Merton: What do we think of when we think of God?

"Aseitas…aseity- simply means the power of a being to exist absolutely in virtue of itself, not as caused by itself, but as requiring no cause, no other justification for its existence except that its very nature is to exist. There can be only one such Being: that is God…..God is Being Itself."
("The Seven Storey Mountain" p172ff)

Etienne Gilson, "The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy"

Church of St. Francis at Havana
 "…a realisation of God made present by the words of consecration….
A neutralization of every lesser experience…
Offered to all to everybody…
It ignored all sense experience…
Belonged to the order of knowledge, yes, but still more to the order of love."
(ssm284ff)

Need to retain respect for the mystery of God ("The Intimate Merton" p149)

Aquinas: "The extreme knowledge of God is to know that we do not know God."
("Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander" p293)

"Even Christianity is often idolatrous without realising it. The sin of craving a God who is 'other' than He who cannot be made an idol - i.e., an object." (im278)

"If nothing that can be seen can either be God or represent Him to us as He is, then to find God we must pass beyond everything that can be seen and enter into darkness. Since nothing that can be heard is God, to find Him we must enter into silence.
Since God cannot be imagined, anything our imagination tells us about him is misleadiing…"
("New Seeds of Contemplation" p134)

Faith:
"By faith one not only assents to propositions revealed by God, one not only attains to truth in a way that intelligence and reason alone cannot do, but one assents to God Himself. One *receives* God." (nsc131)

"Faith is not just conformity it is *life*. It embraces all the realms of life, penetrating into the most mysterious and inaccessible depths not only of our unknown spiritual being but even of God's own hidden essence and love. Faith then is the only way of opening up the true depths of reality, even our own reality."
(nsc140)