

Thomas Merton Quotes

*Wisdom, Men, Spiritual, Mean, Thinking, Silence, Self, Heart, Reality, People,
Prayer, Humility, Love Is, Light, Love, Real, Order, Christian, Life, Peace*

The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves, and not to twist them to fit our own image. Otherwise we love only the reflection of ourselves we find in them.

~Thomas Merton

Love is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone - we find it with another.

~Thomas Merton

â€žOur job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy.

~Thomas Merton

The greatest need of our time is to clean out the enormous mass of mental and emotional rubbish that clutters our minds

~Thomas Merton

Compassion is the keen awareness of the interdependence of all things.

~Thomas Merton

In a world of noise, confusion and conflict it is necessary that there be places of silence, inner discipline and peace. In such places love can blossom.

~Thomas Merton

People may spend their whole lives climbing the ladder of success only to find, once they reach the top, that the ladder is leaning against the wrong wall.

~Thomas Merton

Love is not a matter of getting what you want. Quite the contrary. The insistence on always having what you want, on always being satisfied, on always being fulfilled, makes love impossible.

~Thomas Merton

Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time.

~Thomas Merton

It is my belief, that we should not be too sure of having found Christ in ourselves until we have found him also in that part of humanity that is most remote from our own.

~Thomas Merton

The spiritual life is first of all a life. It is not merely something to be known and studied, it is to be lived.

~Thomas Merton

Every moment and every event of every man's life on earth plants something in his soul.

~Thomas Merton

Nothing has ever been said about God that hasn't already been said better by the wind in the pine trees.

~Thomas Merton

May God prevent us from becoming "right-thinking men"-that is to say men who agree perfectly with their own police.

~Thomas Merton

In Silence God ceases to be an object and becomes an experience.

~Thomas Merton

For each one of us, there is only one thing necessary: to fulfill our own destiny, according to God's will, to be what God wants us to be.

~Thomas Merton

Ash Wednesday is full of joy...The source of all sorrow is the illusion

that of ourselves we are anything but dust.

~Thomas Merton

The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another.

~Thomas Merton

Every breath we draw is a gift of God's love; every moment of existence is a grace.

~Thomas Merton

You are made in the image of what you desire.

~Thomas Merton

Pride makes us artificial and humility makes us real.

~Thomas Merton

We live on the brink of disaster because we do not know how to let life alone. We do not respect the living and fruitful contradictions and paradoxes of which true life is full.

~Thomas Merton

A faith that is afraid of other people is no faith at all.

~Thomas Merton

Before we can realize who we really are, we must become conscious of the fact that the person we think we are, here and now, is at best an impostor and a stranger.

~Thomas Merton

I see no contradiction between Buddhism and Christianity ... I intend to become as good a Buddhist as I can.

~Thomas Merton

True happiness is found in unselfish Love, A love which increases in proportion as it is shared.

~Thomas Merton

Gratitude takes nothing for granted, is never unresponsive, is constantly awakening to new wonder.

~Thomas Merton

We have to have a deep, patient compassion for the fears of others and irrational mania of those who hate or condemn us.

~Thomas Merton

A life is either all spiritual or not spiritual at all. No man can serve two masters. Your life is shaped by the end you live for. You are made in the image of what you desire.

~Thomas Merton

Jesus lived and died in vain if He did not teach us to regulate the whole of life by the eternal law of love. Gandhi, quoted in Merton, p. 38

~Thomas Merton

When I pray for peace, I pray not only that the enemies of my own country may cease to want war, but above all that my country will cease to do the things that make war inevitable.

~Thomas Merton

Perhaps I am stronger than I think.

~Thomas Merton

Be good, keep your feet dry, your eyes open, your heart at peace and your soul in the joy of Christ.

~Thomas Merton

There were only a few shepherds at the first Bethlehem. The ox and the

donkey understood more of the first Christmas than the high priests in Jerusalem. And it is the same today.

~Thomas Merton

Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance and order and rhythm and harmony.

~Thomas Merton

For perfect hope is achieved on the brink of despair, when instead of falling over the edge, we find ourselves walking on air.

~Thomas Merton

Our idea of God tells us more about ourselves than about Him.

~Thomas Merton

How can I be sincere if I am constantly changing my mind to conform with the shadow of what I think others expect of me?

~Thomas Merton

The real hope is not in something we think we can do, but in God, who is making something good out of it in some way we cannot see.

~Thomas Merton

We are so obsessed with doing that we have no time and no imagination left for being. As a result, men are valued not for what they are but for what they do or what they have - for their usefulness.

~Thomas Merton

Violence is not completely fatal until it ceases to disturb us.

~Thomas Merton

The Holy Spirit is the most perfect gift of the Father to men, and yet He is the one gift which the Father gives most easily.

~Thomas Merton

A happiness that is sought for ourselves alone can never be found: for a happiness that is diminished by being shared is not big enough to make us happy.

~Thomas Merton

We are not converted only once in our lives but many times and this endless series of conversions and inner revolutions leads to our transformation.

~Thomas Merton

Do not be too quick to condemn the man who no longer believes in God: for it is perhaps your own coldness and avarice and mediocrity and materialism and selfishness that have chilled his faith.

~Thomas Merton

We have what we seek, it is there all the time, and if we give it time, it will make itself known to us.

~Thomas Merton

We are not at peace with others because we are not at peace with ourselves, and we are not at peace with ourselves because we are not at peace with God

~Thomas Merton

We cannot achieve greatness unless we lose all interest in being great.

~Thomas Merton

To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything.

~Thomas Merton

Actions are the doors and windows of being. Unless we act, we have no way of knowing what we are.

~Thomas Merton

A man who fails well is greater than one who succeeds badly.

~Thomas Merton

We stumble and fall constantly, even when we are most enlightened.

~Thomas Merton

Let us come alive to the splendor that is all around us and see the beauty in ordinary things.

~Thomas Merton

Every one of us is shadowed by an illusory person: a false Self. We are not very good at recognizing illusions, least of all the ones we cherish about ourselves.

~Thomas Merton

The grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference.

~Thomas Merton

What can we gain by sailing to the moon if we cannot cross the abyss that separates us from ourselves?

~Thomas Merton

The truth that many people never understand until it is too late is that the more you try to avoid suffering, the more you suffer.

~Thomas Merton

For although God is right with us and in us and out of us and all through us, we have to go on journeys to find him.

~Thomas Merton

Prayer is not so much a way to find God as a way of resting in him...who loves us, who is near to us.

~Thomas Merton

The purpose of our lives is to find the purpose of our lives.

~Thomas Merton

Love is the epiphany of God in our poverty.

~Thomas Merton

Love in fact is the spiritual life, and without it all the other exercises of the spirit, however lofty, are emptied of content and become mere illusions.

~Thomas Merton

When you see God in everyone, then they see God in you.

~Thomas Merton

The biggest human temptation is... to settle for too little.

~Thomas Merton

A man knows when he has found his vocation when he stops thinking about how to live and begins to live.

~Thomas Merton

Finally I am coming to the conclusion that my highest ambition is to be what I already I am.

~Thomas Merton

The true contemplative is one who has discovered the art of finding leisure even in the midst of his work, by working with such a spirit of detachment and recollection that even his work is a prayer

~Thomas Merton

Here is an unspeakable secret: paradise is all around us and we do not understand.

~Thomas Merton

Death is someone you see very clearly with eyes in the center of your heart: eyes that see not by reacting to light, but by reacting to a kind of a chill from within the marrow of your own life.

~Thomas Merton

Reason is in fact the path to faith, and faith takes over when reason can say no more.

~Thomas Merton

One of the strange laws of the contemplative life is that in it you do not sit down and solve problems: you bear with them until they somehow solve themselves. Or until life solves them for you.

~Thomas Merton

The man who sweats under his mask, whose role makes him itch with discomfort, who hates the division in himself, is already beginning to be free.

~Thomas Merton

Modern man believes he is fruitful and productive when his ego is aggressively affirmed, when he is visibly active, and when his action produces obvious results.

~Thomas Merton

We are already ONE. We just think we are separate.

~Thomas Merton

Peace demands the most heroic labor and the most difficult sacrifice. It demands greater heroism than war. It demands greater fidelity to the truth and a much more perfect purity of conscience.

~Thomas Merton

A man searching for enlightenment is like a man sitting on an Ass in search of an Ass

~Thomas Merton

And that is why the man who wants to see clearly, before he will believe, never starts on the journey.

~Thomas Merton

The fact remains that we are invited to forget ourselves on purpose, cast our awful solemnity to the wind, and join in the general Dance.

~Thomas Merton

Even the darkest moments of the liturgy are filled with joy, and Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the lenten fast, is a day of happiness, a Christian feast.

~Thomas Merton

Fear narrows the little entrance of our heart. It shrinks up our capacity to love. It freezes up our power to give ourselves.

~Thomas Merton

There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun.

~Thomas Merton

On Pride: This sickness is most dangerous when it succeeds in looking like humility. When a proud man thinks he is humble his case is hopeless.

~Thomas Merton

In an age where there is much talk about "being yourself," I reserve to myself the right to forget about being myself, since in any case there is very little chance of my being anybody else.

~Thomas Merton

We are obliged to love one another. We are not strictly bound to "like"

one another.

~Thomas Merton

We stumble and fall constantly even when we are most enlightened. But when we are in true spiritual darkness, we do not even know that we have fallen.

~Thomas Merton

Life is this simple: we are living in a world that is absolutely transparent and the divine is shining through it all the time. This is not just a nice story or a fable, it is true.

~Thomas Merton

It is in deep solitude and silence that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brother and sister.

~Thomas Merton

A life that is without problems may literally be more hopeless, than one that always verges on despair.

~Thomas Merton

Love not only prefers the good of another to my own, but it does not even compare the two.

~Thomas Merton

Prayer is an expression of who we are...We are a living incompleteness. We are a gap, an emptiness that calls for fulfillment.

~Thomas Merton

The whole world is charged with the glory of God and I feel fire and music under my feet.

~Thomas Merton

The beginning of love is the will to let those we love be perfectly

themselves.

~Thomas Merton

Action is the stream, and contemplation is the spring.

~Thomas Merton

We do not exist for ourselves.

~Thomas Merton

Just remaining quietly in the presence of God, listening to Him, being attentive to Him, requires a lot of courage and know-how.

~Thomas Merton

It is a glorious destiny to be a member of the human race, though it is a race dedicated to many absurdities and one which makes many terrible mistakes.

~Thomas Merton

If you yourself are at peace, then there is at least some peace in the world.

~Thomas Merton

Life is not accomplishing some special work but attaining to a degree of consciousness and inner freedom which is beyond all works and attainments.

~Thomas Merton

Love seeks one thing only: the good of the one loved. It leaves all the other secondary effects to take care of themselves. Love, therefore, is its own reward.

~Thomas Merton

The goal of fasting is inner unity.

~Thomas Merton

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