

*Appendix***Thomas Merton****LIST OF WORKS**

Submitted for the Approval of the
Most Reverend Fathers Capitular, O. C. S. O.,
Meeting at Citeaux, May 1946

Translated from the French by **William H. Shannon**

My Most Reverend Fathers:

Permit me to submit to you a list of works which I am pleased to send you in a spirit of holy obedience and in filial submission to your judgment and your will. They are works that will be undertaken or brought to completion at the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani. As you can see, some of these books have already been finished; the others would require years of work.

I should mention, first of all, a series of pamphlets — between 100 and 200 pages each and IN ENGLISH — about Cistercian life, our history and spirituality, lives of saints, etc. Among the latter, there will also be some translations of our Fathers of the 12th century, etc.

There are, besides, some volumes that will be of a more universal character, as you shall see.

If our Most Reverend Fathers have some suggestions to make or some advice to offer, these would help a great deal in directing our efforts along the way designed by the will of Jesus. For it is only for His glory that these works have been conceived.

I. WORKS COMPLETED

1. *TRAPPIST LIFE* (a new edition of our "Postulants Guide", with some additions). Published in 1946.

2. *WHITE MONKS OF THE GOLDEN AGE* (*Moines Blancs de L'âge d'Or*) A large volume, almost 500 pages, of the lives of the greatest Cistercian saints of the 12th and 13th centuries. All these lives are based on authentic documents, in accord with the research information supplied by the Commission on the New Menology. We have with special care followed the Bollandists, seeking above all else to be objective and true, so as to grasp the true Cistercian character of all our saints — their spirituality, their prayer, etc. This has not yet been published, but it is all ready.

3. *Exile Ends in Glory*, (*L'exil finit dans la gloire*). A biography, almost 450 pages long, of Our Mother M. Berchmans who died at Our Lady of the Angels in 1915. Based on a lengthy volume, 800 manuscript pages, written by her confessor, Father M. Roberts who was once director of the nuns at this convent. This has not yet been published.

5. 6. And now: two volumes of a somewhat special character, but which have attracted the attention of a secular editor. These are collections of poems, almost all of them religious and spiritual in nature, dealing with the life of prayer and the love of God. Some of these poems were written in the world and some in the monastery by the same religious who has undertaken these other works.

They are *Thirty Poems* (*Trente Poemes*), published in 1944, with the first edition going out of print in eight months. And then a new book of poems, *A Man in the Divided Sea* (*Un homme dans la mer divisee*), an allusion to the Red Sea as a type of Baptism. To appear in April 1946.

7. *The Spirit of Simplicity* (a new translation of *L'Esprit de Simplicité*). With the addition of some passages from our Father, St. Bernard on *Interior Simplicity*, translated into English, with a brief commentary.

8. *The Cistercian Life* — A new edition of *La Vie Cistercienne*.

9. *St. Lutgarde, A Study in Cistercian Spirituality* (*Ste. Lutgarde, une étude de spiritualité Cistercienne*). Almost two hundred pages. It is just about completed. It is a biography based on the *Life of Lutgarde* by a thirteenth century writer, Thomas of Cantimpre. It includes an analysis of the spirituality and mystical life of this saint according to the teachings of St. Bernard, St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross.

II. WORKS TO BE UNDERTAKEN

(a) Cistercian works:

1. *The Cistercian Way of Contemplation (La Voie Cistercienne de Contemplation)*. A book of 200 pages which will attempt to answer the question: what is contemplation according to our Fathers of the Golden Age of Citeaux? Contemplation in its widest sense: the life of union with God and the principal exercises of our contemplative way. *Opus Dei, Lectio Divina*, Manual Labor and the life of prayer and intercession. Especially the teachings of our Fathers, St. Bernard, Blessed Gueric, William of St. Thierry and St. Aelred, on the love of God. All this will be presented simply and briefly to make clear the essential purpose of our lives: the life of heaven begun here below. *Frui Deo* ("to take joy in God") through love and the cross.

2. *Cistercian Legends of Our Lady (Legends Cisterciennes de la T. S. Vierge)*. Taken from the Exordium, the Bollandists, the Dialogues of Caesar, with a preface on love for Our Lady in our spirituality and on the loving concern which our most Blessed Queen has so often shown toward us. We shall exclude all that is exaggerated or purely fanciful.

3. The Mariale of Adam of Perseigne and the Homilies of St. Amadeus on the Blessed Virgin. Translations of these sermons of our Fathers, with notes and commentary. We shall add also some sermons of St. Aelred, Blessed Gueric and others on Mary. In summary, this will be a brief anthology of Cistercian Mariology. Union with the Queen of Citeaux — surely this is the way to understand and to live the Cistercian way of Love and Sacrifice!

4. St. Aelred of Rievaulx. A biography of the saint. Details of Cistercian life as it was lived at Rievaulx in the 12th century. The off-shoots of Rievaulx (Blessed Waltheof of Melrose), the school of mystical writers of Rievaulx, but especially a study of St. Aelred's doctrine.

5. Blessed Gueric of Igny. A study of the doctrine of Blessed Gueric, somewhat along the lines suggested in the dissertation by our Father M. Deodat, but with some additional material that would show the practical consequences of his teaching for Cistercian life.

6. William of St. Thierry, *On the Love of God*. A study of the teaching of William of St. Thierry on the love of God. At the same time we

want to publish translations of the best works of this saint: *De Natura et Dignitate Amoris* (*On the Nature and Dignity of Love*), *De Contemplando Deo* (*On Contemplating God*) and the *Meditativae Orationes* (*Reflective Prayers*), with notes and perhaps a short commentary.

7. *The Cistercian Laybrothers* (*Le Convers Cistercian*) A pamphlet, historical and ascetical in character, on the institution and life of our laybrothers, with stories drawn from the *Exordium* and from other well-known sources that remain unknown in English.

8. *The Exordia* (Translations of both the *Little* and the *Great Exordium*).

9. *The School of Charity* — a pamphlet on the common life of Cistercians, and especially information from our Fathers regarding the place and function of fraternal charity in the life of union with God — something very important in Cistercian spirituality. St. Aelred builds a whole mystical theology on fraternal charity. We consider this work, at least in terms of its subject matter, as the most important on this list.

10. *The Ancient Cistercian Liturgy* (*L'ancienne liturgie Cistercienne*). We shall follow Part Two of *The Ancient Cistercian Mass* and will add some details on the Office, the liturgical cycle, etc., making use of the old liturgical books which we possess at Gethsemani.

11. *Sanctity in the Trappistines* — some biographies of Trappistines of the 19th and 20th centuries.

12. *Citeaux and Cluny*. A study of the relationship between the two orders, so as to determine the true character of the Cistercian reform and to present an accurate picture of the life and observances of our Fathers; but, above all, to answer the question: what was the understanding of the Cistercian vocation at the beginning of the 12th century?

We can add to this list a few other translations of our Fathers, for example the *Speculum Charitatis* of St. Aelred or the *Life of St. Benedict* by St. Gregory the Great.

Furthermore, the same editor who published the two volumes of poems mentioned above is asking once again for two volumes, namely some anthologies:

1. *A Liturgical Anthology*: including Hymns, Responsorials, Prayers, Sequences from the Breviary, some ancient Sacramentaries, etc. We shall especially make use of Cistercian sources.

2. *An Anthology of Mystical Poetry*: drawn from Christian sources of all countries, especially the great saints and the liturgy.

Finally, another volume, the biography or rather the history of the conversion and the Cistercian vocation of a monk of Gethsemani. Born in Europe the son of an artist, this monk passed through the abyss of Communism in the university life of our times before being led to the cloister by the merciful grace of Jesus.