Kindred Spirits in Revelation and Revolution: Rachel Carson and Thomas Merton

Monica Weis

In considering the theme of Revelation and Revolution, one could focus on many different incidents in Thomas Merton's life when a significant spiritual insight effected a dramatic change in attitude or behavior. One thinks of his epiphanic experience at Fourth and Walnut when Merton realized how intimately he was linked with every other human being; or those years in the late 1950s and early '60s, termed by some scholars his "turning toward the world," when, as the fruit of long periods of contemplative prayer, Merton became increasingly aware of how closely issues of social justice were tied to his monastic vocation of silence and solitude. It is to these early years of the 1960s I want to turn, to look at a little-discussed moment of revelation and revolution in Merton's life—specifically to January 1963 when Merton felt compelled to write a letter to Rachel Carson.

Let me set the scene. Since 1939 DDT had been used successfully to eradicate mosquito larvae; during World War II, our military regularly sprayed the Pacific islands with this chemical before an invasion. When malaria was significantly reduced in developed countries, DDT's inventor, Paul Müller, was awarded a Nobel prize. By the mid-1950s most U.S. municipalities were spraying DDT in neighborhoods to eradicate tent caterpillars, gypsy moths and the beetles responsible for Dutch elm disease.[1] Yet all was not well.

Rachel Carson in 1945 had submitted an article to *Reader's Digest* detailing the disruptive influence of DDT on the delicate balance of nature. Despite the fact that she had been an occasional contributor to the magazine for almost ten years and had once sought a position as its science editor, her article was not accepted. As Carson's biographer Linda Lear comments, "The *Digest*...found pesticides an unpalatable subject, and Rachel turned her attention to other research subjects."[2]

Now, in the early 1960s when a friend in Massachusetts asked her to investigate why all the song birds in her yard had died along with the mosquitoes, Carson was persuaded to tackle this question. *Silent Spring*, published in three installments in *The New Yorker* beginning June 1962, and in a single volume by Houghton Mifflin that September, called for a major paradigm shift in our thinking. Considerable hell broke loose. Negative comments from scientists, politicians, and chemical company executives—a veritable international controversy—threatened to destroy her. Carson's writing and scientific career seemed to be at an end. Targeted in a vicious campaign to discredit her scientific integrity, Carson was vilified as a "hysterical female," a "pseudo-scientist," "probably a communist," a "bird and bunny lover" and a charlatan researcher.[3]

The controversy over *Silent Spring*—what Vice President Al Gore has termed the "power of the writer against the power of politicians"[4]—fueled public debate and "people began to think about the chemicals they were handling, what they were doing to the environment, and what scientists weren't telling them....they began to question the very direction of technology."[5] Rachel Carson—the mouse that roared—was heard.

Forty-plus years later, we can verify that *Silent Spring* became a catalyst for our current environmental movement. Carson's "third eye" allowed her to see beneath the surface to a new truth about nature, namely, the interdependence of all creation: soil, air, water, animals, and human beings. Prior to 1962, the word "environment" was not a public policy term; two years earlier, conservation matters had been only peripherally mentioned at both the Democratic and Republican conventions.[6] But concern over nuclear fallout, the pesticide-contaminated cranberry scandal of 1959, and widespread infant deformities in Europe due to the drug, thalidomide, had created public readiness for a new message.[7] Carson's meticulous research, combined with her lyrical explanation of the dangers of pesticides, not only put the issue of pesticides into the public debate, but directly led to the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970, and a ban on the production of DDT in 1972. Widely regarded as the most influential book in the last fifty years, *Silent Spring* is credited by Thomas J. Lyons and former Vice-President Al Gore, among others, with inaugurating a new era of environmental concern, a watershed moment of new vision and activism. In presenting Rachel Carson

posthumously with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1980, President Jimmy Carter said: "she created a tide of environmental consciousness that has not ebbed."[8] More recently, Gary Kroll has claimed that *Silent Spring* was "so much more than an anti-pesticide tract. It was an essay of ecological radicalism that attempted to wake up a populace quiescent to the techno-scientific control of the world."[9]

Thomas Merton became aware of Carson's book and, through the efforts of Ann Ford, secured a copy soon after it hit the bookstores. On January 12, 1963, before television interviews with Rachel Carson had persuaded the American public to support her position, Merton wrote to Carson, congratulating her on her "fine, exact, and persuasive book."[10] Merton had for some time been concerned about racism, war, nuclear weapons, and the dangers of technology.[11] He had been in contact with James Forest of *The Catholic Worker*, peace activist Daniel Berrigan, and non-violence advocates Jean and Hildegard Goss-Mayr. Peace and the moral bankruptcy of the Vietnam War were uppermost in his mind. And yet, Merton paused to initiate a connection with Rachel Carson. Why might this be? What revelation of justice was tugging at Merton's heart?

A careful reading of Merton's letter to Carson reveals several points of resonance with Rachel Carson, namely, her prophetic stance; her ability to view the significance of research on the macro scale of human decision-making; and her belief in the interdependence of all creation. When Merton writes that *Silent Spring* is "perhaps much more timely even than you or I realize," he is sensing in Carson a kindred spirit who is offering both information and insight at the cutting edge of an issue—information with far-reaching consequences, and profound insight into our responsibility for the earth. "Though you are treating of just one aspect, and a rather detailed aspect, of our technological civilization," writes Merton, "you are, perhaps without altogether realizing, contributing a most valuable and essential piece of evidence for the diagnosis of the ills of our civilization."

Merton also realized that Carson's research was a quite good illustration of how we not only disregard the value of small things such as garden pests, but also exhibit "portentous irresponsibility" on the grand scale, namely in world politics and war. He comments:

> [W]e dare to use our titanic power in a way that threatens not only civilization but life itself. The same mental processing...seems to be at work in both cases, and your book makes it clear to me that there is a *consistent pattern* running through everything that we do, through every aspect of our culture, our thought, our economy, our whole way of life. What this pattern is I cannot say clearly, but I believe it is now the most vitally important thing for all of us...to arrive at a clear, cogent statement of our ills, so that we may begin to correct them.... [I]t seems that our remedies are instinctively those which aggravate the sickness: *the remedies are expressions of the sickness itself.* I would almost dare to say that the sickness is perhaps a very real and very dreadful hatred of life ....

Merton, himself, was astute at reading the signs of the times and delineating the long-range implications of human activity. In the later part of the 1950s and into the '60s, he had been reflecting and writing on the rights of indigenous people, the dangers of atomic energy and nuclear war, the Christian responsibility for peacemaking, and the urgency of non-violence as a means toward peace.[12] Indeed, fifteen months earlier, Merton had made a definitive entry into the struggle against war with an essay on the madness of war published in *The Catholic Worker*—"The Root of War is Fear."[13] Most of this essay appears as a chapter in the theologically updated and expanded *New Seeds of Contemplation*.[14] With rhetorical conviction, Merton castigated us for our "fictional thinking" bent on creating "a scapegoat in whom we have invested all the evil in the world" and challenged Western civilization to relinquish its false notion of superiority and accompanying hatred of the "Other."[15]

In Merton's mind, our propensity for nuclear war and our desire to eradicate garden pests spring from the same hubris. To make his point to Carson that we have relinquished wisdom in favor of technology, Merton creates an analogy between our radical actions to exterminate the Japanese beetle, that "dire threat," and our ability to exterminate the enemy through nuclear war. Both, insists Merton, rely on the same logic. Once we have labeled a non-human species or human being as "Other," we arrogantly believe in our right to eradicate the undesirable. "In order to 'survive' we instinctively destroy that on which our survival depends."[16] Despite the danger to nature, to ourselves and to our

children, government leaders and politicians are bent on convincing us that our actions are "harmless."

While Merton traces our "awful irresponsibility" and instinctive propensity for destructiveness to "the doctrine of the 'fall' of man and original sin"—a blindness that contemporary nature writer Barbara Kingsolver has recently dubbed our "crisis of perception"[17]—Merton also acknowledges our incarnational status. "The whole world itself, to religious thinkers, has always appeared as a transparent manifestation of the love of God, as a 'paradise' of His wisdom, manifested in all His creatures, down to the tiniest, and in the most wonderful interrelationship between them....That is, to say, man is at once a part of nature and he transcends it. In maintaining this delicate balance, he must make use of nature wisely." Our vocation, writes Merton, is "to be in this cosmic creation, so to speak, as the eye in the body," a vocation to defend and preserve the "delicate balance" in nature. Unfortunately, laments Merton, "man has lost his 'sight' and is blundering around aimlessly in the midst of the wonderful works of God."

Such a statement in the 1960s emphasizes Merton's own prophetic awareness of our unique human dignity and interdependence with all creatures on this planet. Grounding his thinking, as he admits to Carson, in the writing of psychologist Erich Fromm and Zen scholar D.T. Suzuki, Merton distances himself from a Cartesian mechanistic and compartmentalized view of the world. He reiterates the importance of maintaining a "cosmic perspective"[18]—a broad vision that sees all creation as relationship, and human dignity springing from a true sense of our shared creaturehood. Merton would have us reject hubris in favor of humility, a word whose root is *humus*, earthiness—a recognition of the clay and stardust that we are. This paradox of plainness and an exalted dignity often appears in Merton's poetry, for example "O Sweet Irrational Worship," in which he proclaims: "I have become light, /Bird and wind, My leaves sing, I am earth, earth ...[19]

Merton's letter to Rachel Carson is more than a congratulatory message to a well-known writer; it is a revelation of his long-held incarnational yet ever-expanding vision. Such expansion is critical to deep spiritual growth. If one pitches a tent in the wilderness, for example, one gains a certain perspective on the world through the tent flaps; if one shifts those tent pegs, the vision can be enlarged. Merton's letter to Carson marks such a significant enlargement of vision. Having focused his social justice writing

on right relationships among people—topics of racism, rights of indigenous people, the dangers of atomic energy and technology, as well as the moral imperative for making peace through non-violent means—Merton is now articulating a new insight: responsibility for the earth. Indeed, I want to emphasize that reading *Silent Spring* is a graced moment in Merton's life—a moment of both revelation and revolution—because it appears to have allowed him to see how human justice is related to eco-justice.

I use the word "appears" deliberately because this letter to Carson is Merton's first "public" utterance—as much as a personal letter is "public"—about non-violence to the environment. It might seem that Carson is solely responsible for shocking or widening Merton's vision of social justice to include all species of creation, non-human as well as human. However, I would argue that Merton's life experiences—his early childhood in France, the events recorded in *The Seven Storey Mountain*, his long-time fascination with Gandhi, many poems, and his *Journals*, as well as his own commitment to contemplation—predisposed him to this particular moment of increased awareness, what Thich Nhat Hanh calls "engaged spirituality."[20] Nevertheless, I would also insist that Merton's letter to Carson represents a defining moment that sets the stage for a revolution in his thinking, namely, a deepening sense of environmental justice.

In 1963 when he wrote to Rachel Carson, Merton had been a Trappist monk for more than twenty years. His academic training in literature, his natural gift for writing, and his extended experience in theology and contemplation made him a responsive reader of *Silent Spring*. Although from different backgrounds and fields, Carson and Merton had discovered important characteristics of life on this planet. Carson's professional life, which involved intense training in observation, led to her vision of the interdependence of all creation and the human challenge of acting for wholeness; Merton's monastic life, which also involved intense training in awareness, led to a vision of our complete dependence on God, our interdependence with each other, and the challenge of acting in non-violent ways toward all creation. Carson's discipline was marine biology; Merton's, silence and solitude. Carson's practice of the scientific method prepared her to confront the problem of dying song birds; Merton's practice of regular communal prayer and extended periods of contemplation prepared him to embrace the world and its problems with compassion and justice. Carson's

love for the world, coupled with a love of words, enabled her to write graceful, persuasive, astute books that contributed to the field of nature writing and, in the case of *Silent Spring,* triggered modern environmental thinking;[21] Merton's love for the world, coupled with a fascination for words and commitment to the Word, enabled him to inform thousands with his writing on spirituality, prayer, East-West dialogue, and stretched him in his later years to see how justice for human beings must of necessity involve justice for the planet.

In both writers, there is a sense of responsibility for environmental health that comes from attentiveness to their surroundings and commitment to a coherent vision of the cosmos. In both writers, there is what eco-critic Jonathan Bate has called *ecopoesis*—a deep longing for belonging.[22] In such sensitive writers, argues Bates, the rhythm of words—their syntactic connections and linguistic overtones— are intimately related to the "song of the earth itself."[23] Both Carson and Merton are pondering the essential question: "How shall we live? How shall we/can we belong?" In the light of new scientific data, both writers see the urgency of attempting an answer to that question. For Carson, the answer can be found in human action: diminishing the use of chemical pesticides, in favor of biological controls; for Merton, the answer is beginning to dawn that non-violence toward the earth means we must develop an ecological conscience.

And where does that answer take him? Prior to 1963, Merton's journals, letters, and notebooks are filled with notations about spirituality and the delights of the natural world; in the late 1950s there are increasing references to civil rights, non-violence, the dangers of technology, war and nuclear proliferation. After January 1963, a new topic joins this catalogue of concerns: our responsibility for the health of the planet. It appears in reading notebooks, in journal entries, in letters, and in book reviews. Let me be more specific by offering examples.

In the mid-1960s, Merton spent time reading Kenneth Jackson's books on early Celtic nature poetry. [24] He was captivated by Jackson's research into the influence of the rustic, simple life of the solitary in the woods on Irish poetry. It is clear from multiple and extensive entries in his notebooks that Merton felt affirmed in his own desire to live as a hermit by discovering he shared some insights about nature and contemplation with the early Irish monks. In one his of working [reading] Notebooks, he comments:

"The ultimate significance of the hermit's relationship with Nature is something that transcends both nature and hermit....Bird and hermit are joining together in an act of worship; the very existence of nature was a song of praise in which he himself took part by entering into harmony with nature."[25] In another notebook dedicated to ideas for poems and notes for *Cables to the Ace,* Merton waxes lyrically about creation and includes himself as integral to its continuous unfolding:

> My worship is a blue sky and ten thousand
> crickets in the deep wet grass of the field.
> My vow is the silence under their
> Sound. I support the woodpecker & the dove.
> Together we learn the norms. The plowed & planted field
> says: it is my turn.[26] And several of us
> begin to sing.

Here Merton not only celebrates the splendor of nature and his intent to interact responsibly with it—symbolized by his commitment to the woodpecker and the dove—but he also admits how his worship and nature's praise of God are intertwined. The field initiates a moment of celebration, yet the word "my" is unclear: does it indicate the field's turn or Merton's turn? It matters not; "several of us begin to sing." Surely, the Celtic harmony with nature, which Merton so valued, is evident in this jotting.

Not long after, Merton confides in his journal how glad he is that "on Rum (Hebrides) now they allow no one to live except those protecting the wildlife and trying to restore the original ecology. This is wonderful!"[27] Equally important, as Merton comments in another working notebook, is our obligation to heed the call of wilderness prophets like John Muir who could write with lyrical rhapsody about the trees of the North American forests and decry the white man's axe that sealed their doom. [28]

And, of course, mention can be made of Merton's elegant description of his life at the hermitage published posthumously as *Day of a Stranger.*[29] In these journal pages, which offer a salute to the wilderness, Merton celebrates the "ecological balance" of his hermitage with its "precise pairs of birds."[30] There he could savor the "mental ecology, too, a living balance of spirits in this corner of the woods"[31]—writers from East/West, North/South. With the woods as his home, he could live fully the Benedictine ideal of an

integrated life, captured so profoundly in this famous catch-phrase: "What I wear is pants. What I do is live. How I pray is breathe."[32]

However, one paragraph of Merton's journal description that does not appear in *Day of a Stranger* is especially worth noting. In this section, he deplores

> non-ecology, the destructive unbalance of nature, poisoned and unsettled by bombs, by fallout, by exploitation: the land ruined, the waters contaminated, the soil charged with chemicals, ravaged with machinery, the houses of farmers falling apart because everybody goes to the city and stays there.... There is no misery to compare with that which exists where technology has been a total success.[33]

This statement echoes an earlier journal entry in which Merton laments how he personally used calcium chloride to kill some troublesome ants. Unfortunately his actions also killed the "beautiful whistling ... titmice.... What a miserable bundle of foolish idiots we are! We kill everything around us even when we think we love and respect nature and life. This sudden power to deal death all around us *simply by the way we live,* and in total 'innocence' and ignorance, is by far the most disturbing symptom of our time."[34] Merton would agree with Thoreau that we need the tonic of wildness.

Merton also began counseling his correspondents about our responsibility for environmental justice. In a January 1964 letter to Jim Frost, a high-school sophomore, Merton was prompted to write: "[W]e Americans ought to love our land, our forests, our plains, and we ought to do everything we can to preserve it in its richness and beauty, by respect for our natural resources, for water, for land, for wild life. We need men and women of the rising generation to dedicate themselves to this.[35] To an Italian graduate student inquiring about his values, Merton shared his belief in the sacramentality of nature: "God manifests himself in his creation, and everything that he has made speaks of him. . . .The world in itself can never be evil." [36]

In the last year of his life in a still more extensive letter to Barbara Hubbard, Director of the Center for Living in New York City, Merton distinguished between what he termed a millennial consciousness and an ecological consciousness.[37] A millennial con-

sciousness invests all our hope in technology and commercial progress—and is doomed to intensify the world's problems. On the other hand, there is hope for our planet if we develop an ecological consciousness, that is, an attitude built on authentic awareness of our interconnectedness with all creation and our Christian responsibility of stewardship.

Merton enlarges on this theme in two book reviews published just months before his accidental death in Thailand. In a critique of two scholarly books on scripture and desert spirituality, Merton adds his advocacy for compassion toward all our brothers and sisters in the planetary community.[38] He writes:

> If the monk is a man whose whole life is built around a deeply religious appreciation of his call to wilderness and paradise, and thereby to a special kind of kinship with God's creatures. . ., and if technological society is constantly encroaching upon and destroying the remaining 'wildernesses'. . . .[T]he monk should be anxious to preserve the wilderness in order to share it.... [Monks] would seem to be destined by God, in our time, to be not only dwellers in the wilderness but also its protectors.[39]

In a footnote to this paragraph Merton further muses that it "would be interesting to develop this idea" because hermits have a "natural opportunity" to act as forest rangers or fire guards in "the vast forests of North America."[40] It might be noted that at some monasteries, monks have literally placed some of their properties and land in public trust. Redwoods Monastery in California, for example, is part of a collaborative effort to manage the headwaters of the Mattole River and preserve the old growth forest and nearby salmon runs; Holy Trinity Monastery in Arizona invites birders to enjoy its 1.3 mile trail around its pond.[41]

A subsequent 1968 book review, devoted to a critique of Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind*, reveals Merton's at his ecological best.[42] After skillfully summarizing the Puritans' negative attitude toward nature, the Transcendentalists' view of its healing power, John Muir's commitment to preserve wilderness for its own sake, Theodore Roosevelt's impulse to preserve hunting opportunities to support the cult of virility, and Aldo Leopold's principles for ethical land use, Merton astutely comments that the savagery which the Puritans had projected "out

there" onto the wilderness has turned out to be savagery within the human heart. Our challenge, he writes, is to adopt Aldo Leopold's notion of an ecological consciousness: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." For Merton, this is the essential challenge of contemporary living and he concludes his review with a piercing question:

> Can Aldo Leopold's ecological conscience become effective in America today? The ecological conscience is also essentially a peace-making conscience. A country that seems to be more and more oriented to permanent hot or cold war making does not give much promise of developing either one. But perhaps the very character of the war in Vietnam—with crop poisoning, the defoliation of forest trees, the incineration of villages and their inhabitants with napalm— presents a stark enough example to remind us of this most urgent moral need.

One might be prompted to comment: how curious this flurry of activity and ecological commitment after January 1963. And yet, not so curious. Rachel Carson had written a landmark book that influenced millions. Her revelation began a revolution in American thinking that birthed our current notions of eco-justice. Along the way she touched the consciousness and heart of Thomas Merton, writer and monk, with a revelation of justice for the planet that engendered its own ongoing revolution of love in thinking and writing—a revolution of love that expanded to include not just human beings but the entire planetary community.

Notes

1. Bruce Watson, "Sounding the Alarm," *Smithsonian* (September 2002), pp. 115-177. See also Linda J. Lear, "Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*," *Reflections*, Oregon State University, 9:2 (May 2002), pp. 3-7.

2. Linda J. Lear, *Rachel Carson: Witness for Nature* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1997), pp. 118-119. Lear makes the point that this rejection by *Reader's Digest* was fortunate because when Carson returned to the subject of pesticides in the 1960s, she did so not as a federal employee but as a private citizen.

3. Watson, p. 116 and Lear, p. 5.

4. Al Gore, Introduction to *Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1994), p. xv.

5. Lear, *Rachel Carson*, quoted by Watson, p. 115.

6. Gore, p. xv.

7. Lear, *Reflections*, p. 4.

8. J. North Conway, *American Literacy: Fifty Books that Define our Culture and Ourselves* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1993), p. 243, and Thomas J. Lyons, *The Incomparable Land: A Guide to American Nature Writing* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2001), p. 13. See also Al Gore's Introduction to *Silent Spring*.

9. Gary Kroll, "Ecology as a Subversive Subject," *Reflections*, Oregon State University, 9:2 (May 2002), pp. 10-12.

10. Thomas Merton, Letter to Rachel Carson, 12 January 1963 in *Witness to Freedom: Letters in Times of Crisis*, ed. William H. Shannon, (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1994), pp. 70-71. All subsequent unidentified quotations are from this letter.

11. Merton had already published "Nuclear War and Christian Responsibility" in *Commonweal* (February 9, 1962), "We Have to Make Ourselves Heard" in *The Catholic Worker* (May/June 1962), "Peace: A Religious Responsibility" in *Breakthrough to Peace*, edited by Merton and published by New Directions, September 1962, and "Original Child Bomb" (New Directions, 1962). He was also periodically disseminating his "Cold War Letters" from October 1961-62. See Patricia Burton's *Merton Vade Mecum* (The Thomas Merton Foundation, 1999) for a complete listing of letters, poetry, and publications.

12. See *Merton Vade Mecum* for a complete listing of letters, articles and books on these topics.

13. Thomas Merton, *Passion for Peace: The Social Essays*, ed., William H. Shannon (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1995), pp. 11-19.

14. Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Directions, 1961), pp. 112-122.

15. Merton, *Passion for Peace*, p. 14; *New Seeds*, p. 114.

16. Merton, *Witness to Freedom*, p. 71.

17. Barbara Kingsolver, *Small Wonder* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002).

18. Merton, *Witness to Freedom*, p. 71.

19. Thomas Merton, "O Sweet Irrational Worship" *In The Dark Before Dawn: New Selected Poems of Thomas Merton*, ed., Lynn R. Szabo (New Directions, 2005), p. 96.

20. Thich Nhat Hanh, *Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life* (New York: Bantam, 1991). Merton's belief in non-violence can be traced to his early awareness of Gandhi when Merton was a student at Oakham and reaches new fulfillment with the publication of *Gandhi on Non-violence* (New York: New Directions, 1965).

21. Carson's earlier full-length publications, *Under the Sea-Wind* (1941) and *The Sea Around Us* (1951) not only made her famous but enabled her to retire from government service in order to write full-time.

22. Jonathan Bate, *The Song of the Earth* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 212.

23. Bate. *The Song of the Earth*, p. 76.

24. Kenneth Jackson, *Early Celtic Nature Poetry* (Cambridge, 1935) and K.H. Jackson, *A Celtic Miscellany*, (London 1951).

25. Thomas Merton, *Working Notebook #14* (June 1964), Thomas Merton Center, Bellarmine University, Louisville, KY, p. 5.

26. Thomas Merton, *Working Notebook #15* (1965-August 1966), Thomas Merton Center.

27. Thomas Merton, *Dancing in the Water of Life* (Journals 5 1963-65); ed., Robert E. Daggy; San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997), p. 165.

28. Thomas Merton, *Working Notebook #19* (July 1966-68), Thomas Merton Center.

29. Thomas Merton, *Day of a Stranger*, ed., Robert E. Daggy, (Salt Lake City: Gibbs. M. Smith, 1981).

30. Merton, *Day of a Stranger*, p. 33.

31. Merton, *Day of a Stranger*, p. 35.

32. Merton, *Day of a Stranger*, p. 41.

33. Merton, *Dancing in the Water of* Life, pp. 239-40.

34. Thomas Merton, *Turning Toward the World* (Journals 4; 1960-63); ed., Victor A. Kramer; San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), p. 312.

35. Thomas Merton, *The Road to Joy: Letters to New and Old* Friends, ed., Robert E. Daggy (New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1989), p. 330.

36. Merton, *The Road to Joy*, p. 347-348.

37. Merton, Letter to Barbara Hubbard, 16 February 1968 in *Witness to Freedom*, pp. 73-75.

38. Louis Merton, 'Wilderness and Paradise: Two Recent Books', *Cistercian Studies* 2:1 (1967), pp. 83-89; reprinted in Thomas Merton, *The Monastic Journey: Thomas* Merton, ed., Patrick Hart; (Kansas City, MO: Sheed, Andrews, and McMeel, 1977), pp. 144-150.

39. Merton, 'Wilderness and Paradise', p. 89.

40. Merton, 'Wilderness and Paradise', p. 89, n.

41. Redwoods Monastery is part of the Upper Mattole River Cooperative, an entity of public, private, federal, state and non-profit organizations working together to manage over 4,000 acres of the Mattole headwaters and its corresponding old growth forest and endangered salmon refuge. Holy Trinity Monastery in the San Pedro River Valley, Arizona invites birders to enjoy its 1.3 mile trail around their ponds. The Carmelite Monastery in Wyoming is part of the greater Yellowstone Coalition to

preserve the regional ecosystems. The Chicago Little League plays on five acres originally owned and operated since the 1960s by the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception Abbey. In 2005 the National Council of Churches as part of its Eco-Justice Program, committed itself to managing its public lands in a way that will "sustain our cultures and economies and God's glorious web of life." Recently, Holy Spirit Monastery near Atlanta joined city, church, and environmental organizations to fund wetlands adjacent to the monastery dubbed the Greenway Acquisition to preserve this wilderness area in perpetuity.

42. Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind,* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1967). "The Wild Places," *Catholic Worker,* (June 1968) and *The Center Magazine* (July 1968) 40 – 44; reprinted in *Preview of the Asian* Journey, ed., Walter Capps (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1989), pp. 95-107. All subsequent unidentified quotations are from this review.