finds that in all the psalms a motif similar to that found in Psalm 1 may be discerned: "Blessed is the man who follows not the counsel of the ungodly...but whose delight is in the law of the Lord." The one experience that the psalms lead us to is this delight in the law of the Lord, this peace in the will of God. This is the cornerstone of the praise the psalmists rendered God.³⁸ This is the fundamental religious experience that the psalms teach us: *the peace that comes from submission to God's will and from perfect confidence in Him*.

Merton instructs us that, whether we understand a psalm at first or not, we should always remember to make use of it as a prayer that will enable us to surrender ourselves to God. If we kept this in mind, the other psalms will unfold their mysteries to us, and soon we will discover which psalms fit our condition and our experience better than others.

Merton notes that if our prayer feels dead, perhaps it is because we are centered only on asking God for things. We do not praise Him enough. Merton reminds us of Mary's deep gratefulness and praise to God for all that He did for her. Her song of praise, "My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my savior," indicates her deep prayer life. We, too, should have something of that reflected in our own prayer.

Merton encourages us to acquire the habit of reciting the psalms slowly and well. He says that we can say a few psalms or just one psalm. The important thing is that we meditate on the lines that have the deepest meaning for us. All aspects of the interior life, all religious experiences and all the spiritual needs of man are depicted and lived in the psalms, but if we do not use them with faith, confidence, and love, we will fail to grasp their richness.³⁹

On April 14, 1949, Merton noted in his journal that, although he was too much concerned about how much he was personally getting out of praying the psalms, he felt that he was getting a lot out of it. "I don't mean 'lights or spectacles,'" he said, "but a deep unitive awareness of God and a sapience that came up out of the midst of me in waves, under the impulsion of the psalms. I keep seeing the psalter as a compendium and a summary of the whole spiritual life, with everything packed into it, everything."⁴⁰

Merton says that he had learned to love with a human heart in the psalms, because they are full

of human simplicity. David knew God as a man and loved Him as a man. Merton understood for himself that Christ became a man so that his heart and Christ's heart may love God the Father in one love in the Holy Spirit. He realized the mystery of his vocation: "Not that we cease to be men in order to become angels or gods, but that the love of my man's heart can become God's love for God and men, and my human tears can fall from my eyes as the tears of God because they well up from the motion of His Spirit in the heart of His incarnate Son. Hence—the gift of piety grows in solitude, nourished by the Psalms."⁴¹ Merton teaches us that when our love of other men becomes pure and strong, we will be able to go out to them without vanity and complacency. We will be able to love them with something of the purity and gentleness and hiddenness of God's love for us. When this happens, our solitude in Christ will have borne much fruit.⁴²

In one of Merton's conferences to the monks at the beginning of 1968, he expounds on the Hebrew meaning of the line from the psalms: "I have loved because the Lord will hear." "I have loved" means that one has reached a point in life at which he can no longer live without love and turn his back on God's love. He becomes like the psalmist who has experienced God and who has realized that all creation is one with him in this love. His heart now being alive with love, he can also praise God in these words: "All you creatures of the world, praise you the Lord."⁴³

Notes

1. Thomas Merton, *Entering the Silence: Becoming a Monk and Writer*, ed. Jonathan Montaldo (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996) 198–99.
2. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 122.
3. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 202.
4. Thomas Merton, *Bread in the Wilderness* (New York: New Directions, 1953) 3.
5. Thomas Merton, *Praying the Psalms* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1956) 9.
6. Merton, *Praying the Psalms* 5.
7. Thomas Merton, *A Search for Solitude: Pursuing the Monk's True Life*, ed. Lawrence S. Cunningham (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996) 38.
8. Merton, *Bread in the Wilderness* 13.
9. John Cassian, *Conferences* (New Jersey: Paulist, 1985) 39–40.
10. Merton, *Bread in the Wilderness* 20–21.
11. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 127.
12. Cassian, *Conferences* 42.
13. Cassian, *Conferences* 43.
14. Cassian, *Conferences* 52.
15. Cassian, *Conferences* 93.
16. Cassian, *Conferences* 113.
17. Cassian, *Conferences* 123.
18. Cassian, *Conferences* 132–33.
19. Cassian, *Conferences* 137.
20. Merton, *Bread in the Wilderness* 70–73.
21. Merton, *Bread in the Wilderness* 121.
22. *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1979) 586.
23. *Collected Works* 125. See also Merton, *Bread in the Wilderness* 127.
24. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 70.
25. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 71.
26. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 79.
27. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 89.
28. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 89.

29. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 122.
30. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 383.
31. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 384.
32. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 236.
33. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 248.
34. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 253.
35. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 271.
36. Merton, *A Search for Solitude* 39.
37. Merton, *A Search for Solitude* 39.
38. Merton, *Praying the Psalms* 17.
39. Merton, *Praying the Psalms* 31.
40. Merton, *Entering the Silence* 302.
41. Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude* (New York: Noonday, 1991, c1956) 123.
42. Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude* 124.
43. Thomas Merton, *The Heart Alive with Love*, audiotape, Credence Cassettes.