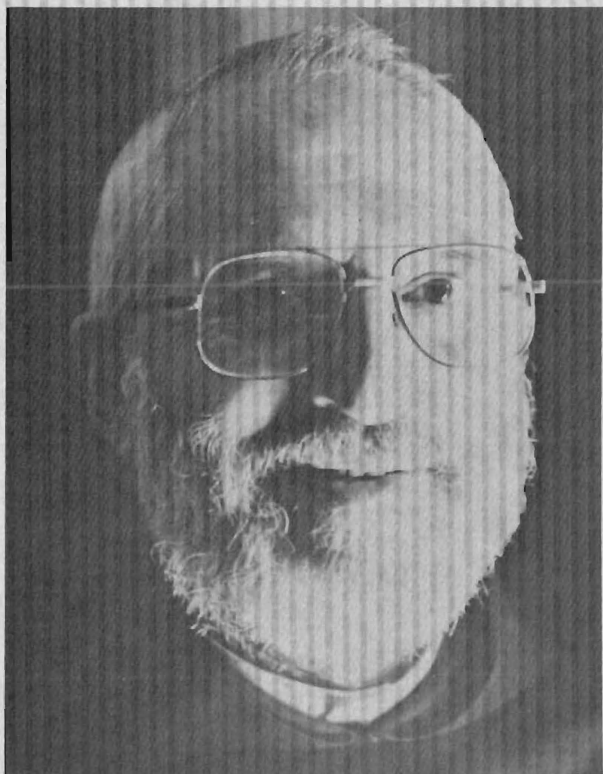


A MERTON COMMENTARY

Review of
CONTEMPLATION AND COMPASSION:
 Thomas Merton's Vision
 by Anthony Thomas Padovano

—Reviewed by **Brother Patrick Hart, O.C.S.O.**

Anthony Padovano, who published a book on Thomas Merton some years ago (*THE HUMAN JOURNEY: THOMAS MERTON, SYMBOL OF A CENTURY*, New York: Doubleday, 1982)* now presents a small gift book on two aspects of Merton's vision: contemplation and compassion. Padovano has selected twenty-four passages from a variety of Merton's published works, and then proceeds with his own commentary. It is amazing how well Padovano has entered into Merton's thought as he comments upon the initial quotation. For example, in the opening selection on "Self", with a quote from *SEEDS OF CONTEMPLATION*, Padovano's commentary seems aptly addressed to anyone holding positions of authority, or in fact to anyone desiring a healthy relationship with others: "Our words are personal expressions of ourselves. This is why we are grateful when people listen to us. Listening is the way we accept one another as persons. We are offended when people pay no attention to our words. Refusing to hear the words of another may be the most profound form of rejection" (p. 15).



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The remaining twenty-three quotations and commentaries are equally perceptive and thought-provoking. They deal with *Orgins* (Self, Relationship and God), *Yearning* (Journey and Illusion, Justice and Mercy, Anxiety and Hope) and finally *Destiny* (Prayer and Contemplation, Mystery and Silence).

The book is handsomely designed by Paula J. Goodman with illustrations which admirably complement the texts. My only regret is the shortness of the book (60 pages). It is a perfect bedside book for all those searching for ways to grow in the love of God and neighbor.

*EDITOR'S NOTE. *THE HUMAN JOURNEY* WAS issued as a paperback by Doubleday Image Books in March 1984.

Brother Patrick Hart, former secretary to Thomas Merton, needs no introduction to Merton readers. He is the editor of *THE ASIAN JOURNAL OF THOMAS MERTON* (1973); the award-winning *THOMAS MERTON/MONK: A MONASTIC TRIBUTE* (1974); *THE MONASTIC JOURNEY* (1977); *THE THOMAS MERTON 1979 APPOINTMENT CALENDAR* (1978); *LOVE AND LIVING* (1979); and *THE MESSAGE OF THOMAS MERTON* (1981). His current project, a limited edition of two of his essays on Thomas Merton, will be published by Necessity Press in Bardstown, Kentucky.