

## THOMAS MERTON

By Alexandra



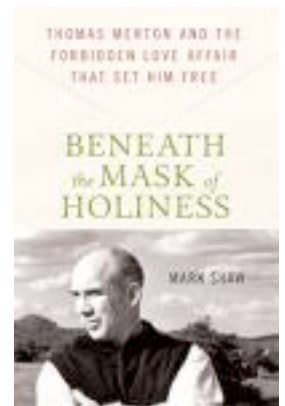
“Peace demands the most heroic labor and the most difficult sacrifice. It demands greater heroism than war. It demands greater fidelity to the truth and a much more perfect purity of conscience.” - Thomas Merton

I think that this quote by Thomas Merton is interesting because it tells us that peace isn't easy to achieve. In order to have peace, Thomas Merton says that we have to devote ourselves and put all of our effort into achieving it. Then, we have to value truth and work to clear our thinking. We have to sacrifice all that we have to get peace, which is something that will help us all in what we do. Also, we have to be heroes and not only think of ourselves. Basically, Thomas Merton says that peace isn't easy and we all have to work hard to achieve it. That is what this quote means to me.



Thomas James Merton was a very interesting man and he did a lot of good in his very short life. Thomas was born on January 31, 1915 in Prades, France to two artists: an American mother named Ruth and a French father named Owen. He had a brother named John Paul and no other siblings. As a child, Thomas had been rambunctious and his family was known as “weirdoes.” Unfortunately, Thomas felt that he had been under nurtured as a kid and both of his parents died by the time he was a teenager. Also, Thomas had a fairly good education, going to private schools in England and college at Columbia University. When Thomas was quite young, he joined Our Lady of Gethsemani Abbey in Bardstown, Kentucky and spent 27 years there being a priest and a monk. Later, Thomas Merton died on December 10, 1968, when he stepped out of the shower and was electrocuted by a poorly grounded electric fan.

A social activist, poet, and student of comparative religion, Thomas Merton was a curious man who helped many people. Thomas started caring about religion when he was in his early twenties, and he acted upon that interest by becoming a priest. As a priest, Thomas inspired many people by writing over sixty books about spiritual direction and meditation. These books will go down in history for helping many people become at peace with themselves. In 1937, Thomas Merton read books by Aldous Huxely and became extremely interested in eastern religions. Throughout his life, Thomas was very involved in issues concerning peace and he influenced some government decisions. After his death, an award was named in his honor. It is still given today to those who work as hard for peace as Thomas did himself.



I admire Thomas Merton and wish that I could do as many good deeds in my life as he did in his. Also, I wanted to find out what was so special about this man. Although I seem to have many connections with this man, being someone that strives to do well, I didn't really know everything about him, and I wanted to learn more. At first, I thought that Thomas Merton was just a regular priest, but then I realized what courage and curiosity he had that led him to such great things. Someday, I hope to be as inspiring and as wise as Thomas Merton was, and even if I don't achieve that goal, I can try and do my best and I will have tried just like he did, to bring some peace to the world.