

## Contemplative Prayer By Thomas Merton Bahai Studies

2013 Reprint of 1960 Edition. Full facsimile of the original edition, not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. This book contains a revised and considerably expanded version of material on spiritual direction and meditation which appeared in the Magazine "Sponsa Regis." The first part is addressed to the Christian who seeks a director or who has one, and who desires to take full advantage of his opportunities. The second part is made up of notes on mediation which were written as a kind of companion to "What is Contemplation?"

A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER AND NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK OF THE YEAR "Vivid, compelling... An embrace of moral and spiritual contemplation." -The New York Times "A remarkable piece of writing. If read with humility and attention, Kathleen Norris's book becomes lectio divina, or holy reading." -The Boston Globe From the iconic author of *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith*, a spiritual journey that brings joy to the meanings of love, grace and faith. Why would a married woman with a thoroughly Protestant background and often more doubt than faith be drawn to the ancient practice of monasticism, to a community of celibate men whose days are centered on a rigid schedule of prayer, work, and scripture? This is the question that poet Kathleen Norris asks us as, somewhat to her own surprise, she found herself on two extended residencies at St. John's Abbey in Minnesota. Part record of her time among the Benedictines, part meditation on various aspects of monastic life, *The Cloister Walk* demonstrates, from the rare perspective of someone who is both an insider and outsider, how immersion in the cloistered world-- its liturgy, its ritual, its sense of community-- can impart meaning to everyday events and deepen our secular lives. In this stirring and lyrical work, the monastery, often considered archaic or otherworldly, becomes immediate, accessible, and relevant to us, no matter what our faith may be.

In print for more than forty years, *New Seeds of Contemplation* has served as a guide to the contemplative life for several generations of spiritual seekers. The word contemplation is itself somewhat problematical, according to Thomas Merton: "It can become almost a magic word, or if not magic, then 'inspirational,' which is almost as bad." In this modern Christian classic, Merton reveals contemplation to be nothing other than "life itself, fully awake, fully active, fully aware that it is alive." The thirty-nine short "seeds" that make up this book are intended to awaken and cultivate the contemplative, mystical dimension of the spiritual path for everyone. *New Seeds of Contemplation* is a revised and expanded version of Merton's earlier book *Seeds of Contemplation*.

Merton's gift to all of us is this simple message: the contemplative experience, which uncovers our unity with the Lord and a new vision of life, is not only for monks but for all Christians.

Contemplation in a World Action

Contemplative Critic

A Guide to Christian Art and Prayer

Contemplative Vision

Flee, Be Silent, Pray

Thomas Merton: Notes on Contemplative Prayer

*Thoughtful and eloquent, as timely (or timeless) now as when it was originally published in 1956, Thoughts in Solitude addresses the pleasure of a solitary life, as well as the necessity for quiet reflection in an age when so little is private. Thomas Merton writes: "When society is made up of men who know no interior solitude it can no longer be held together by love: and consequently it is held together by a violent and abusive authority. But when men are violently deprived of the solitude and freedom which are their due, the society in which they live becomes putrid, it festers with servility, resentment and hate." Thoughts in Solitude stands alongside The Seven Storey Mountain as one of Merton's most uring and popular works. Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk, is perhaps the foremost spiritual thinker of the twentiethcentury. His diaries, social commentary, and spiritual writings continue to be widely read after his untimely death in 1968.*

*In the mystical tradition the "dark," or apophatic way has a long history. It is the way of John of the Cross, of Master Eckhart, of Juliana of Norwich, of the anonymous author of The Cloud of Unknowing, and of Thomas Merton. This dark path of contemplation that Merton followed, wrote about extensively, and considered the focal point of his life is the subject of William H. Shannon's book.*

*"The rich complexity of Thomas Merton is rendered clear and accessible. The reader is invited to that transformation of life which is at the heart of Merton's message". Sr. Donna Kristoff, Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland, Ohio*

*This guide to monastic prayer, written in 1968 and thus turning out to be Thomas Merton's final testament to us, is now available in a new edition commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of his death. While he wrote it*

*for other monastics, all seekers drawn to explore the full dimensions of prayer will be enriched by his words, especially as they take on added meaning in today's dizzying world. The climate in which monastic prayer flowers is that of the desert, where human comfort is absent, where the secure routines of the "earthly city" offer no support, and where prayer must be sustained by God in the purity of faith.*

*Notes on Contemplation*

*A Short History of Contemplative Prayer*

*From the Stone Age to Thomas Merton*

*Merton and Hesychasm*

*The Cloister Walk*

*Awakened*

In this classic text, Thomas Merton offers valuable guidance for prayer. He brings together a wealth of meditative and mystical influences—from John of the Cross to Eastern desert monasticism—to create a spiritual path for today. Most important, he shows how the peace contacted through meditation should not be sought in order to evade the problems of contemporary life, but can instead be directed back out into the world to affect positive change. *Contemplative Prayer* is one of the most well-known works of spirituality of the last one hundred years, and it is a must-read for all seeking to live a life of purpose in today's world. In a moving and profound introduction, Thich Nhat Hanh offers his personal recollections of Merton and compares the contemplative traditions of East and West.

The practice of prayer and meditation in modern Western Christianity is rooted in the Eastern tradition of early Church prayer as well as the wisdom of early Church fathers. In *Centering Prayer*, M. Basil Pennington, the author of the highly acclaimed *Daily We Touch Him*, returns to these roots, offering contemporary Christians a new approach to ancient prayer forms. Pennington combines the best of the Eastern spiritual exercises (such as the Jesus Prayer) with a spirituality for today's world.

Addressing the obstacles that discourage people from praying well, he explains how to relax for prayer, how to listen to and be directed by the Other, and how to handle the pain and distractions that can stifle attempts to communicate with God. *Centering Prayer* has sold more than a quarter million copies since it was first published in 1982. In this eminently practical book, simple, inspiring instructions will help readers find the comfort and the guidance they seek through prayer.

Amid the noise and distractions of everyday life, is it really possible to choose to love the world? In these times of great uncertainty and anxiety, how can we find God? Thomas Merton felt the urgency of these questions more than 50 years ago, and his reflections upon them are more relevant than ever. One of America's most beloved mystics of the 20th century, Merton's voice was prophetic in the troubled era of the 1960s. In this new collection of thoughts and meditations selected from his most inspiring books and letters, Merton's radiant wisdom and foresight serve as a beacon of light for all of us searching to find true meaning and solace in today's difficult times. "Father Louis," as he was known at the Abbey of Gethsemani, fully embraced the contemplative life of a monk, yet he never held the world at arm's length: "We and our world interpenetrate. It is only in assuming full responsibility for our world, for our lives and for ourselves, that we can be said to live really for God." Sharply honest in his words but balanced by his poet's heart, Merton explores themes that include the inner ground of love, living in wisdom, and dialoguing with silence. He teaches that contemplation is possible for everyone and that the fundamental context for seeking God's presence is always our everyday lives. "In the deep silence, wisdom begins to sing her unending, sunlit, inexpressible song: the private song she speaks to the solitary soul." In *Choosing to Love the World*, Thomas Merton inspires us to look deep within ourselves and, in the peaceful silence of contemplation, to find and sing our own song. Edited by Jonathan Montaldo, associate director of The Merton Institute for Contemplative Living, and director of Bethany Spring, the Merton Institute retreat center in Trappist, Kentucky.

"It is hard not to say 'I told you so.' The first time I read Juliet Benner's 'Oh Taste & See' column for *Conversations* journal I knew she had a rare gift for seeing---what others may miss---and describing---in a way that touches the soul---and I was pretty sure a wonderful book would follow. Here it is!" Gary W. Moon, executive editor of *Conversations* Juliet Benner was trained as a visual artist, so when she became a spiritual director, she found it natural to begin showing people how to meditate on Christian art treasures that are rooted in a passage of Scripture. She taught a way of encountering the Word behind both the words of Scripture and the artist's meditation on Scripture. This became a way of seeing art as an aid to contemplative prayer. In each chapter of this book you'll encounter a passage of Scripture and a corresponding piece of art. You'll be guided into deeper levels of meaning and reflection through the text and the questions at the end of each chapter. In the process you'll find yourself entering into a new experience of prayer and meditation in God's presence. "This is a beautiful and inspiring work that will help you reflect and respond to God not just with your mind but also with your heart and soul." Ruth Haley Barton, author of *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* "A delightful and lavish feast, it left me hungry for more!" Margaret Guenther, author of *Holy Listening*

*A Book of Hours*

*Deepening Your Experience of God*

*No Man is an Island*

*The Inner Experience of a Contemplative*

## Thomas Merton, Spiritual Master

### Active Meditations for Contemplative Prayer

Essays discuss holiness, identity, unity, solitude, integrity, fear, hatred, faith, traditions, freedom, detachment, and prayer

One of the most famous books ever written about a man's search for faith and peace. The Seven Storey Mountain tells of the growing restlessness of a brilliant and passionate young man, who at the age of twenty-six, takes vows in one of the most demanding Catholic orders—the Trappist monks. At the Abbey of Gethsemani, "the four walls of my new freedom," Thomas Merton struggles to withdraw from the world, but only after he has fully immersed himself in it. At the abbey, he wrote this extraordinary testament, a unique spiritual autobiography that has been recognized as one of the most influential religious works of our time. Translated into more than twenty languages, it has touched millions of lives. .

There are so many Christians who do not appreciate the magnificent dignity of their vocation to sanctity, to the knowledge, love and service of God. There are so many Christians who do not realize what possibilities God has placed in the life of Christian perfection — what possibilities for joy in the knowledge and love of Him. There are so many Christians who have practically no idea of the immense love of God for them, and of the power of that Love to do them good, to bring them happiness. Why do we think of the gift of contemplation, infused contemplation, mystical prayer, as something essentially strange and esoteric reserved for a small class of almost unnatural beings and prohibited to everyone else? It is perhaps because we have forgotten that contemplation is the work of the Holy Ghost acting on our souls through His gifts of Wisdom and Understanding with special intensity to increase and perfect our love for Him. These gifts are part of the normal equipment of Christian sanctity. They are given to all in Baptism, and if they are given it is presumably because God wants them to be developed. Their development will always remain the free gift of God and it is true that His wise Providence sees fit to develop them less in some saints than in others. But it is also true that God often measures His gifts by our desire to receive them, and by our cooperation with His grace, and the Holy Spirit will not waste any of His gifts on people who have little or no interest in them.

Originally for monks these essays on prayer and meditation are appropriate for everyone

Choosing to Love the World

Thomas Merton

Seeds of Contemplation

The Seven Storey Mountain

Seeds

Merton's Palace of Nowhere

*An intensely personal devotional book from Thomas Merton, the ultimate spiritual writer of our time, showing his contemplative and religious side through his prayers and rarely-seen drawings. The only Merton gift book available. Dialogues with Silence contains a selection of prayers from throughout Merton's life--from his journals, letters, poetry, books--accompanied by all 100 of Merton's rarely seen, delightful Zen-like pen-and-ink drawings, and will attract new readers as well as Merton devotees. There is no other Merton devotional like this, and the paperback edition will be elegantly designed and packaged.*

*Now in paperback, revised and redesigned: This is Thomas Merton's last book, in which he draws on both Eastern and Western traditions to explore the hot topic of contemplation/meditation in depth and to show how we can practice true contemplation in everyday life. Never before published except as a series of articles (one per chapter) in an academic journal, this book on contemplation was revised by Merton shortly before his untimely death. The material bridges Merton's early work on Catholic monasticism, mysticism, and contemplation with his later writing on Eastern, especially Buddhist, traditions of meditation and spirituality. This book thus provides a comprehensive understanding of contemplation that draws on the best of Western and Eastern traditions. Merton was still tinkering with this book when he died; it was the book he struggled with most during his career as a writer. But now the Merton Legacy Trust and experts have determined that the book makes such a valuable contribution as his major comprehensive presentation of contemplation that they have allowed its publication.*

*In the teachings of Jesus, there are prayers, and then there is prayer—the silent, loving communion with the divine, beyond words or ritual. With Father Thomas Keating's book *Open Mind, Open Heart*, hundreds of thousands discovered the transformative power of Centering Prayer as a form of Christian meditation. Now, with *The Path of Centering Prayer*, Keating's senior student, friend, and advisor David Frenette reveals the profound depths of this practice, making it easier for meditators to deepen their connection with God. Beginning and experienced practitioners alike will benefit from this fresh voice, at once eloquent and clear, as they explore: The key insights and principles of Centering Prayer Guided instruction in the sacred word, sacred breath, and sacred glance practices Gentleness and openness: the way of letting go and letting be Experiencing a deeper sense of God in meditation and in everyday life Many other contemplative practices and teachings founded upon the wisdom of Fathers Thomas Keating and Thomas Merton Has your spiritual path grown routine or unfulfilling, or is it at a crossroads for new discovery? For all Christians who seek to move closer into the presence of the divine, *The Path of Centering Prayer* offers guidance in this rewarding and time-honored meditation practice, to help break through obstacles and illuminate the way.*

*Includes excerpts from "Seven storey mountain", "Conjectures of a guilty bystander" and many other works including a chronology of Merton's life.*

*On Contemplation*

*The Path of Centering Prayer*

*Thomas Merton on Prayer*

*Prayers & Drawings*

*On Christian Contemplation*

*Spiritual Direction and Meditation*

Anxious, Results-Driven Christians can never pray enough, serve enough, or study enough. But what if God is calling us not to frenzied activity but to a simple spiritual

encounter? In *Flee, Be Silent, Pray*, contemplative retreat leader Ed Cizewski guides readers out of the anxiety factory of contemporary Christianity and toward a God whose love astounds those who are quiet long enough to receive it. Emerging from the centuries-old wisdom of the church, Christian spiritual practices are a treasure trove for anxious believers. With helpful guidance into solitude, contemplative prayer, and practices such as lectio divina and the Examen, Cizewski leads us toward the Christ whose burden is light. Ready to shed the fear of the false self and the exhaustion of a duty-driven faith? *Flee. Be silent. Pray.* Book jacket.

Thomas Merton was the most popular proponent of the Christian contemplative tradition in the twentieth century. Now, for the first time, some of his most lyrical and prayerful writings have been arranged into *A Book of Hours*, a rich resource for daily prayer and contemplation that imitates the increasingly popular ancient monastic practice of "praying the hours." Editor Kathleen Deignan mined Merton's voluminous writings, arranging prayers for Dawn, Day, Dusk, and Dark for each of the days of the week. *A Book of Hours* allows for a slice of monastic contemplation in the midst of hectic modern life, with psalms, prayers, readings, and reflections.

A selection of Merton's writings, the burden of which is the necessity of learning to live and to love, emphasizes the unending process of learning, modern man's fear of solitude, and humanity's place in nature

In the Sixties, Merton invited a group of contemplative women -- cut off by inflexible rules from any analysis of important movements in the Church and the world -- to make a retreat with him at his abbey in Kentucky. What he and they said on such themes as "Zen, a Way of Living Life Directly," "Prophetic Choices," and "The Feminine Mystique," is the text of this book.

Love and Living

What Is Contemplation?

The Hidden Life

Ancient Prayers for Anxious Christians

Renewing an Ancient Christian Prayer Form

*Contemplative Prayer*Image

*This is a book about prayer, about Christian prayer, about Christian contemplative or meditative prayer as a way of simply being in the loving presence of God. It begins with prayer as that natural sense of the divine, what has been known for centuries as the sensus divinitatis, that consciousness of the mystery of God that is in each of us from the time of our birth. There are many ways of praying, and they all tend toward contemplation or "mysticism." That is, toward heightening our conscious connection to God, our awareness of the love of God, our wakefulness to the presence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in us, through us, and around us. By tracing the origins of contemplative prayer, its practice through the Old and New Testament Scriptures, then across the centuries of the Christian era to the contemporary world, it is hoped that the reader will develop a keener appreciation for the depth, beauty, and richness of the Christian spiritual tradition.*

*Selections from the author's previous works guide the reader toward closer communion with God and a richer spiritual life*

*This profound work introduces the West to Eastern Christian spirituality through the lens of Thomas Merton, as practiced from the time of the Desert Fathers. Contributors to this volume present the riches of Christian contemplative methods and experience dating back to their original Christian source.*

*Centering Prayer*

*The Climate of Monastic Prayer*

*The Inner Experience*

*Dialogues with Silence*

*The Essential Writings*

*Contemplative Prayer*

This volume is a stimulating series of spiritual reflections which will prove helpful for all struggling to find the meaning of human existence and to live the richest, fullest and noblest life. --Chicago Tribune

Simple text and photographs depict types of flower seeds, how they travel, and what happens when they are planted.

A unique meditation on the life & writings of Thomas Merton by one of the most popular Catholic writers today. "In reading this book one can meet for a brief moment, the living spirit of Merton. It is a refreshing encounter." (John Eudes Bamberger)

For forty years, James Finley's *Merton's Palace of Nowhere* has been the standard text for exploring, reflecting on, and understanding the rich vein of Thomas Merton's thought. Spiritual identity is the quest to know who we are, to find meaning, to overcome that sense of "Is this all there is?" Merton's message cuts to the heart of this universal quest, and Finley illuminates that message as no one else can. As a young man of eighteen, Finley left home for an unlikely destination: the Abbey of Gethsemani, where Thomas Merton lived as a contemplative. Finley stayed at the monastery for six maturing years and later wrote this *Merton's Palace of Nowhere* in order to share a taste of what he had learned on his spiritual journey under the guidance of one of the great religious figures of our time. At the heart of the quest for spiritual identity are Merton's illuminating insights—leading from an awareness of the false and illusory self to a realization of the true self. Dog-eared, tattered, underlined copies of this book are found on the

bookshelves of retreat centers, parish libraries, and the homes of spiritual seekers everywhere. This anniversary edition brings a classic to a new generation and includes a new preface by Finley.

A Retreat at the Abbey of Gethsemani

The Role of Contemplative Prayer in Self Discovery According to Thomas Merton

Praying with Thomas Merton

The Springs of Contemplation

Thoughts In Solitude

Thomas Merton's Dark Path

**Thomas Merton's classic study of monastic prayer and contemplation brings a tradition of spirituality alive for the present day. But, as A M Allchin points out in his Introduction to this new edition, Contemplative Prayer also shows us the present day in a new perspective, because we see it in the light of a long and living tradition.**

**A compendium of spiritual guidance in a beautiful special edition. "Every moment and every event in every man's life on Earth plants something in his soul," wrote Thomas Merton. A Trappist monk, Merton was both a poet and a theologian who pondered monastic life. He was praised for his meditations and conversations with God, as well as interfaith dialogue, tolerance, and non-violent activism during the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War. On Christian Contemplation, edited by Merton scholar Paul Pearson, is a collection of the great monk's work, compiled into a gift-size edition. With poems, reflections, and social commentary, this is the perfect book to nurture the spirit of faith and duty guided by one of the twentieth century's leading voices of theology and social justice.**

**An Invitation to the Contemplative Life**

**A Study of Merton's Approach to Contemplative Prayer**

**New Seeds of Contemplation**