

Words and Silence: On The Poetry Of Thomas Merton

by Sister Therese Lentfoehr

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Sister Therese Lentfoehr is a recognized poet and scholar in her own right (she has published three volumes of poetry as well as a scholarly study on the Poetry of Marianne Moore), and here provides us with a comprehensive study of the entire corpus of Thomas Merton's poetry. Unlike many of the other Merton scholars, Sister Therese has explored the poetics of Thomas Merton, having access to all his working notebooks with special permission of the Merton Legacy Trust. In addition, she knew Merton personally, and was able to quote at length from personal letters, manuscript variants of a number of Merton's poems, as well as reminiscences of their visits together.

The author has done her research well, and has come up with a highly readable work, which has the ring of authenticity about it, since she herself is a poet — and as the adage has it, it takes one to know one. Because of the great current interest in the writings of Thomas Merton, especially his poetry since the publication of **The Collected Poems** last year, this volume can be recommended as something of a companion volume to his poetry. This book is further enhanced by a bibliography, index and copious notes.

— Brother Patrick Hart, o.c.s.o.