Thomas Merton Selected Essays

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this volume provides a broad cross section of merton s work as an essayist collecting pieces that are characteristic examples of his astonishing output and the fantastic breadth of his interests the essays range from the wisdom of the desert fathers to the novels of faulkner and camus from interreligious dialogue to racial justice

thinking is a dynamic process resulting from practices of integration thought encounters in openness wonder receptivity and contemplation confer upon us intellectual work that is uniquely our own digital patterns however distract us from these creative encounters our intellectual searching is weakened and fragmented by frenetic consumption of information we miss out on reason s innate pull toward integration and concrete reality this book is an invitation to enter into openness wonder receptivity and contemplation with deeper understanding and intentionality we can do this by considering exemplars persons who lived out the integrity of their hard won beliefs each process of integration is applied also so that practical knowledge and practice become a way into this intellectual restoration we need deeper knowledge won in the slow orbit of encounters encounters in thought are precisely what each generation needs to apprehend the cosmos nature authority truth and moral action responsibility to this ecologic age requires a reform of reason this book is just one attempt to convey a way toward this restoration

thomas merton recognized the value and possibility of contemplative dialogue between monastics and contemplatives of other religious traditions and hoped that through such dialogue monastics would strive for inter monastic communion and a bonding of the broader spiritual family he held out hope that this bond would demonstrate the fundamental unity of humanity to a world that was becoming ever more materialistic and divided among other themes and topics this book explores thomas merton s role as a pioneer of buddhist christian dialogue and monastic interreligious dialogue it delves into the process of merton s self transformation through contemplative experiences explores his encounter with zen and tibetan buddhists and his pioneering engagements in buddhist christian dialogue and presents and responds to the criticisms of those who raise questions about merton s understanding of buddhism fr jaechan anselmo park osb articulates and analyzes the influences of buddhist theory and practice on thomas merton s contemplative spirituality and shows how merton s legacy has influenced and continues to inspire

interreligious and inter monastic dialogue particularly in an asian monastic context

this book argues that nature mysticism is an excellent source for building an ecological ethic that takes seriously the human responsibility in creation

this collection of essays discusses the human relationship with and responsibilities toward the natural environment from the perspective of religions and the social sciences the chapters examine a variety of conditions that have contributed to the contemporary environmental crisis including abuse of power economic greed industrialization deforestation and unplanned waste management they then discuss concepts from several different religious texts and traditions that promote environmental protection as a sacred moral duty for all humanity religious concepts such as dharma duty toward mother earth tikkun olam repair of the world khalifa people as deputies of god on earth amanah the universe as a trust in human hands and paticca samuppada dependent co arising are employed to argue that all the components of the biosphere are integral to the cosmos each piece with its own value and role in the harmony of the whole the book makes it clear that religions can become more green and play a helpful role in raising our ecological consciousness and supporting preservation of the environment into the future

that saw the publication of his best selling autobiography the seven storey mountain his ordination to the priesthood and his initial appointment as spiritual and intellectual guide of the young monks at the abbey of gethsemani the essays most of which have never been reprinted focus above all on aspects of the contemplative life but also consider the spiritual dimensions of literature and the social implications of christian life issued to coincide with the one hundredth anniversary of his birth this collection brings to fruition at long last merton s own original plan of publishing these essays as a group and so makes available a previously little recognized and underutilized resource for understanding and appreciating a crucial transitional phase in his life as both monk and writer

an appreciation in journal form of thomas merton as spiritual writer monk and poet

includes list of books indexed published also separately

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