

Editing the Journals of Thomas Merton

Patrick Hart, O.C.S.O.

When I was asked to write an article for *The Merton Annual* on editing the original Thomas Merton journals, I thought it would afford an opportunity to reflect on our approach to this long-range project. Thus far the first volume, *Run to the Mountain*, which I edited, was published in June 1995; in January 1996 the second volume, *Entering the Silence*, edited by Jonathan Montaldo, was published, and in June 1996 the third volume, *A Search for Solitude*, edited by Lawrence S. Cunningham, appeared. The fourth volume, *Turning Toward the World*, planned for January 1997, is being edited by Victor A. Kramer. HarperSanFrancisco has scheduled the seven volumes to appear at six-month intervals. So by the new millennium all seven volumes will be available.

Until a publisher was chosen by the Merton Trust, it was not possible to decide definitely on the editorial policy for the entire project. If a university press were chosen, there was a possibility of doing something closer to a facsimile edition of the journals. But with HarperSanFrancisco as the publisher, it became clear that a very readable series of Merton journals was wanted, much like Merton himself might have published, but without inclusion of deletions and additions and/or rewritings, often done by Merton to satisfy censors of the order. Our thought was to publish the journals just as Merton wrote them with minimal editing. Footnotes would be allowed only for essential explanations of persons or events not comprehensible to the reader. Foreign language phrases were translated and placed in brackets immediately following the text. As John Loudon at Harper explained at the outset, he did not want something resembling a German doctoral dissertation on the Scriptures, with more footnotes than text.

After my appointment as general editor in the spring of 1990 I began a search for all the extant Merton journals housed in the various archives around the country. The majority of these were located at the Thomas Merton Center of Bellarmine College in Louisville, Kentucky. I had become aware of a number of journals located at St. Bonaventure University Library, especially the pre-monastic journals Merton had given to his friend Mark Van Doren and some transcripts of journals he had given to another friend, Richard Fitzgerald. Columbia University in New York inherited the Sister Thérèse Lentfoehr's Merton collection, which is quite extensive.

The Merton Legacy Trust agreement, drawn up in 1967, the year before Merton's death, includes the indenture that the journals may be published "in whole or in part" at the discretion of the Trust, but not until after the official biography had been published and twenty-five years had elapsed since his death. The biography, *The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton* by Michael Mott, was published in 1985, and December 10, 1993, marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death, so the journals could begin to appear anytime after that date.

During his lifetime Merton drew upon these journals, choosing excerpts for a number of his books, including *The Secular Journal*, *The Sign of Jonas*, and *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*. He edited heavily, omitted a great deal of material, and substituted fictitious names in the monastic journals to preserve the anonymity of monks in particular. After his death several books based on his journals appeared: *A Vow of Conversation*, *Woods, Shore and Desert*, *The Alaskan Journal*, and, finally, *The Asian Journal*.

As I explained in the introduction to *Run to the Mountain*, "There is no denying that Thomas Merton was an inveterate diarist. He clarified his ideas in writing especially by keeping a journal. Perhaps his best writing can be found in the journals, where he was expressing what was deepest in his heart with no thought of censorship."

Run to the Mountain

The first volume of the Merton journals covers the years from May 1939 through December 1941, the earliest journals discovered from his pre-monastic years. The first part, which has been called "The Perry Street Journal," begins with an entry dated May 2, 1939: "This is May. Who seen any birds?" I find it amusing that he should begin with an ungrammatical question, followed by reflections on Cicero and Augustine.

This early journal reflects the life of a young intellectual living at 35 Perry Street in the Village and teaching at Columbia University Extension. He had received his master's degree from Columbia in 1938 writing on "Nature and Art in William Blake"¹ and was contemplating a doctoral dissertation on the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, but the latter never became a reality. We see here a twenty-four-year-old writer, clearly ambitious and eager to be published, offering his first novels to any number of publishing houses, only to be greeted with rejection slips. Some of the more compassionate publishers actually read the manuscripts and commented on them, encouraging Merton to continue writing.

As far as we know, after his reception into the Catholic Church in 1938, he must have destroyed his previous journals, as he mentions in the introduction to *The Secular Journal*:

These are a few selections taken from a diary that I kept when I was a layman, a graduate student at Columbia, teaching in University Extension there, and later when I was an Instructor at St. Bonaventure University. This was written, like most diaries, informally, colloquially, and in haste. The whole diary filled two or three large manuscript volumes. Only one of these still exists, the others were thrown away or destroyed after I had typed out a few excerpts which are given here, along with parts of the surviving volume[s].²

Merton was mistaken in the above statement, since there were two holographic journals given to St. Bonaventure's University archives by Mark Van Doren to add to their collection of Thomas Merton's notebooks and art work. These two journals appear to be the first and third of what must have been three pre-monastic journals. The first begins on May 2, 1939, and ends February 13, 1940. The third journal, which has come to be known as the St. Bonaventure Journal, begins on October 19, 1940, and ends with an entry for December 5, 1941.

But what about the missing journal, from February 13, 1940, to October 10, 1940? When packing his bags at St. Bonaventure's in early

1. See Appendix I in *The Literary Essays of Thomas Merton*, ed. Patrick Hart (New York: New Directions, 1981) 385-453.

2. *The Secular Journal of Thomas Merton* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1959) vi.

December 1941, preparing to enter Gethsemani, Merton was passing out manuscripts, poems, and drawings to friends; one of these, Richard Fitzgerald, a seminarian who had been on friendly terms with Merton, was given a treasure trove. Many years later Fitzgerald, having retired from the ministry, was living in Florida. He wrote to St. Bonaventure's asking if they might be interested in these unpublished Merton materials. Fr. Irenaeus Herscher, a Franciscan friar and librarian at St. Bonaventure's University, was delighted to receive the gift. And so are countless Merton scholars today.

Among the contents of the so-called "Fitzgerald File" at St. Bonaventure's was a transcription of parts of the missing journal. It included Merton's month in Cuba, which, together with the manuscript Merton had sent Catherine Doherty when he was about to enter Gethsemani, came to be known as "The Cuban Journal." There were other articles, for example, one on the lay apostolate recently published in *The Merton Annual* 7.³ In this same file were discovered fragments of unpublished novels, such as *The Labyrinth* and the opening part of *The Man in the Sycamore Tree*. We can only conjecture here that Merton himself made the transcription of a part of, or the whole of, the missing holographic journal that was then apparently discarded.

One question still remained: Were these actually transcriptions of the missing journal, or did Merton work them over as he typed them up, hoping that at some future time he might incorporate them or transform them into a novel? Or were they fragments of one of his autobiographic novels on which he was working at the same time at the cottage? This was to be a pattern in his later writings, for the most part to please the censors of the order. This dilemma was finally solved with the assistance of Robert Lax. This journal was written at a time when Lax and Merton were very close friends, and during several summers when the friends had stayed at the cottage near Olean, New York, which belonged to Gladys and Benjamin Marcus, Bob Lax's sister and brother-in-law. I felt strongly that if anyone would be able to help discern the authenticity of these journals and their chronological sequence, it would be Lax.

For nearly twenty years, Lax had been living in self-imposed exile on the Greek island of Patmos. I wrote him asking if I might visit him in an effort to establish some order in these transcriptions of journals found at St. Bonaventure's, and he readily agreed. In the spring of

1992 I set off for Athens, and then embarked on the ten-hour-long ferry ride out to Patmos in the Aegean Sea.

After going through these transcriptions page by page, Lax and I agreed on the transcriptions that were made directly from the "raw" holographic journals and not reworked at a later date. The immediacy of the writing convinced us that the transcriptions were authentic and could be included in this pre-monastic journal. Several transcriptions were not included because they were obviously reworkings of already existing entries that we considered "raw" journal.

The third part, known as the "St. Bonaventure Journal," was written for the most part at St. Bonaventure's while Merton was teaching English and creative writing. Before leaving St. Bonaventure's for Gethsemani, Merton had given Mark Van Doren two bound volumes of journals, along with other materials for an anthology of poetry, and a few typewritten pages from a journal. In January 1944, Van Doren wrote to St. Bonaventure's asking if these journals might find a home there. They were indeed welcomed, and on January 15, 1944, the two journals that comprise this volume were transferred to St. Bonaventure's for safekeeping. It was only years later, when Michael Mott, the official Merton biographer, wrote of having discovered these journals and other Merton manuscripts in the library at Olean, New York, that I realized what a gold mine was to be found at St. Bonaventure's Library archive.

Toward the end of the journal there are references to the Baroness, who had given a talk to the friars and students at St. Bonaventure's on her lay apostolate with the poor at Friendship House in Harlem. As the journal brings out very well, Merton was torn between a possible vocation as a volunteer staff worker at Friendship House and a vocation to become a friar or monk. The matter was finally resolved as the journal closes and he departs from St. Bonaventure's for the Abbey of Gethsemani in the knob country of Kentucky, where he would spend the last twenty-seven years of his life.

A Postscript: Four Merton Journal Transcriptions

During the International Thomas Merton Society meeting held at St. Bonaventure's University in June 1995, Dr. Paul Spaeth, the director of the library, discovered some transcriptions of Merton journals

3. See *The Merton Annual* 7 (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1994) 1-13.

that were filed in a folder called "The Brown Journal." While doing my research at St. Bonaventure's in 1990 I was not aware that such transcriptions existed, apart from what was unearthed in "The Fitzgerald File." Four of these dated entries coincided with pages Merton had torn out of the journal he was keeping and presumably discarded. We are grateful to Dr. Spaeth for calling these omissions to our attention. After studying them carefully, it was decided to make these available to Merton readers as soon as possible. What follows are the four transcriptions, which we considered authentic "raw" journal entries. Fortunately, they have been included as an Appendix in the forthcoming paperback edition of *Run to the Mountain*.

(1) July 13, 1940; Olean

[1941 is the year given by Merton, but the text of the letter leads one to believe it was actually 1940, when he was spending the summer at the cottage that belonged to Bob Lax's sister and brother-in-law, Gladys and Benjamin Marcus.]

At noon I went out to sit in the bright sun and write, but the sun was too bright to sit and write in.

The paper says we will all be in the army by October 1st. Nobody has beaten any drums, and probably nobody would believe them if they did.

All I know is that the weather today was bright like the fall of the year: bright and cool. Last night, the night was cold, and a lot like a night in fall, with the sky very full of bright stars. You could have been led to imagine that the cars climbing the hill were on their way back from football games.

Now, very clear, from down in the valley, comes the sound of barking dogs.

I haven't read any of the books I brought up this hill a month and a half ago.

(2) July 23, 1941; St. Bonaventure

"Son, believe not thine own affection that now is, for it soon shall be changed into another. . . . But above all these things standeth the wise man and well taught in spirit, taking no heed what he feels in himself, nor on which side the wind of unstableness bloweth, but that all the intention of his mind may profit to the due and best end. For so

he may abide, one and the same, unshaken, with the simple eye of intention directed to Me without ceasing, among so many diverse chances."

Imitation of Christ 3:38

This is the whole of ethics, from a psychological standpoint. It is the only thing anybody needs to surely know how to do, in order to be happy, and holy, which are exactly the same thing. It is saying in psychological terms, "Forsake everything, take up thy cross, and follow Me!" It is saying what the following of Christ means, in anybody's experience, and what forsake everything means: and it gives the reason why we have to forsake everything, psychologically.

No matter how we feel, subjectively, happy or sad, devout or not, healthy or sick, our feelings are unimportant, but our intentions are all that matter, if they are still directed only to God. And they are directed to Him when they drive us always to do good actions, to think good things, according to God's commandments and counsels.

This also is the basis of the *credo ut intelligam* [I believe so that I can understand] in philosophy. If philosophy is to be the search for truth, instead of mere curiosity, it must go out with this humility and this obedience to God: ignoring everything that merely pleases or flatters or amuses us, or merely defeats somebody we dislike. Unless we possess this humility and intense singleness of vision, we go to find truth somewhat like those Jews who "sometimes came into Bethany to Martha and Mary not for Jesus alone, but for they would see Lazarus."

(3) November 9, 1941

Baudelaire was never really comprehensible to me until I became a Catholic. He is not intelligible unless you are aware of what it is to love God, and what it is to consciously rebel against God, believing Him to exist to be rebelled against. When I lived in my mild, anarchic, Epicurean universe at the age of sixteen I could hardly see what Baudelaire was talking about. I thought I knew what he meant by *ennui*. If I had for one moment felt at that age the *ennui* of Baudelaire instead of the *ennui* of anybody who was ever sixteen, I would have died on the spot and crumbled into ashes.

I had the pleasure of finding out later something of what he was talking about, however: but I didn't understand what it was either until more recently still.

To understand the degradation he describes, you have to know at the same time the infinitesimally short distance between grace and sin, life and death, which is, at the same time, the immensely large, the infinite distance between heaven and hell.

There is a certain terrific incorruptibility about Baudelaire's writing and his clarity in hell that makes his writing about damnation almost holy in its honesty. He has a poem on the denial of St. Peter that kills me with sorrow and anguish and I can hardly read it, it is so terrible: and its terror is that it is the denial of St. Peter seen from the point of view of Judas, and *praised*.

—Ah Jésus, souviens toi du Jardin des Olives!
 Dans ta simplicité tu priais à genoux
 Celui qui dans son ciel riait au bruit des clous
 Que d'ignobles bourreaux plantaient dans tes chairs vives.

[Ah Jesus, is that memory still fresh—
 How in the Garden of Olives guilelessly you prayed
 To Him who in his heaven, undismayed,
 laughed at the sound of nails that pierced your flesh?]

It combines all the desolation of the "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me!" with the terrible twist of meaning that this is how the cry sounded in hell: hell, which did not understand, believed that Christ's cry was hell's victory, and began to sympathize with Him triumphantly as if he actually were no more than a man, and a failure.

But it is that actual cry: the cry that shook heaven and earth and hell, and Baudelaire, in hell, heard it: which many of us, in grace, never bother to listen to!

Putting down Baudelaire I realized that the whole of Dante's *Inferno* is nothing but a schoolboy's fancy compared to what is described in the *Fleurs du Mal*. Dante fancies himself in a kind of hell, and described it according to the textbooks. And all the other writers who described the howling of the damned and their terrible torments have been silly compared to Baudelaire who saw that the most terrible thing about hell was the attractiveness of what is horrible, and not its unattractiveness!

In all evil, there is something holy perverted. The dialectic between the good that underlies evil and the evil into which this good is perverted is frightful. In every evil act of Baudelaire's life, God was present to remind him of exactly what he was doing, who he was cru-

cifying. That is the greatness and the terror of the *Fleurs du Mal*, and it is proved by the fact that Baudelaire finally admitted it, and gave in to God [whom] he had killed all his life.

And anybody who can't see the intimate connection between Baudelaire's love of evil and his return to the love of God, had best leave him strictly alone. What terror is in that book! God, save me!

To fear to lose God is the worst of all fears—it is [at] the same time the most salutary and the silliest. We can only lose Him by our own stupidity and ill will. To know how great is our own stupidity and weakness is to have everything in the world to fear, but to know the strength of God's grace is to have nothing in the world to fear. As long as we live, we remain balanced between fearlessness and terror.

(4) November 17, 1941

It was a nice sunny day, to be a pilgrim and an exile. I went into town and deposited my monthly paycheck in the bank: which did nothing whatever to make me happy. For, in spite of the sun, there is no real peace in this place, only inertia, and inertia is never the same as peace: peace is a kind of active order and harmony. It is vital, and not inert.

Everything here seems totally neutral. Not unhappy people, who are not happy either, stand in the sun and talk about absolutely nothing; and time passes. Sun shines in the windows of the stores, upon the big gaudy showcards, upon the grins of the hefty, moronic blonde queens (always the same empty grins, everywhere, as if it were a blasphemy not to be grinning all the time) as they point their cardboard hands at the refrigerators and the electric ranges, or salute (and grin falsely, still) as if to say: "We are ready, Uncle Sammy, with our bottles of ketchup, our cheap toothbrushes, our ersatz good humor and cheap products, to support anything so long as we only have to make faces and never have to think, as long as we live."

It flashed into my mind a comparison between the inertia here, which is spiritual, and the inertia of any small town in Europe, which might be economic. But economic inertia is no inertia at all compared to this, which is really deadly. And even though there is no end of spiritual inertia in Europe (especially in England), that stagnation doesn't seem so bad in places where there are some signs that there was some life in the past, once. On the other hand, when the spiritual decay of something that was once very vital sets in, it is more terrible than the

inertia of something that was never really lived at all. (I just remembered Oxford and Cambridge.)

There is often no real reason for preferring one place to another: metaphysically, it doesn't matter what town you happen to be in; you can work out your salvation in it, and find peace there if you want to, because the peace we need we have to look for in ourselves.

Psychologically, there are great differences between places, though, and the limits they put upon your own spirituality are often very significant. I am beginning to think it was good, being quiet here for a year, but now, perhaps, I have used up the resources for recollection that the mere inertia of the place gave me. Maybe if I stayed here, what I now seem to possess as peace would cease to deepen itself, and turn into inertia (if such a thing is possible).

Perhaps there is in place a certain value: they make it possible for you to seek and find certain things in your own soul. When you have found them, you begin to know the place has served you: and if the place is pleasant and pretty doesn't mean much anymore: it has only one further value: the value of a sacrifice. The only good thing that can be done with the place, the type of life, is to give it up. Renounce the temptation to keep what you have got as if it were now a possession, and hold on to it in inertia.

There was a rich young man in the Bible who had learned to keep all the commandments. Being rich, he had nevertheless used his riches wisely and justly. But they had done him all the service they could: they had only one further service, the value they would have if he freely renounced them, and gave everything to the poor. Unless he did this, from this point on, all his justice would be mere inertia, and to a Christian, inertia must be intolerable—it is hiding the talent that will become useless as soon as it is idle!

Christ told the young man what he should do. But he loved his security, and loved the peace that had already ceased to be peace (since he was restless enough to ask what to do) and become inertia. He turned away in sorrow, says the Gospel, for he had great possessions. And yet most Catholics who frequent the sacraments are "good people." Some are pharisees, no doubt, because there are pharisees everywhere where pride is possible, and that is everywhere on earth. But most practicing Catholics are good, worthy men and women, not willfully unkind, not more nervous and short tempered than anybody else, often much less so—but what is all this? These things are insults: to say Christians are *no less* uncharitable than everybody else. If they

are not men who are consumed with the intense desire to love God and their neighbor, they are salt without savor. If they merely are in a sort of negative state of grace, not doing any wrong but not doing any good either, are they actually in grace at all? What about the man who took the talent and buried it? What will happen to him when the Lord comes and asks what we have done with our talents that he left with us? What will happen to us if the grace in us doesn't bring forth any fruit and is allowed to remain idle from our own lack of work and of charity?

When the aim we know is our highest aim in life, the salvation of our souls by means of loving God and our neighbor, is followed after with so much indifference by us (at best we merely keep out of a state of sin), how will the writing of poetry ever command any intense devotion from us?

No doubt we mean furiously to be good poets, and rage about our literary opinions, just the way we fume over our religious and political arguments too: we have enough energy to argue, but not enough to act. We can roar and rave against communists, but we have not the strength to go out and be charitable to the poor. We can rage against atheists, but we do not try to become saints ourselves, and we rage against the writers who are said to be technically good but write about things that really hurt us and offend us (like Joyce), but we do not devote ourselves to learning how to write, or even to read like Joyce did, and great writers must. We want it to be easy. We want to learn to be saints without giving up our whole lives to the Love of God.

In the same way, we think we can learn to be writers without loving the best and deepest and greatest poetry as a total and intense experience of the whole intellect and imagination, united in an act of contemplation, for contemplation means nothing to us any more, either spiritually or intellectually!

The one Catholic writer in this century who knew that being a writer meant following a vocation through tribulation and poverty and persecution was Leon Bloy. And Eric Gill went about being an artist with the same kind of attitude, too, prepared to suffer anything for what he knew was true and good and holy.

Two Missing Sheets of Merton Journal Discovered

In his research while reviewing *Run to the Mountain*, Dr. Patrick O'Connell, president of the International Thomas Merton Society, was

able to compare the published text with the manuscripts and transcriptions at St. Bonaventure University Library. In addition to the typographical errors he noted, and for which we are most grateful since they have been incorporated into the new paperback edition, he unearthed two sheets that were previously torn out of the holographic notebooks.

When I did my research there in 1990, these pages were not available. Through some mystery of "providence" the pages were returned to St. Bonaventure's and were made available to Dr. O'Connell. Whether Merton himself or someone else removed the pages, we will never know for certain, but we must be grateful that they have been retrieved. They make more comprehensible this particular part of the journal.

The first of these sheets (69-70) of the "St. Bonaventure Journal" manuscript would fit into *Run to the Mountain* on page 300 as a continuation of the preceding dialogue:

besides the plot?

A: Alas, no. Even in one story the plot was nothing, either.

Q: What about characters?

A: Ninnies, the whole crazy pack of them. Stoopids. Clods. Blocks. Logs. Stones. Earth.

Q: Come, come. That's bad.

A: You said it. That's what comes of cheating.

Q: What are you going to do with the stories?

A: First send them to Westbrook's Business College to be typed out neat and tidy. Then mail them to Naomi Burton, England's jewel, down at Curtis-Brown Lit. Agency, 347 Madison Ave, New York City.

Q: And supposing they sell like hot cakes?

A: I'll cry like a boy with a mouthful of mustard.

Q: And why?

A: Love of poverty.

Q: Couldn't you take the dough and give it to the poor?

A: That would be cheating. Aint I poor too? Robbing Peter to pay Paul. Who am I to give money to the poor? Leave it alone in the first place.

Q: Aw, you're crazy.

A: You said it. But I don't feel clean, writing a story with a plot, and selling it. Especially when it isn't even autobiographical.

Q: Lousy Platonist.

A: I hate the word: admit the fact. I fear stories that are all technique and lies. Better truth and no technique, eh?

Q: Ha ha! You'd look silly saying that in public.

A: Anyway, I wasted time. I could have been doing something profitable, like reading Euphues.

Q: Yes, or T. S. Eliot's essays on The Elizabethans!

A: Sneering dog!

Q: Well, come on, you farcical writer: what do you like writing?

A: Joyce language; that's what I like writing. I'd like to write that all the time.

Q: Why don't you? Because you think you'd make money the other way?

A: No. But I can't. I can't write Joyce talk all the time. And my style is changing. It is getting clear, even stupid. Too terse, too. Too sharp. Too darn precious.

Q: When did you ever write Joyce talk since the spring and summer of 1939?

A: I wrote three pages of it in a letter to Lax. And I liked writing it, too. That's the way I want to write. And it can't be sold. Just because it can't be sold doesn't mean it can't be read. I could mimeograph it and send it around. I have a clean stencil, right here in my room. And I don't mean send it around to just anybody: only to people I know. Jinny, Lilly, Lax, Gibney, Rice, Knight, Van Doren, Dan Walsh, even (those mad) professors in the Graduate School of English at Columbia. That's what I want to do. Write like poor Joyce. I pray he comes to heaven. I was sorry to read he went so long without marrying his wife. He just did that to be funny!

As to Lax: Lax's father came up to me in the lobby of the New Old Lompoc house, beaming like a golden statue, and told me of Lax's new job on [the] *New Yorker*. That is a sweet new job. Ten minutes a day, ten cents: but I guess what he wants to do. I don't think he'd even want to be editor, but it would be a good thing if in the future all the editors were to listen to him, and maybe the *New Yorker* would get good again. And what I think is, maybe they will.

Macaronic Lyric

Mens sana (nerfs de café)
 Corpore sano (défense de fumer!)
 "What are ces mots of advice you have sung us!
 Mens feeble in corpore fungus?"

Mens grandma in corpore grandpa
 Comes never to lovers of rhumba and samba:
 La vie carries on plus heureuse, also longer
 With mens sana in corpore conga!

There are palabras far besser to teach:
 "Mens happy in corpo felice!"

No! Joys of the sense
 Ruin corpus and mens!
 Your corpus is drunk and reason is dense!
 So please to pensare some thoughts of demain:
 Mente di coucou in corpo migraine!

Feb. 2, 1941

"In numerous minds is to be found the coexistence of faith and atheism, of anarchy in the sentiments and of some doctrine of order in the opinions. On the same subject, the majority of us will have several theses, which, at the same moment, are without difficulty mutually interchangeable in our judgements according to the passing mood."

—Paul Valery, *Variety*. p. 188.

"A modern man—and it is in this that he is modern—lives on familiar terms with a quantity of contraries lingering in his mental penumbra and taking their turn on the stage."

The second missing sheet from the journal is pp. 75–76, which fits into *Run to the Mountain* in the middle of page 304:

condescension, and in him there is no condescension, but perfect friendliness, which is perfect because you have absolutely no feeling of being, yourself, singled out by it, but that it is for everybody, and the same—and in some way you know here is a man that loves all men as himself, because his friendliness is not friendliness, it doesn't step out,

and show itself, it is part of a simple unity, part of calmness, part of immense patient curiosity about meanings of words and symbols, of liturgy, of everything, part of a no doubt immense knowledge of language, and an immense memory, I don't know.

He was disturbed because they had changed, in the Easter Morning Epistle, "leaven" to "yeast," and had all sorts of different reasons, linguistic as well as reasons of delicacy. I hope he gets the change annulled.

As for Mgr Reugel—he is a very reverend person. I think it was just his saying "Good day, son" that put into my mind, from somewhere, the movement that ended in the poem I wrote down about the Passion of the Lord.

If I were not so mad with my own vanity and selfishness and petty cares for the ease of my flesh and my pride, I would see clearly how perhaps nothing I have ever done, of any good, was mine, or through me, but given by God through the love and gifts and prayers of people who have given their whole life in fruit for me to pick and take or spoil according to my indifferent and cursed selfishness. And that fruit has only nourished me in grace in spite of myself, so to speak, and accidentally given me a little health.

Look how the whole life of my grandfather, all his work of years was poured out for my brother and myself, buying me what hundreds of things, Italy, France, England, Cuba, Bermuda, food and clothing and care and hundreds of curious books and besides that all the things I hate to think of. But Pop worked from a boy in an Ohio town, for sixty years, in order that I should run down Bridge Street, Cambridge, in the middle of the night, terrified because I had just thrown something, a bottle, a shoe, a brick, I don't know, through a shop window. And he worked his whole life so Bill Finneran and I should lean on some poisonous little bar on 52nd St. in a half empty place picking a fight with some (long,) callow, drunken kid whom some swept up lousy old dames in the place seemed to prefer to us.

And look how he spent his whole life in working so that I could sit at the foot of the flag pole outside Columbia, in 1935, with a great (pleasure and surprise in me) about a girl I thought I was in love with. [cancellation of one and one-half lines] That's nobody's affair.

What else did he buy for me with his blood, for not only Christ gave his life for me, but all who ever loved me have sacrificed some of their life's blood for me. How easily I take that gift, as if I were a god, to be sacrificed to—as if the sacrifice really could be mine, and not God's.

My grandfather bought me the day I came into the bar of the American Merchant, going up the channel, around 3:30 in the morning, after I had fallen [on] my [berth] with all my clothes on around ten, and passed out. So I find this dame talking with the Ship's doctor. That was a fine humiliation, me with vomit on my black pants. That was what I gave him back for loving me even with his life, and my grandmother too.

If father had not died ten years ago, how much would I have hurt him in that time? How could I spoil and waste so much love and so much care and so many gifts?

At Aunt Maud's funeral: I realized it was dramatic and was only secretly vain of it, and congratulated myself that here I was down from Cambridge and nobody knew the secret of where I had been the night before, not that it was anything terrible, but I made it so in my imagination, that I should come among the sober relatives, at a funeral, and could still taste this dame's perfumed mouth in my own mouth. So when good Aunt Maud, a saint, was buried, I had, I supposed, some decent regret she was dead, because I did love her, but was just as full of my own private seventeen year old drama that I applauded for a magnificent adventure, I am sure! That was what her love for me brought her at her funeral! For she had made it possible by her patient care, for me to get to Oakham, and then to Cambridge.

All these things are easy to say: and the Lord suffered in everyone who ever loved me for Love's sake and was turned upon by my vicious ingratitude and pride, for I hated even to be loved in any such way.