

Inspiration: Thomas Merton

A retreat on Thomas Merton will be offered by Judith Hunter at Siena Center January 20-22, 2006. For your personal reflection and inspiration on the spirit of this great monk, mystic, and very human being, we offer pieces from his writings related to the retreat's intriguing theme: "What We Have to Be Is What We Are."

Reflection:

Take the occasion of this mysterious title to ponder. Whatever could that mean: "*What we have to be... is what we are*"? Here are some things to realize and live into...of what we are—and have to be. It is stunning, isn't it! We have life within great mystery....

- Filled with a sense of being and becoming.
- Desiring in our deepest selves to be good, true, strong, and loving.
- Aware of our relatedness to all that is...was...and will be...forever.
- Blessed in the complex nature of our humanness.
- Loved and called by God.

And now, to the complex nature of our humanness, reflected on by Thomas Merton excerpted from various writings.

Thomas Merton

“God does not need an ideal situation in order to carry out his work in our hearts.
If we do what we can with the means and grace at our disposal,
if we sincerely take advantage of our genuine opportunities,
the Spirit will be there and his love will not fail us.”

“Our vocation is not simply to be,
but to work together with God in the creation of our own life,
our own identity, our own destiny...”

“If you want to identify me,
ask me not where I live, or what I like to eat, or how I comb my hair,
but ask me what I think I am living for, in detail,
and ask me what I think is keeping me from living fully
for the thing I want to live for...”

GOD is what happens to us on our way to becoming human.

Gregory Baum, Man Becoming