DEAR READERS,

Again this year Cistercian Publications brings you a rich variety of books new and old, some just off the press, others from earlier years. They include both theology and spirituality, from Fr. Isaac Slater’s *Beyond Measure* to Pauline Matarasso’s *Clothed in Language*. Several books portray contemporary Cistercian life, such as Fr. Philippe Robin’s *Beyond Measure* to Pauline Matarasso’s *Clothed in Language*. Several books portray contemporary Cistercian life, such as the *Letters of Blessed Gabriella*, Fr. Marie-Gérard Dubois’s *Happiness in God*, and Fr. Bernard Bonowitz’s *Truly Seeking God*. We’re particularly excited about *Northern Light*, meditative reflections on the liturgical and calendar year by nuns at Tautra Mariakloster, on Norway’s Trondheim Fjord. This book even contains eight pages of colored photos from Tautra!

We also offer you new translations of patristic and medieval works, including sermons by Bernard of Clairvaux and Isaac of Stella, and volume 5 of the *Revelations of Gertrud the Great of Helfta*, this one complemented by *This Is My Body*, Ella Johnson’s book on Saint Gertrud’s eucharistic theology and anthropology. *Volume 2 of The Life of Jesus*, Ludolph the Carthusian’s encyclopedic collection of early commentaries, is also now available. We also have a surprising number of books by and about Thomas Merton!

You may be about ready to replace some of your older Cistercian books. Some of mine—Aelred of Rievaulx’s *Mirror of Charity* and the first volume of Saint Bernard’s *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, for example—are simply falling apart. If some of your favorites are in the same situation, new copies are always available: we keep the works of the Fathers and Mothers permanently in print in the paperback editions!

In *On the Soul*, Aelred wrote that men and women “are fitted to cling to God,” because he placed in the soul “three things that allow it to share his eternity, participate in his wisdom, and taste his sweetness.” Those things are memory, understanding, and love. This year as always, Cistercian Publications endeavors to publish books that will nourish your memory, understanding, and love. We invite you to try them out!

Sincerely,

Marsha L. Dutton
Executive Editor, Cistercian Publications
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CISTERCIAN PUBLICATIONS
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Bernard of Clairvaux

Various Sermons

Translated by Grace Remington, OCSO

Introduction by Alice Chapman

This last small group of Bernard’s sermons to be published in translation by Cistercian Publications rightly goes by the title De varii in the critical edition. While most of them treat feasts on the church calendar, they do so in a somewhat hit-or-miss fashion. Three sermons also deal with God’s will, God’s mercies, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Two sermons for the feast of Saint Victor are a response to a request to Bernard from the monks of Montiéramey; the Bollandist Life of Saint Victor appears here as a complement to those sermons. Besides the nine sermons normally assigned to the De varii, this volume also includes a sermon on the feast of Saint Benedict that was recently added to the collection in Sources Chrétiennes. The survival of this loose assemblage of sermons outside of the organized collections of Bernard’s sermons provides a reminder of Bernard as preacher and writer, able despite all his other activities to turn his hand to preaching when called upon. While they treat of disparate themes, they allow us to encounter the quintessential Bernard—speaking of the life of desire, the true meaning of holiness, and the awakening of the spiritual senses in the search for God.

SR. GRACE REMINGTON, OCSO, has been a nun of Our Lady of the Mississippi Abbey near Dubuque, Iowa, since 1997. She studied Latin at Grinnell College, where she graduated with a degree in biology. She currently serves the community as cook, gardener, and raiser of chickens.

Additional volumes on page 26.
Beyond Measure
The Poetics of the Image in Bernard of Clairvaux

Bernard of Clairvaux continually returns to the classical idea that the quality of desire shapes theological imagination. By attending to the multiple ways he develops and applies this insight, *Beyond Measure* uncovers a new depth of organic unity to the literary, philosophical, and theological strands densely interwoven through his writings. Bernard’s apparent iconoclasm with respect to art, affectivity, and the humanity of Jesus is revealed as an alternative mystical aesthetic, congruent with his program for monastic reform. The central movement of Cistercian spirituality from the carnal to the spiritual is shown not to elide but to recapitulate the carnal in higher spiritual expression. Further, this approach provides fresh understanding of the ways in which Bernard is at once “last of the fathers” and “first of the moderns.” In particular, a careful reading of works by Julia Kristeva and Jean-Luc Marion on Bernard reveals both the enduring brightness and vitality of his writing and the relevance of his work for people today.

“Slater’s innovative work is unique in taking into account both the theological as well as the artistic dimensions of Bernard’s writings. Attending to Bernard’s insights into the role of the imagination and desire in spiritual transformation, *Beyond Measure* resonates with current concern about the true self and an accurate perception of the world and shows how the divine works through distortions and turns all things to good. It sheds new light on topics such as art, experience, and freedom in Bernard’s corpus.”

Raymond Studzinski, OSB
The Catholic University of America

“From the beginnings of our Order, Cistercian monks and nuns have expressed their desire for—and sometimes their insistence on—seeing God in the here and now *sicuti est* (‘as he is,’ 1 John 3:2), and none more than Bernard of Clairvaux. In this clear and illuminating study, Slater demonstrates to what extent Bernard considered this contemplative knowledge possible in this life, to what extent he accepted it as impossible, and how, by the transformation of desire, men and women could be brought closer to the impossible. Reading Slater’s book, we are renewed in the willingness to allow the Word to work on who we are interiorly in the unrelinquishable hope of coming to know him for who he is.”

Bernard Bonowitz, OCSO, author of *Truly Seeking God*
Gertrud the Great of Helfta

The Herald of God’s Loving-Kindness

Book 5
Translated, with an Introduction by Alexandra Barratt

Gertrud the Great (1256–1302) entered the monastery of Helfta in eastern Germany as a child oblate. At the age of twenty-five she underwent a conversion that led to a series of visionary experiences. These centered on “the divine loving-kindness,” which she perceived as expressed through and symbolized by Christ’s divine Heart. Some of these experiences she recorded in Latin “with her own hand,” in what became book 2 of The Herald of God’s Loving-Kindness.

Books 1, 3, 4, and 5 were written down by another nun, a close confidant of the saint, now often known as “Sister N.” Book 5 details the sickness, deaths, and afterlife fates of various Helfta nuns, novices, and lay brothers, as witnessed by Gertrud in her visions. It also describes Gertrud’s preparations for her own death and her predictive visions of her ultimate glorification in heaven.

Alexandra Barratt is professor emerita at the University of Waikato in New Zealand. She studied at the Universities of Cambridge and Toronto and has published extensively on religious writing by medieval women in Latin and English. She has previously translated books 1 and 2 (CF035), book 3 (CF063), and book 4 (CF085) of The Herald for the Cistercian Fathers series.

Additional volumes on page 30.
Ella Johnson

This Is My Body

Eucharistic Theology and Anthropology in the Writings of Gertrude the Great of Helfta

This book examines how the writings of the thirteenth-century nun Gertrude the Great of Helfta articulate an innovative relationship between a person’s eucharistic devotion and her body. It attends to her references to the biblical, monastic, and theological traditions, including attitudes and ideas about the spiritual and corporeal senses, in order to illuminate the affirmative role Gertrude assigns to the body in making spiritual progress. Ultimately the book demonstrates that Gertrude leaves behind the dualistic aspect of the Christian intellectual and devotional tradition while exploiting its affirmative concepts of bodily forms of knowing divine union.

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7: Gertrude in Context: A Challenge to Difference Fixed into Dichotomy

CS280P 978-0-87907-280-3 Paperback, 272 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $34.95

Available April 2020

Ella Johnson, PhD, is an assistant professor in the theology department at St. Ambrose University, Davenport, Iowa, where she teaches courses on systematic theology, ecclesiology, social justice, and medieval women mystics. Johnson's research focuses on women's theology and piety in medieval Christian history, especially that of the thirteenth-century Helfta writers. She has published several book chapters and articles on Gertrude the Great of Helfta in peer-reviewed journals such as Viator, Magistra, and Medieval Mystical Theology.

“Ella Johnson’s passionate study explores the depth of the writings associated with Gertrude of Helfta, looking into both their sources in scholasticism and their effects for meditative readings. It discusses questions of theology, gendered authorship, and the medieval sensorium in new and inspiring ways.”

Racha Kirakosian
Harvard University
Isaac of Stella

Sermons on the
Christian Year
Volume Two

Translated by Lewis White
Introduction by Elias Dietz, OCSO

Isaac of Stella was an English-born Cistercian who studied in the schools before entering monastic life and becoming abbot of Stella in 1147. His liturgical sermons inject a speculative philosophical inquisitiveness into imaginative meditations on scenes from Scripture. This present volume includes sermons 27–55, along with three fragments. In these sermons, while treating biblical passages corresponding to the major feasts of the Christian calendar, Isaac tackles weighty dogmatic issues such as predestination, the problem of evil, and Christ’s two natures.

“This long-awaited volume allows contemporary readers to appreciate the full theological creativity and monastic wisdom of one of the greatest, but less well-known, Cistercian mystics of the twelfth century. Isaac of Stella’s liturgical sermons are original, challenging, and spiritually nourishing. It is a delight to have them in a fine English translation for the first time.”

Bernard McGinn
Divinity School, University of Chicago
The Vita Christi of Ludolph of Saxony, fourteenth-century Carthusian, is the most comprehensive series of meditations on the life of Christ from the late Middle Ages. Ludolph assembles a wealth of commentary from the fathers of the church and the great medieval spiritual writers and weaves them into a seamless exposition of the Gospel.

This is the full English translation of this classic work and, while it will be of great interest to students of Christian spirituality, it is intended for ordinary believers seeking to enter more deeply into the meaning of the life of Christ. Ludolph divided his work into two parts; the present volume contains the second half of Part One.

Volume 3 foreseen for late Fall 2020!

Call for special standing order offer!
A Benedictine Reader
530–1530
Edited by Hugh Feiss, OSB, Ronald E. Pepin, Maureen M. O’Brien

A Benedictine Reader: 530–1530 has been more than twenty years in the making. A collaboration of a dozen scholars, this project gives as broad and deep a sense of the reality of the first one thousand years of Benedictine monasticism as can be done in one volume, using primary sources in English translation. The texts included are drawn from many different genres and from several languages and areas of Europe. The introduction to each of the thirty-two chapters aims to situate each author and text and to make connections with other texts and studies within and outside the Reader. The general introduction summarizes the main ideas and practices that are present in the Rule of Saint Benedict and in the first thousand years of Benedictine monasticism while suggesting questions that a reader might bring to the texts.

Hugh Feiss, OSB, is a monk of the Monastery of the Ascension in Jerome, Idaho. Ronald E. Pepin received his PhD from Fordham University. Maureen M. O’Brien is professor in the Department of History at Saint Cloud State University, where she teaches ancient and medieval European history. All three previously collaborated on The Lives of Monastic Reformers, 1 and 2 from Cistercian Publications.

“Translated into fresh and readable English, each text contains a concise introduction that has an almost intuitive quality. This is a welcome addition to the field and is an excellent resource for both scholars and students alike.”

Alice Chapman
Grand Valley State University

“Anyone interested in medieval monastic intellectual culture will find this book to be a springboard for jumping into further study or pursuance of the topics found in it. It may find a home in medieval monastic history courses, perhaps not as the basic reader but as one whose diverse authors and genres will be enriching.”

American Benedictine Review

“A monument to the first millennium of Benedictine tradition. It is particularly welcome to see so many female voices from the Benedictine tradition represented in this volume. The diversity in genre of documents is breathtaking, with poetry, art, music, liturgy, horticulture, hagiography and law among the areas covered, all usually in a Benedictine and theological key.”

The Furrow
To understand the life and thought of Thomas Merton, one must understand him as a monk. After introducing his vocation and entrance into the Trappist order, this book highlights some of his basic spiritual presuppositions. Relying primarily on Merton’s writing, Bonnie B. Thurston surveys his thought on fundamental aspects of monastic formation and spirituality, particularly obedience, silence, solitude, and prayer. She also addresses some of the temptations and popular misunderstandings surrounding monastic life. Accessible and conversational in style, the book suggests how monastic spirituality is relevant, not only for all Christians, but also for serious spiritual seekers.

“Thurston skillfully illuminates the many ways in which Merton’s monastic life informed his spirituality and energized his witness to peace and justice. And, in prose that is as lucid as it is learned, she invites her readers to draw deeply from the wellspring of monastic wisdom that is central to Merton’s legacy. A must-read!”

Christine M. Bochen
Nazareth College, Rochester, New York, co-author of The Thomas Merton Encyclopedia

“Thurston argues that to understand Thomas Merton one must understand him as a monk. This careful study argues that point with deep insight based on her four decades of reading and writing about the Merton corpus. This book, extremely readable and unfailingly intelligent, is highly recommended.”

Lawrence S. Cunningham
The University of Notre Dame

“One of Bonnie Thurston’s great gifts to us is her ability to write, when appropriate, about profound topics with a light touch—both accessible and illuminating. That gift is on full display in this wonderful distillation not only of Thomas Merton’s core spiritual teachings but of her many years of study, reflection, and prayer on these teachings.”

Patrick O’Connell
Former president of the International Thomas Merton Society and editor of The Merton Seasonal

Bonnie B. Thurston, after years as a university and seminary professor, lives quietly in her home state of West Virginia. She is the author of many books on Scripture and theology, including Maverick Mark: The Untamed First Gospel, The Spiritual Landscape of Mark, and Philippians in the Sacra Pagina series, all published by Liturgical Press. Her poetry appears frequently in religious periodicals, and among her published collections is Belonging to Borders: A Sojourn in the Celtic Tradition. She is also a contributor to Give Us This Day (Liturgical Press).
Dom Marie-Gérard Dubois, OCSO

**Happiness in God**

Memories and Reflections of the Father Abbot of La Trappe

Translated by Georges Hoffmann and Jean Truax

This is a rich collection of memories and reflections from the long-time abbot of La Trappe, Dom Marie-Gérard Dubois, OCSO. Starting with his entry into monastic life, he walks the reader through the dramatic changes in the Strict Observance of the Cistercian Order, including its liturgical reform and developments in the role of lay brothers. Dom Dubois also shares stories about the diverse group of men who entered the Order at that time, including WWII veterans, Holocaust survivors, and members of the French literary elite, and why they decided to become monks. His stories offer a fascinating inside view into twentieth-century Cistercian life.

Dom Marie-Gérard Dubois was born in Lille, France, in 1929 in a family of seven children. In 1947 he entered the Trappist Monastery of Mont-des-Cats, where he became master of novices and then prior. After a short stay as superior *ad nutum* at Cîteaux, Dubois was elected abbot of the Monastery of La Grande Trappe in Soligny, France. During his twenty-five years as abbot he presided over many commissions responsible for implementing the reforms of Vatican Council II in the Cistercian Order. In 2011, Dom Dubois returned to the Lord.

Georges A. Hoffmann is an attorney and a lay Cistercian at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, Conyers, Georgia.

Jean Truax has a PhD in medieval history; she is an independent scholar and author of *Archbishops Ralph d’Escares, William of Corbeil and Theobald of Bec: Heirs of Anselm and Ancestors of Becket,* and *Aelred the Peacemaker: The Public Life of a Cistercian Abbot* (CS251; Cistercian Publications, 2018).

“A deeply engaging and delightfully personalized glimpse into genuine monastic life and experience, including his own meaningful path to La Trappe. Much more than a memoir, Dubois’s book whets our appetite to taste and see the *conversatio morum* of Trappist community, so personally and profoundly spread before us as though at table with the brothers. The English translation captures the narrative and insight of Dubois beautifully.”

F. Tyler Sergent
Berea College, Kentucky
Bernard Bonowitz, OCSO

Truly Seeking God

“Truly seeking God” is the one requirement Saint Benedict establishes for the admission of a candidate to the monastery. Once inside, that is exactly what he or she will be doing. In the first part of the book, “From the Rising of the Sun to Its Setting,” Bernard Bonowitz recounts the ways in which the monk actively seeks God in all the practices and places of the monastic life—in silence and liturgical prayer, work and leisure, solitude and community, spiritual direction and fraternal friendship, the encounter with nature and the encounter with the unsuspected recesses of his or her own heart.

Grace is ever at work through the ongoing fidelity of a monk or nun to the monastic vocation. In the second half of the book, “The Making of a Monk,” Bonowitz describes the gradual transformation that grace effects, transforming the innocently self-centered novice into the young solemnly professed, content to carry the weight of responsibility within the community, and finally into the beautiful elder, joyfully focused on God and neighbor and filled with desire for eternal life.

“Dom Bernardo has the rare gift for distilling decades of experience in formation work into real gems of wisdom and insight, at once deeply contemplative and eminently practical. This book is a precious gift to those seeking God with St. Benedict as their guide.”

Gerard D’Souza, OCSO
Abbey of Genesee

“Bonowitz’s book shows the way that a monk’s experience develops over the course of a lifetime, with both its struggles and its joys. Reading it, many will discover their thirst for God, as well as their yearning to find their true self and the way to genuine freedom and life.”

Sister Teresa Paula Perdigão, OSB
Mosteiro do Encontro, Paraná, Brazil

“This is a fresh, modern book on personal spirituality. So many of us are taken up with the distractions of our work, our phones, and our own inner chatter that it is hard to find a path back to ourselves. Bonowitz shows how aspects of monastic life can help.”

Sherry Turkle, MIT professor and author of Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other
Pauline Matarasso

Clothed in Language

At the heart of *Clothed in Language* lies a journal, but the writing, while personal, has been given a thematic structure. Seeing language as a vital medium through which the divine is made present to us, scholar and poet Pauline Matarasso explores the ways in which this God-given language, with its overcoat of metaphor and undertow of rhythm, serves to reflect the truth and, on occasion, mask it. This book also includes an essay that looks at certain features common to myth, fairy tale, lore, and Scripture.

“It takes a contemplative soul filtered through a mind at once scholarly and poetic to render complex insight with such clarity and beauty. This book offers substantial nourishment, manna in the wilderness.”

Erik Varden, OCSO
Mount Saint Bernard Abbey

Blessed Gabriella Sagheddu

The Letters of Blessed Maria Gabriella

Translated by David Lavich, OCSO, with Introduction by Mariella Carpinello

During her short life as a Cistercian nun in the Italian monastery of Grottaferrata, Blessed Maria Gabriella Sagheddu wrote detailed letters about her life there to her family in Sardinia and to her former parish priest. These letters are collected here, along with notes and letters by and to her abbess, Mother Pia Gullini, OCSO, and M. Pia’s notes and recollections about Bl. Gabriella.

“One excellent window to glimpse into the world of early twentieth-century Catholic spirituality.”

Judith Sutera, OSB
Magistra

David P. Lavich, OCSO, entered the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance at Saint Joseph’s Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts, in 1987, after completing twelve years of missionary work in Japan. After serving in Rome as a councilor to the abbot general of the Order from 2008 until 2017, he has returned to serve as chaplain to the Order’s women’s monasteries in Japan.

MW059P, 978-0-87907-059-5
Paperback, 160 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $24.95
eBook

MW057P, 978-0-87907-557-6
Paperback, 232 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $29.95
eBook

Rights: World, English
The Cistercian Nuns at Tautra Mariakloster

Northern Light

For at least eight centuries, the Norwegian island of Tautra in the Trondheim fjord has been known for its spiritual waves and special light. In the Middle Ages, Cistercian monks established the northernmost monastery of the Order, living God-centered lives and developing skills such as land use and animal husbandry until the Reformation.

In 1999, Cistercian nuns reestablished Tautra Mariakloster, the monastery of Our Lady of the Safe Island. Visitors to the modern monastery, distinguished by its glass-roofed church, quickly sense the silence, peace, and light of the place.

Four of the women who live at Tautra have contributed to this volume of monastic wisdom from the north. They write of their experiences as monastics living close to the land, sky, and water on this island, following the liturgical year of the monastery with its enduring rhythm while experiencing the changing seasons and landscape that help to shape their life of faith and light.

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The Cistercian Nuns of Tautra Mariakloster are a group of women from eight countries who have been called to monastic life at Tautra, in central Norway.
Michael Papazian

The Doctor of Mercy
The Sacred Treasures of St. Gregory of Narek

In April 2015, Pope Francis named the Armenian poet and theologian St. Gregory of Narek (ca. 945–1003) a Doctor of the Church. Though venerated for centuries by Catholic and Orthodox Armenians, Gregory is an obscure figure virtually unknown to the rest of the church. Adding to the extraordinary nature of the pope’s declaration, Gregory has the distinction of being the only Catholic Doctor who lived his entire life outside the visible communion of the Catholic Church. The Doctor of Mercy aims to provide an accessible introduction to Gregory’s literary works, theology, and spirituality, as well as to make the case for the contemporary relevance of his writings to the problems that face the church and the world today.

978-0-8146-8501-3
Hardcover with dust jacket, 278 pp., 6 x 9, $49.95
Ebook

Michael Papazian is professor of philosophy at Berry College in Rome, Georgia. After completing his philosophy doctorate at the University of Virginia, he studied classical Armenian at Oxford University. He publishes on ancient Greek philosophy and medieval Armenian theology, most recently a book-length translation of an eighth-century Armenian commentary on the Gospels, Step'anos Siwnets'': Commentary on the Four Evangelists (SIS Publications, 2014).

“Very satisfying and enlightening. Well worth the time of anyone interested in the history of doctrine and spirituality, but the book also demonstrates why the study of Gregory is relevant and worthwhile in our time. I especially appreciated the way the author connects Christological implications to artistic depictions of Christ, demonstrating that all art teaches something about its subject.”

Jim L. Papandrea
Professor of Church History and Historical Theology
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

“In The Doctor of Mercy, Papazian makes a distinctive contribution by providing the most comprehensive introduction to St. Gregory of Narek, a medieval mystic who experienced and expressed a reality not easily comprehended. The book touches upon everything conceivable about the Saint and his works and does so in an appealingly clear fashion.”

Abraham Terian
Emeritus Professor of Armenian
Theology and Patristics
St. Nersess Armenian Seminary
Bernadette McNary-Zak

Humble Aspiration
Constructing an Early Christian Ideal

What does it mean to be humble like Christ? In this book, Bernadette McNary-Zak explores various concepts of Christian humility in late antiquity. To help readers deepen their understanding of Christian humility, McNary-Zak takes a close look at some of the ways different types of humility operated as a relational value in specific contexts involving ascetic women. With this approach, the author shows how, at the very margins of a male-dominated culture, the ascetic woman represented a form of renunciation of self that enabled her to function as a symbol of Christian humility for women and men alike.

978-0-8146-8406-1  Paperback, 192 pp., 6 x 9, $24.95

eBook
Available May 2020

Bernadette McNary-Zak, PhD, is associate professor of religious studies at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. She is the author of several books including Useful Servanthood: A Study of Spiritual Formation in the Writings of Abba Ammonas (CS 224; Cistercian Publications, 2010). Other publications include two co-edited books and a number of articles in her areas of research.

“Humble Aspiration is a welcome addition to a growing body of scholarship on the meaning and practice of humility. McNary-Zak brings to life an assembly of early Christian women who stand strongly as equals, alongside their more celebrated male counterparts, in their imitation of the humble Christ. Christian humility was indeed a ‘countercultural’ force in the world of late antiquity, as McNary-Zak richly demonstrates.”

Jane Foulcher
Charles Sturt University

“In a world where humility is often misunderstood, especially as applied to women, this book offers a deep and wide exploration of the concept. McNary-Zak gathers views of humility from ancient and modern sources into a resource unlike any other currently available.”

Judith Sutera, OSB
Mount St. Scholastica
Atchison, Kansas

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**Balaam’s Donkey**

*Random Ruminations For Every Day of the Year*

*Balaam’s Donkey* is a series of daily reflections based on the homilies preached by Cistercian monk Michael Casey over his fifty years of priesthood. What remained of the original homilies was a large box full of index cards with a few talking points on each. From there, Casey has re-created the homilies and recast them into short reflections, arranged randomly for every day of the year. The range of topics discussed is broad, and the approach taken differs with each reflection, most of them colored with a touch of Casey’s whimsy and good humor.

978-0-8146-8463-4  Paperback, 488 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $29.95  
**eBook**

Michael Casey, OCSO, has been a monk of Tarrawarra Abbey (Australia) since 1960. In the intervening years he has conducted many retreats and workshops on every continent (except Antarctica) and has written many articles on topics relating to monastic history and spirituality. He is also the author of many books, including *The Road to Eternal Life: Reflections on the Prologue of Benedict’s Rule* and *Seventy-Four Tools for Good Living: Reflections on the Fourth Chapter of Benedict’s Rule*, both from Liturgical Press.

“Casey calls it ‘random ruminations,’ but I noticed after reading the meditation for the day and putting the book down, I felt better about the coming day. Hope and encouragement is the golden string binding these reflections together like the ‘bundle of myrrh’ so dear to the lover in the Song of Songs 1:13.”

**Abbot Brendan Freeman**  
Mellifont Abbey, Ireland

“Casey’s ‘repurposed’ homilies are the best fruit of *lectio divina*. Wherever you stick your thumb in, you pull out a spiritually wise and theologically thought-provoking plum. Engaging turns of phrase and energetic prose promote reflection that is both sweet and sustaining.”

**Bonnie Thurston**  
Author of *Maverick Mark: The Untamed First Gospel*

“Michael Casey is one of the best spiritual guides for our times, or for any time. There is truly gold here.”

**Catholic Books Review**
Gregory the Great

Moral Reflections on the Book of Job, Volume 5
Books 23–27
Translated by Brian Kerns, OCSO
Introduction by Mark DelCogliano

The Moral Reflections on the Book of Job were first given to the monks who accompanied Gregory to the embassy in Constantinople.

This fifth volume, containing books 23 through 27, provides commentary on six chapters of Job, from 32:1 through 37:24. The present volume covers the chapters of Job devoted to Eliph, the young man who derides the three friends who couldn’t find an answer to Job.

CS260H, 978-0-87907-260-5
Hardcover with dust jacket, 332 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $39.95
Rights: World, English

Br. Brian Kerns has been a Trappist for sixty years, seventeen years at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky, and the rest at the Abbey of the Genesee in upper New York state, interrupted by a year at Oxford, North Carolina, and five years at Genesee’s foundation of Novo Mundo in Parana, Brazil. The first four volumes of his translation of Gregory the Great’s Moral Reflections on the Book of Job were published by Cistercian Publications between 2014 and 2017.

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Thomas Merton’s lectures to the novices at the Abbey of Gethsemani provide a good look at Merton the scholar. *A Course in Christian Mysticism* gathers together, for the first time, the best of these talks into a spiritual, historical, and theological survey of Christian mysticism—from St. John’s gospel to St. John of the Cross. Sixteen centuries are covered over thirteen lectures. A general introduction sets the scene for when and how the talks were prepared for young men studying to become Trappist monks and for the perennial themes one finds in them, making them relevant for spiritual seekers today. This compact volume allows anyone to learn, like a novice, from one of the twentieth century’s greatest Catholic spiritual teachers. The study materials at the back of the book, including additional primary source readings and thoughtful questions for reflection and discussion, make this an essential text for any student of Christian mysticism.

“A *Course in Christian Mysticism* is an excellent source for those who want to begin a systematic study of the great early masters of the Christian mystical tradition. Merton offers us his keen perception of these teachings with an eye to our contemporary search for the Divine, that ‘mystery of our union with God.’ Merton’s command of the sources is aided by Sweeney’s skilled editing, which makes Merton’s lectures more accessible to readers. I highly recommend this resource.”

Laura Swan, OSB
Associate Editor of *Magistra*

“This text is an excellent resource not only to academics but also for sincere aspirants seeking an accessible introduction to a spiritual life.”

*Reading Religion*

“*A Course in Christian Mysticism* is not only a must-read text for fans of Merton but also a great introduction to the history of Christian mystical spirituality through the centuries.”

Daniel P. Horan, OFM
Catholic Theological Union

Thomas Merton

**A Course in Christian Mysticism**

Edited by Jon M. Sweeney

Foreword by Michael N. McGregor

Jon M. Sweeney is an independent scholar, author, critic, and publisher. His books include *The Pope Who Quit: A True Medieval Tale of Mystery, Death, and Salvation*, *Inventing Hell*, and several books on Saint Francis. He is a regular contributor to *America* and *The Tablet*. Jon is the publisher and editor-in-chief at Paraclete Press. He is married, the father of three, and lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
Thomas Merton's sessions with the young monks at the Abbey of Gethsemani showcase Merton's brilliant ability to survey the key figures and synthesize their writings, inspiring his listeners and readers with what it means for the spiritual life. Like its companion volume, A Course in Christian Mysticism, this book is a collection of fifteen lectures that get to the heart of Merton's belief that monastic wisdom and spirituality are applicable for everyone. This compact volume allows anyone to learn from one of the twentieth century’s greatest Catholic spiritual teachers. The study materials at the back of the book, including additional primary source readings and thoughtful questions for reflection and discussion, make this an essential text for any student of Christian desert spirituality.

“A Course in Desert Spirituality offers keen insight into the wisdom of early Christian mystics like St. Gregory of Nyssa, John Cassian, and Evagrius Ponticus. It makes the Desert Mothers and Fathers come alive. But it also reveals much about the spiritual heart of Thomas Merton himself.”

Carl McColman, author of The Big Book of Christian Mysticism and The Unteachable Lessons

“This is a solid and welcome collection for those seeking to live the spiritual life.”

Cistercian Studies Quarterly

“Merton was a formidable scholar, a quality demonstrated in ample measure in the 15 lectures included in this book. Editor Jon M. Sweeney, whose oeuvre is fast approaching 40 books, has done a yeoman’s job of abridging this material, making it much more user-friendly and far more accessible to a wider, general audience.”

Englewood Review of Books

978-0-8146-8473-3 Paperback, 200 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $19.95

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Jon M. Sweeney is an independent scholar, author, critic, and publisher. His books include The Pope Who Quit: A True Medieval Tale of Mystery, Death, and Salvation, Inventing Hell, and several books on Saint Francis. He also edited A Course in Christian Mysticism, by Thomas Merton. He is a regular contributor to America and The Tablet and is the publisher and editor-in-chief at Paraclete Press. He is married, the father of three, and lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
Thomas Merton

The Climate of Monastic Prayer

Foreword by Sarah Coakley

This guide to monastic prayer, written in 1968 and thus turning out to be Thomas Merton’s final testament to us, is now available in a new edition commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of his death. While he wrote it for other monastics, all seekers drawn to explore the full dimensions of prayer will be enriched by his words, especially as they take on added meaning in today’s dizzying world.

The climate in which monastic prayer flowers is that of the desert, where human comfort is absent, where the secure routines of the “earthly city” offer no support, and where prayer must be sustained by God in the purity of faith.

“It’s a beautiful, new, gift-quality, hardcover edition, and the Coakley foreword is a delight, and the book itself is one of Merton’s many essential titles.”

Carl McColman

“The ‘climate’ of monastic prayer, Merton says, is the desert, the monastic community, but this wonderful book, from his last years, is for all of us. Merton shows us something he pushed for from the start—that prayer is our breathing, not just close to our life and experience, but totally wound up with every moment of our consciousness, every minute of everyday existence. This is a rich feast for us today, not recipes, but a kind of counseling on prayer’s omnipresence that we need to hear.”

Michael Plekon
Professor Emeritus of The City University of New York
Author of The World as Sacrament

“A contemporary Christian spiritual masterpiece. Merton’s prose is clear and astute, and his text is replete with profound, yet succinct reflections on contemplative prayer and the Christian spiritual life that is valuable for anyone interested in Christian spirituality.”

Catholic Book Review
Jaechan Anselmo Park, OSB

Thomas Merton’s Encounter with Buddhism and Beyond
His Interreligious Dialogue, Inter-Monastic Exchanges, and Their Legacy
Foreword by William Skudlarek, OSB
Preface by Bonnie B. Thurston

Thomas Merton recognized the value and possibility of contemplative dialogue between monastics and contemplatives of other religious traditions and hoped that, through such dialogue, monastics would strive for “inter-monastic communion” and a bonding of the broader “spiritual family.” He held out hope that this bond would demonstrate the fundamental unity of humanity to a world that was becoming ever more materialistic and divided.

Among other themes and topics, this book explores Thomas Merton’s role as a pioneer of Buddhist-Christian dialogue and monastic interreligious dialogue. It delves into the process of Merton’s self-transformation through contemplative experiences, explores his encounter with Zen and Tibetan Buddhists and his pioneering engagements in Buddhist-Christian dialogue, and presents and responds to the criticisms of those who raise questions about Merton’s understanding of Buddhism.

978-0-8146-8474-0 Paperback, 320 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $29.95
Ebook

Jaechan Anselmo Park, OSB, is a member of St. Benedict Waegwan Abbey in South Korea, where he has been vocation director and director of the Monastic Experience program. He received his STL and ThD from Regis College at the University of Toronto, Canada, where he is currently completing a doctorate in sacred theology. Park is interested in spiritual direction, Thomas Merton, and inter-monastic religious dialogue. Presently, he engages in Dialogue Interreligieux Monastique/Monastic Interreligious Dialogue (DIMMID) as an at-large director for intra-monastic dialogue in Asia.

“Fr. Park’s profound study of Thomas Merton’s multireligious encounters reveals the enormous impact and importance of Merton’s legacy for the church and for the world. It is the first extensive study to explore Merton’s legacy in terms of how it has shaped the institutional church, through the activities of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) and through the Monastic Interreligious Dialogue (MID), which functions under its aegis. This is a convincing portrayal of Merton’s pivotal importance in the history of interreligious dialogue.”

Joe Raab
Siena Heights University
Coeditor of The Merton Annual
Three Pseudo-Bernardine Works

Edited by Ann Astell and Joseph Wawrykow

Introduction by Dom Elias Dietz, OCSO

During the “Silver Age” of the Cistercians (the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries), pseudopigraphical compositions bearing the name Bernard flourished. Important for the history of monasticism and, more broadly, of Christian spiritual formation and practice, these little-studied writings interpret, appropriate, transform, and apply Saint Bernard of Clairvaux’s authentic works, transmitting them to new audiences.

Under the direction of Ann Astell and Joseph Wawrykow, with the assistance of Thomas Clemmons, a talented team of young scholars from the University of Notre Dame (the Catena Scholarium) offers here a complete translation of three of these Pseudo-Bernardine essays, providing notes that identify sources, clarify allusions, highlight rhetorical strategies, and demonstrate overall a fascinating, intertextual complexity. The Bernard who emerges from these texts speaks with many voices to herald a living, Bernardine tradition.

Like many great spiritual writers, Bernard of Clairvaux had a number of works pseudonymously ascribed to him after his death. In Bernard’s case the total is said to be as high as 177. In modern times we rightly value authentic works over pseudonymous ones, but this should not lead us to neglect the ‘pseudo-Bernard,’ who has much to tell us about the saint’s fame and the subsequent history of his ideas. This valuable translation provides readable and well-annotated versions of three pseudo-Bernardine meditative texts particularly useful for the religious formation of monks. It is a welcome addition to our knowledge of Bernard’s afterlife and the history of the medieval monasticism.”

Bernard McGinn
Divinity School, University of Chicago

Why should we know about texts once wrongly attributed to St. Bernard? The fact that some of them were extremely popular while others were not or were in vogue only regionally suggests that readers looked beyond the name Bernard to the contents of the manuscripts. Lovingly translated and beautifully annotated, these works offer new and valuable glimpses into twelfth- and thirteenth-century religious mentalities.”

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Initiation into the Monastic Tradition

Thomas Merton

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Rights: World, English
As master of novices for ten years (1955–1965) at the Cistercian Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani in Kentucky, Thomas Merton was responsible for the spiritual formation of young men preparing for monastic profession. These conferences form an essential part of the overall picture of Cistercian monastic life that Merton provided as part of his project of “initiation into the monastic tradition” that is evident in the broad variety of courses that he put together and taught over the period of his mastership.

The texts of these conferences represent the longest and most systematically organized of a variety of conferences that Merton presented during the decade of his mastership. They may be the most directly pastoral work Merton ever wrote.

Thomas Merton

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Thomas Merton (1915–1968), Catholic convert, Cistercian monk and hermit, poet, contemplative, social critic, and pioneer of interreligious dialogue, was a seminal figure of twentieth-century American Christianity.

Patrick F. O’Connell is professor of English and theology at Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania. A founding member and former president of the International Thomas Merton Society, he edits *The Merton Seasonal* and is coauthor of *The Thomas Merton Encyclopedia*.
Bernard of Clairvaux

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