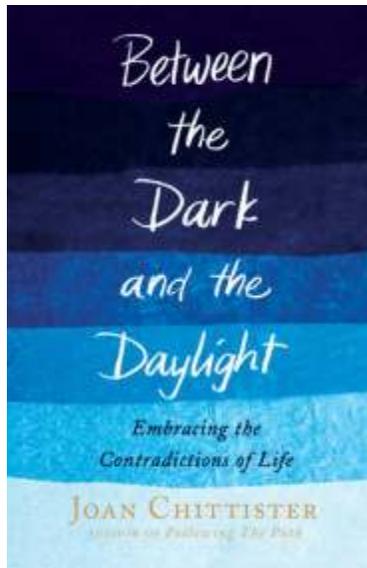


Not Impossible: The Art and Joy of Doing What Couldn't Be Done by Mick Ebeling, Atria Books, New York: 2015, \$25.00, 245 pp., ISBN 978-1-4767-8280-5

I found it on Barnes and Noble's "New Arrivals" table at the beginning of 2015 (my first book purchase of that year) and, though having an occasional colorful phrase, it is a truly spiritual read for the person in the pew—and, I might add, a great motivator for the staff of any charitable institution. "It's all about taking the leap of faith" (p. 12). The author, a film and TV producer by trade, is the son of a philanthropist who attended daily Mass and sat on the Board of Catholic Social Services in Phoenix; and his Mom co-founded the Well-Care Foundation providing free health care for women getting off welfare to work. The author founded the Not Impossible Foundation and started a TV show "Making Good." He states: "I really do believe that every human being in this world is good, and if you don't see the good, then we're most likely misunderstanding them" (p. 132). Hearing of an artist who had ALS and could no longer paint or even speak, he found a way to build the equipment to help him do both—and then he "open sourced" it so anyone anywhere could copy the designs and do the same for others. Similarly, hearing of a young boy in the Sudan, Daniel, whose hand had been blown off, he found a low-cost and simple way to 3-D print new hands, flew the equipment to the Sudan, and trained the locals how to make them, for Daniel and many others. (The local Catholic diocese in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan hosted his presence there and supported him operationally. Indeed, as he prepared to leave the Sudan, he attended morning Mass with the local doctor to acknowledge the importance of that higher power making it all come together—p. 194.) He writes: "If you take anything at all from this book, I hope you take that: If this guy Mick [himself, the author] can accomplish what he accomplished, what could I do if I set my mind to it?" (p. 184). In pastoral ministry, parish councils and staffs all occasionally have to "Commit: then figure it out" (title of ch. 3). Ebeling shows how!



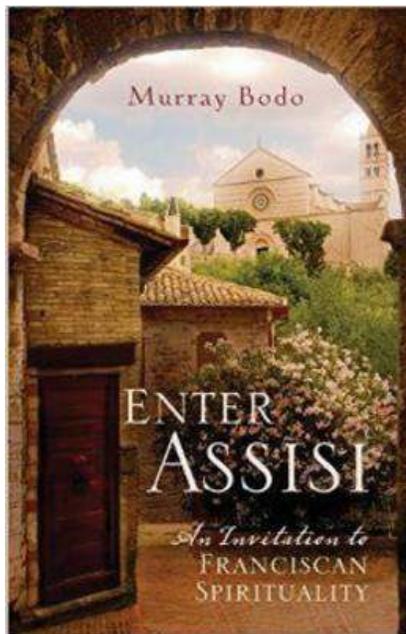
Between the Dark and the Daylight: Embracing the Contradictions of Life by Joan Chittister, Image, New York: 2015, 173 pp., \$20.00, ISBN 978-0-8041-4094-2

Though the title is deeply inviting, the subtitle captures the true focus of this book. Within only a chapter or so, you'll probably think of a friend or two to whom you'd like to pass this book along when you finish. Its 32 chapters would make for a very adequate month full of reflections for a personal time of retreat. The well-known author, past president of the Conference of American Benedictine Prioresses, is the current Executive Director of Benetvision, a resource and research center for contemporary spirituality. The gist of the title is addressed right in chapter one: "Only the experience of our own darkness gives us the light we need to be of help to others whose journey into the dark spots of life is only just beginning" (p. 19). The importance of being able to help others get off of home plate with their game plan comes through in chapter 3: when we treasure a bad status quo, "We confuse 'stagnant' with 'calm' and call it holiness" (p. 31); and in chapter 4: "Certainty, for all its guarantees, demands a subservient companion....It nails our feet to the floor and calls it success" (p. 40). Chittister even uses humor to drive home how, though forward motion may lead to confusion, it can lead to creativity as well: "The story is told that when the home of Pablo Picasso, the great neo-expressionist painter of the twentieth century, was burgled, Picasso told police that he would paint them a picture of the intruder. 'And on the strength of that picture,' the French police reported later, 'we arrested a mother superior, a government minister, a washing machine, and the Eiffel Tower'" (p. 83). A very good read!



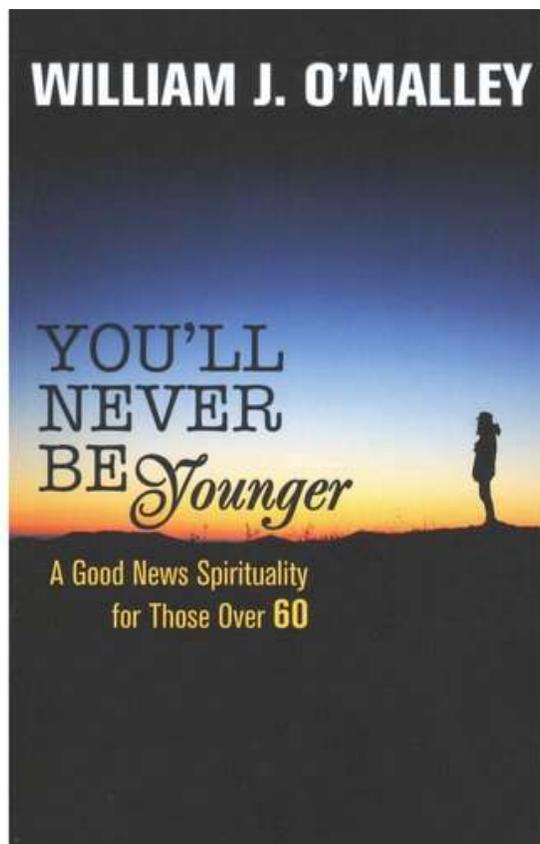
In the Midst of Our Storms: Opening Ourselves to Christ in the Liturgy by Roc O'Connor, Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago: 2015, \$13.95, 115 pp., ISBN 978-1-61671-236-5

This author is one of the St. Louis Jesuits (remember “Be Not Afraid”? 😊), and here he uses his degrees in biblical theology and liturgical studies as well as his experience of rectorship at Creighton University and current parish work in Milwaukee to invite us—according to fellow Jesuit author, Fr. James Martin—“into the riches of the liturgical life, presented in a way that will appeal to both priest celebrants and congregants alike, and that will enable all the faithful to more fully, actively, and consciously encounter Christ in worship and prayer.” He does that and more. Chapters 8 and 9 particularly will delight the Scripture student in each of us with new homiletic insights into key Biblical passages. He also introduces us to the “Liturgical Contemplative Practice” that can help us mine more richly. Enjoy!



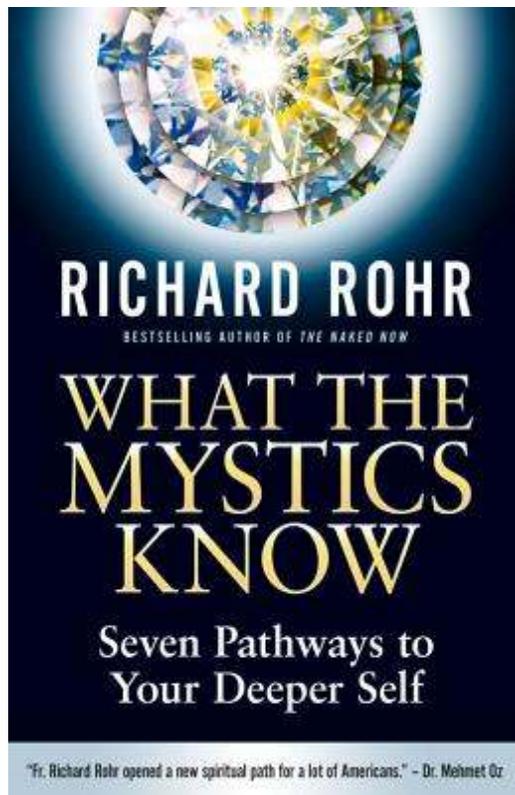
Enter Assisi: An Invitation to Franciscan Spirituality by Murray Bodo, Franciscan Media, Cincinnati: 2015, \$14.99, 119 pp., ISBN 978-1-61636-709-1

It helped that I read this on the plane flying overseas to actually visit Assisi and finished it as we rolled into town. It made the pilgrimage to this Catholic Mecca all the more meaningful, and for those who cannot visit it geographically, it will take you there spiritually. The book, written by a Franciscan priest who is a member of the Franciscan Academy, is dedicated to the people of Assisi. It is interesting that Assisi was inhabited by Umbrians under the control of the emperor; while, across the Tiber, Perugia was inhabited by Etruscans under the control of the pope (p. 14). The author advises that upon passing through any of Assisi's 8 gates, one pray Psalm 118:19-20 (p. 16). He covers both St. Francis and St. Clare, and comments that "The poverty of St. Francis, then, is in the 'penance' of overcoming fear and revulsion to *embrace* what is without love or affirmation" (p. 103). These 22 brief chapters make for a great spiritual read while on vacation or retreat—or a plane to Assisi!



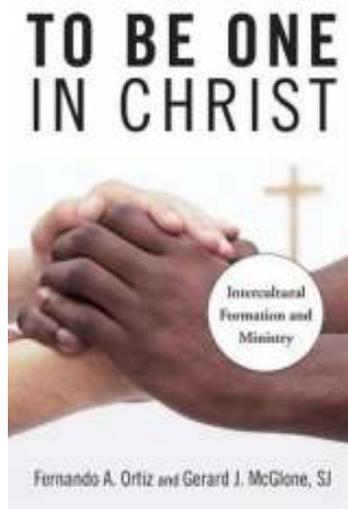
You'll Never Be Younger: A Good News Spirituality for Those Over 60 by William J. O'Malley, Orbis Books, Maryknoll NY: 2015, \$18.00, 197 pp., ISBN 978-1-62698-124-9

Sexagenarians: run, don't walk, to the bookstore for this text! The author—an octogenarian Irish-Canadian Jesuit of former McQuaid H.S. and *The Exorcist* fame—reflects back most helpfully on how we 60-somethings might best approach life and God and everything else in the final decades that shall be dealt us here below: “Every second of your golden years in a golden second” (p. 18). On these pages, you'll find the challenge of this book (p. 19), O'Malley's 2 laws (p. 30), which modern religious writer he finds “a veritable pursuivant of poisonous reductionism” (p. 64), how to pray as an adult (all of chapter 11), traditions (p. 131), the worst sin (p. 162), purgatory (p. 171), and the final challenge of life (p. 194). If you're not yet 60, just read another book. But if you've hit that magic mark (especially if you're already in the Medicare half of that decade), hesitate no longer in your procurement of this text. You wouldn't buy too many green bananas at our age. Consider O'Malley's latest a fruit ripe for Sexagenarian picking!



What the Mystics Know: Seven Pathways to Your Deeper Self by Richard Rohr, The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York: 2015, \$19.95, 164 pp., ISBN 978-0-8245-2039-7

Not your typical Rohr book, this one is inspired by Crossroads' editor John Jones (1964-2012) who perceived the book's seven underlying themes before his early death. It is the type of book that one could possibly read in one sitting. However, when read in a reflective mode, each page has so much to ponder that one could stretch it out over a 30-day retreat. Whatever you seek in its pages will already have a hook within you: "You can only miss something that you have searched for and partially experienced. In fact, you do not even search for it until you have already touched it" (p. 6). Rohr tells how "We long for great-souled people who can hold the chaos together within themselves—and give us the courage to do the same" (p. 20). (I believe we had just such a person last September ['16]—all in white—here in America.) We learn on these pages the two things that draw us outside ourselves (p. 47), how we overcome evil (p. 69), the first goal of contemplation (p. 83), that "Catholicism is still the most successful multicultural institution on the earth" (p. 116), and how "you never think yourself into a new way of living. You invariably live yourself into a new way of thinking" (p. 128). Each page has a treasure; each line, a clue!



To Be One in Christ: Intercultural Formation and Ministry ed. by Fernando A. Ortiz and Gerard J. McGlone, SJ, Liturgical Press, Collegeville MN: 2015, \$24.95, 251 pp., ISBN 978-0-8146-4805-6

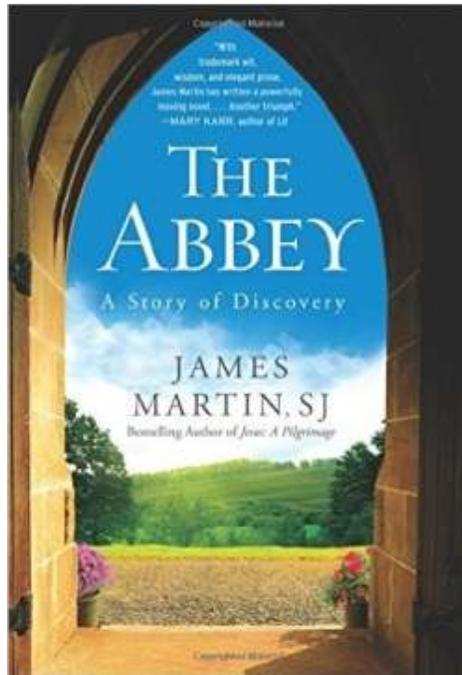
In this age of the increasing intercultural nature of both our congregations and the presbyterate to serve them, this book presents many helpful insights both for those directly involved in preparing candidates for ministry and for those on staffs and in pews at parishes where such ministry is required and/or provided. The editors are (Ortiz) the director of the Counseling Center at Gonzaga University and a member of the USCCB's National Review Board who also provides training in the cross-cultural screening of candidates for the priesthood; and (McGlone) a Jesuit of the Maryland Province who has authored three sex abuse prevention programs for priests and seminarians. Of particular note are:

--chapter 2 by Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles who points out the very different way that Anglos and Hispanics think, perceive, and respond to life situations in rectory, parish, and ministry settings;

--chapter 8 by editor Ortiz on welcoming the stranger among us;

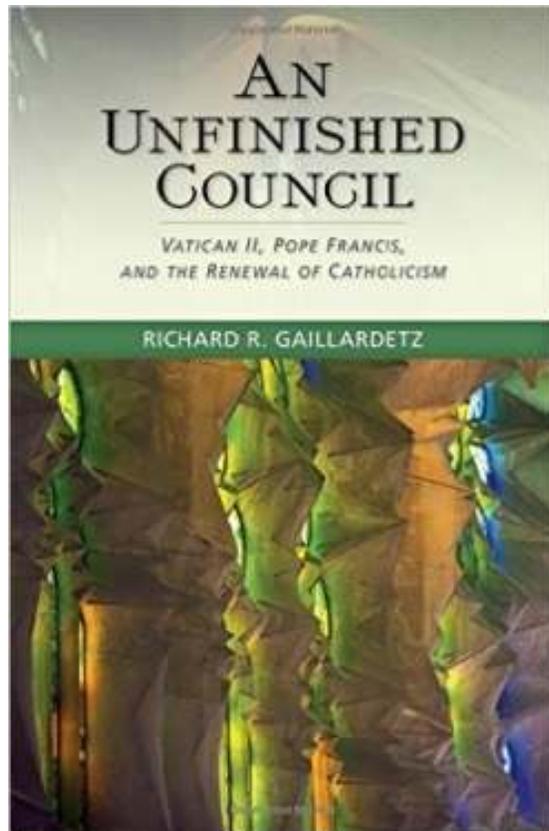
--chapter 10 by Franciscan Conventual Fr. Kenneth G. Davis (spiritual director at St. Joseph College in St. Benedict LA) and Renata Furst (assistant professor of Scripture and Spirituality at the Oblate School of Theology) on the best way of integrating vocations from Latin America into American culture (of particular import is the table on pages 159-160 illustrating different responses to acculturation stress across several domains); and

--chapter 11 by Dominican Aniedi Okure (from C.U. and former USCCB Coord. Of Ethnic Ministries) on engaging African-Born clergy in American ministry and the many ways the two cultures approach daily challenges so differently. A very positive resource offering great perspective for us all!



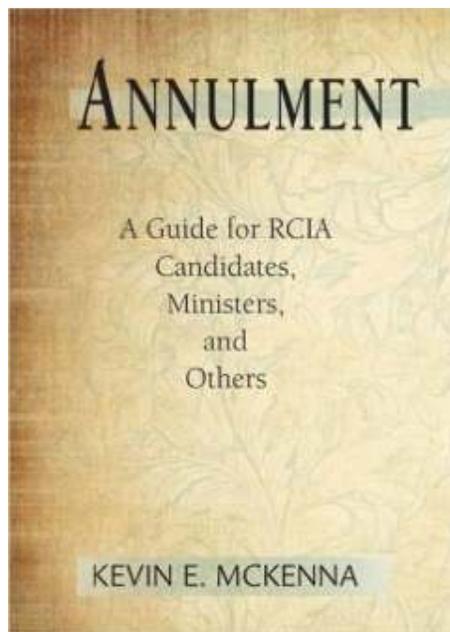
The Abbey: A Story of Discovery by James Martin, SJ, HarperCollins, New York: 2015, \$24.99, 212 pp., ISBN 978-0-06-240186-1

Jesuit Father James Martin is best known for his non-fiction works: *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*; *The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life*; and *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life*. This work is his first novel, is based on a dream, and is very “coincidentally” apropos for our reading in The Year of Mercy. As the abbot says in comforting a bereaved mother, “‘God is mercy,’ he said. ‘So I think God looks down on you with the greatest love imaginable.’” (p. 115). One review on the back cover compares it to *The Shack* and *The Screwtape Letters*. In it, we find a divorced single mom struggling both generally with life itself and particularly with the death of her son; a tenant of hers who is a handyman at a nearby abbey; an elderly monk at this Keystone State abbey who had long ago baptized the divorced single mom above; and the abbot of said abbey. There are moments of sorrow (“Anne inhaled and exhaled deeply as she turned away from her son’s photo, willing herself to continue her day.”—p. 15), humor (Abbot “Paul loved the word ‘abbatial.’ It was absurdly pretentious, so he used it as often as he could to get a laugh from the other monks. ‘Please sit on the abbatial couch, Father.’”—p. 61), and wisdom (elderly monk Fr. Edward to Abbot Paul: “‘Spirituality is like spaghetti . . . When my mother, may she rest in peace, cooked spaghetti, she used to throw a few strands against the kitchen wall. When it stuck, she said it was done. It’s the same with the spiritual life. Not every homily you preach or insight you offer will stick. A lot depends on where the person is...’”—p. 188). A great read!



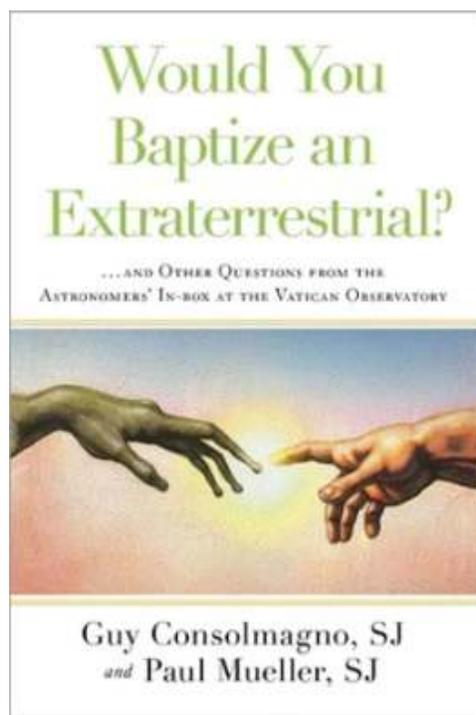
An Unfinished Council: Vatican II, Pope Francis, and the Renewal of Catholicism by Richard R. Gaillardetz, Liturgical Press, Collegeville MN: 2015, \$19.95, 158 pp., ISBN 978-0-8146-8309-5

In opening the Year of Mercy on December 8, 2015, we marked the conclusion of the 50-year anniversary commemorations of the Second Vatican Council, (October 12, 1962-December 8, 1965). But before we let that convocation merely fade to the background, this text is well worth the read. The main goal of the author (past President of the Catholic Theological Society of America and current Chair of Catholic Systematic Theology at Boston College) is “to contribute to the theological task of drawing together the council’s many contributions into a more coherent theological vision of the church, one capable of underwriting a comprehensive program of ecclesial reformed renewal” (p. xiii). In looking back five decades, he acknowledges that “there is work still to be done” (p. 91), and outlines four areas for our attention in chapter 6. The perfect book to keep this Council and its intentions very much on our front contemporary burners!



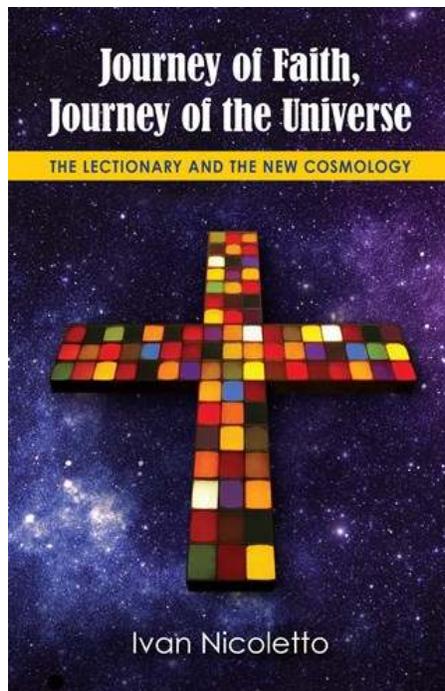
Annulment: A Guide for RCIA Candidates, Ministers, and Others by Kevin E. McKenna, Paulist Press, Mahwah NJ: 2016, \$9.95, 51 pp., ISBN 978-0-8091-4957-5

This handy text is timely, in that sometimes it becomes realized too close to Easter that someone who had hoped to be baptized at the Easter Vigil needs an annulment first. Hopefully, folks will read this text so as to be able to introduce to themselves (and others who may be such candidates needing an annulment) a proper outline and timeline in understandable form for obtaining such. This book first teaches about the role of Canon Law in the Church, and then more specifically explains what a “Declaration of Nullity” *is* for possible applicants. Next it goes into possible grounds for obtaining an annulment, and then answers the question, “Why Should I Petition for a Declaration of Nullity?” in the final chapter: “A significant reason for pursuing the annulment is the possible therapeutic value that may come from participating in the process itself” (p. 42). A great RCIA work for the Year of Mercy, especially with Pope Francis’ recent adjustments to the annulment process!



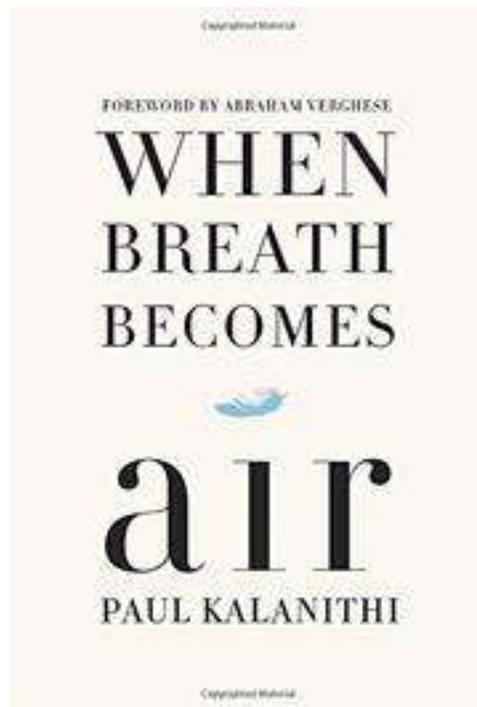
Would You Baptize an Extraterrestrial?...and Other Questions from the In-box at the Vatican Observatory by Guy Consolmagno, SJ and Paul Mueller, SJ, Image, New York: 2014, \$25.00, 293 pp., ISBN 978-0-8041-3695-2

The first co-author of this book is the Jesuit Brother who is Director of the Vatican Observatory and the coordinator of the workshop on “Faith & Astronomy” I attended in January of 2016 Tucson, Arizona, the American headquarters of the Vatican Observatory’s U.S. site located on Mount Graham. (He even has an asteroid named after him: 4597 Consolmagno.) The second co-author is a Jesuit Priest with a Ph.D. in history and the philosophy of science. In the Intro, he explains: “we simply want to share with you the joy and hope—and fun—that we find in doing science and living faith.” (p. 5). The book addresses the main questions which the Vatican Observatory receives in its correspondence with the world. The book’s title is one such question. Others include: What happened to poor Pluto? What really happened to Galileo? What was the Star of Bethlehem? What’s going to happen when the world ends? The entire book is a conversation between the two co-authors in a revelatory and yet humorous vein. As Brother Guy explains in chapter 4, “as *men of faith* we Jesuits are alert to points of encounter with the divine, where we are invited by God not to resolve the mystery but rather to enter more deeply into the mystery” (p. 203). It’s a fun read that takes you deep, yet never without a lifeline of humor and awe to get you through. By the way, I do advise any serious amateur astronomer—priest or lay—to apply (in September) to go to the Vatican Observatory’s annual January workshop in Arizona.



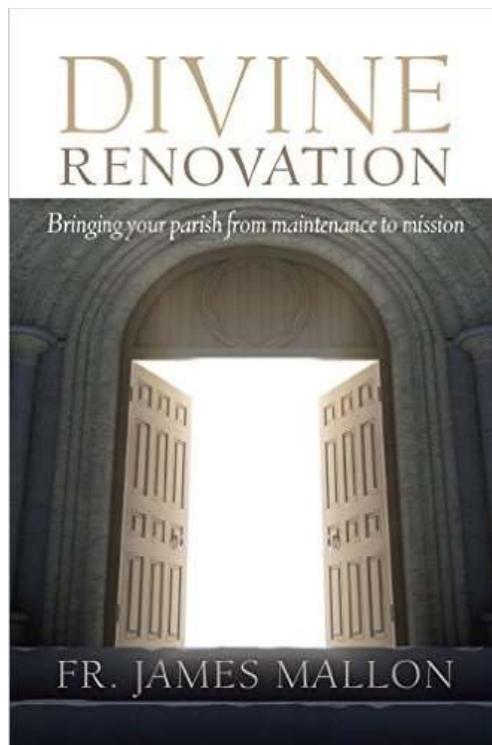
Journey of Faith, Journey of the Universe: The Lectionary and the New Cosmology by Ivan Nicoletto [OSB Cam], Liturgical Press, Collegeville: 2015, \$19.95, 138 pp., ISBN 978-0-8146-4825-4

As a follow-up to the above-mentioned workshop which I attended with a priest classmate, we each delved into such heavenly topics more deeply with this fine commentary by Camaldolese Brother Ivan Nicoletto who cites within this text those certain Sundays in the 3-year cycle of Mass readings where connectedness to matters cosmological seems indicated and/or can conveniently be made. As it says on the book's back cover, "Br. Ivan Nicoletto reveals how very insightful the Scripture and its commentary tradition are to these deep and cosmic perspectives, thus surprising even seasoned Bible-hearers with fresh understanding. It will serve as rich nourishment to anyone involved in the ministry of preaching or who wants to explore the Lectionary in a new way." One example Sunday (which rolls around *every* year via the Cycle A readings for the RCIA) is the 4th Sunday of Lent: the healing of the man born blind. Nicoletto writes: "the human capacity of our eyes is not a finished form; they continue to unfold and evolve, exploring the outer and inner spaces, because we also want to know, to understand deeply, to improve our power of observation, to sharpen the quality, extension, and intensity of seeing" (p. 19). Indeed, looking through the telescopes at the Vatican Observatory's annual January "Faith and Astronomy" workshop in Tucson revealed stars not seen when first aiming the telescope at each desired object. It was as if we were being healed of a certain blindness ourselves when so many other stars appeared in the scope. What spiritual telescopes await the use of us all?



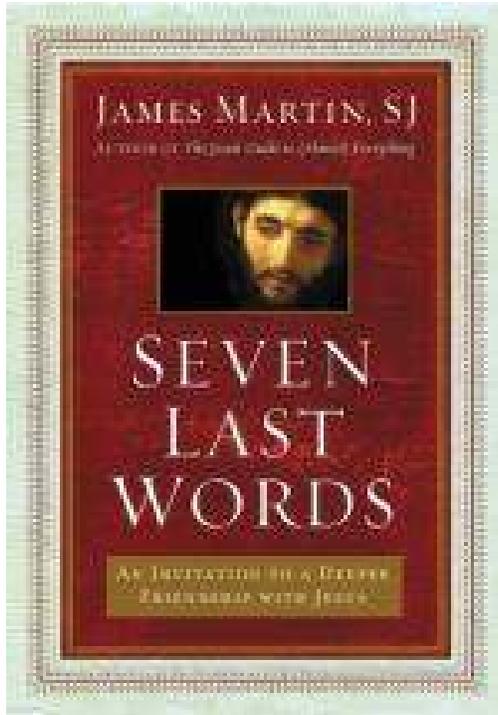
When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi, Random House, New York: 2016, \$25.00, 231 pp., ISBN 978-0-8129-8840-6

At #4 on the bestseller list as I read this, this one will go right to the heart. This author-neurosurgeon succumbs to cancer at age 37. Certain lines he pens cross over professions from medicine to ministry: “Before operating on a patient’s brain, I realized, I must first understand his mind” (p. 98); “How little do doctors understand the hells through which we put patients” (p. 102); “You can’t ever reach perfection, but you can believe in an asymptote toward which you are ceaselessly striving” (p. 115); “Instead of being the pastoral figure aiding a life transition, I found myself the sheep, lost and confused” (p. 120); “I returned to the central values of Christianity—sacrifice, redemption, forgiveness—because I found them so compelling....The main message of Jesus, I believed, is that mercy trumps justice every time” (p. 171). This is a great book to give your doctor, your friend facing loss—or even *yourself* for reflective prep for the end.



Divine Renovation: Bringing Your Parish from Maintenance to Mission by Fr. James Mallon, Twenty-Third Publications, New London CT: 2014, \$19.95, 286 pp., ISBN 978-1-62785-038-4

This book was distributed by the head of our local Diocesan Deanery for consideration in the area of evangelization for our parishes. Like *From Maintenance to Mission* and *Rebuilt*, this is an energetic reflection by a Halifax pastor on how best “to make disciples” (his main focus) via everything we do in the parish. Even if we and/or our peer staff members/council members did nothing more than to discuss (and act upon) the ten common values shared by healthy, growing churches which he provides in chapter 5, our investment in the book would be well made (especially after reviewing the four reasons people leave church in chapter 2). Mallon also references a Canadian Anglican program called *Alpha* which seems to have enabled him to avoid pitfalls and meet with success in building up the Body of Christ in his own parish. Some ideas that came to my mind after reading the book: a.) Have Synod-type input to see where we go as a diocese; b.) Encourage use of a 4-step hospitable parish registration process (p. 109); c.) Have a diocesan promo of the stewardship talk re 5 expectations “to worship, to grow, to serve, to connect and to give” (pp. 156-159); d.) Open our RCIA process at the parish level to all in the parish who may wish to attend it by way of ongoing formation (p. 230); and e.) Whatever we do, we must trust in more than our own strength to accomplish it (ch. 7). A good book to get a deanery (or *any* of us) thinking!



Seven Last Words: An Invitation to a Deeper Friendship with Jesus by James Martin, SJ, HarperOne, New York: 2016, \$18.99, 134 pp., ISBN 978-0-06-243138-7

This very familiar and very gifted contemporary spiritual writer was the homilist in 2015 on Good Friday at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. His reflections on Jesus' seven last words of that first Good Friday are wonderful preparation for *any* year's Good Friday. He begins in the Intro on a positive note: "The Man of Sorrow was, more often, the Man of Joys" (p. 11). After all, the day is called *Good* Friday. We are best not to "freeze" others' sins in our memories/hearts (p. 19). His awareness of the meaning of the closing words of the *Hail Mary* is one which I have had and often used at the graveside (p. 46). Martin helps us to translate our grief over the cross into responsive action for present day persons similarly anguished (p. 81). The Conclusion returns to a joyful note (p. 115), plus gives 3 proactive points to ponder so Jesus' suffering will yield positive results in us all (p. 119-122).



PATRICIA WITTBERG

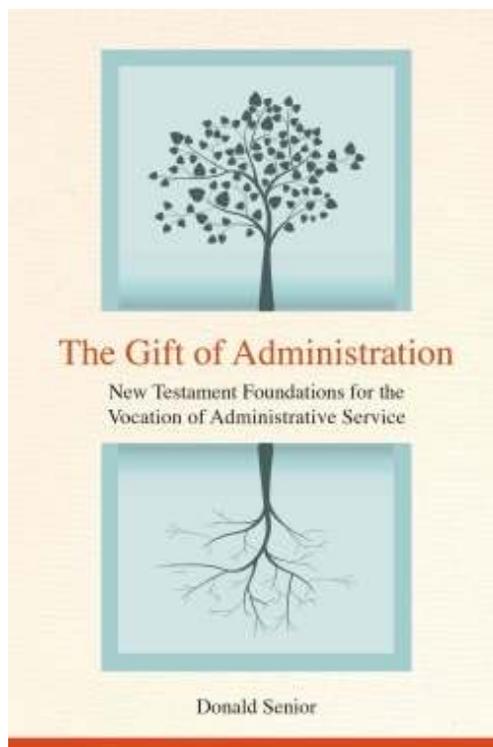
CATHOLIC CULTURES

How Parishes Are Responding to the
Changing Face of Catholicism



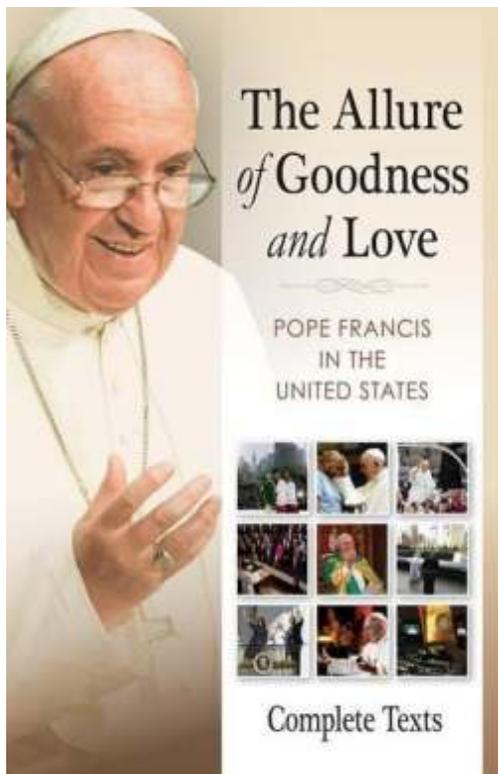
Catholic Cultures: How Parishes Can Respond to the Changing Face of Catholicism by Patricia Wittberg, S.C., Liturgical Press, Collegeville MN: 2016, \$16.95, 102 pp., ISBN 978-0-8146-4858-2

As it says in the Introduction, “The goal of this book is to explore what it would mean for each parish to take the Pentecost story in Acts seriously. How can Catholics proclaim the Good News in the native language(s) of newcomers whose backgrounds may be quite different from their own?” (pp. 1-2). (See also a basic premise of this book on page 46.) You may have read other books on our country’s various ethnic cultures, but if you do nothing but read chapters 4-6 on the generational cultures that also exist, you will find this a book filled with new insights that need to be factored into any evangelization effort that may be being pondering. There has been a 13% increase globally in mass attendance since Pope Francis has been in office. If our local attendance does not mirror that, perhaps some findings addressed in this book with how different generations process things and what they are looking for—and how we may help them find it—will make this the book for our personal and pastoral ongoing formation at this time. “The Spirit will take care of the rest” (p. 102), but we need do *our* part.



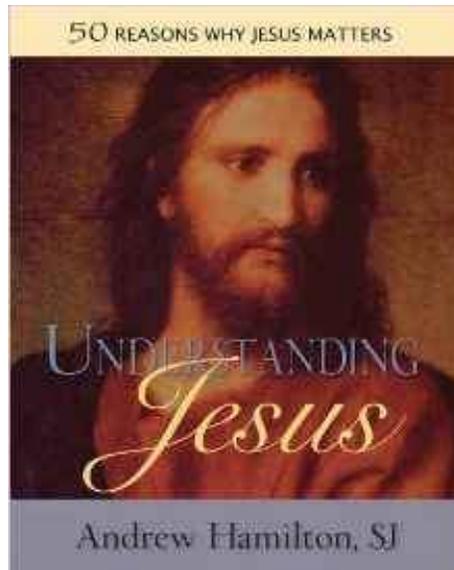
The Gift of Administration: New Testament Foundations for the Vocation of Administrative Service by Donald Senior, Liturgical Press, Collegeville MN: 2016, \$16.95, 157 pp., ISBN 978-0-8146-4716-5

In the Springtime when many are about to enter their next (or first) year of administering a parish or some other institution or program, this may be the book to read to help in seeing how such administration really is a part of one's service. As the author—a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission who served 23 years administering CTU as its President—explains right on the back cover: “In his First Letter of the Corinthians Paul cites ‘administration’ as one of God’s gifts to the Christian community (I Cor 12:28). But many who serve in administrative service today have difficulty seeing how their everyday work is an expression of discipleship.” The author’s hope “is to consider how the essential elements of the work of administration themselves are rooted in our Christian biblical and theological heritage” (p. xx of the Intro). Of particular note for those about to do any appeals in any organization is chapter 5 on “Finances and Fund-Raising.” Sixteen of Jesus’ 38 parables deal with money, and “the Bible offers 500 verses on prayer, less than 300 verses on faith, but more than 2,350 verses on money” (p. 106). The book may not make administration any more enticing, but it helps situate it meaningfully within the context of the work that belongs to the institutional administrator.



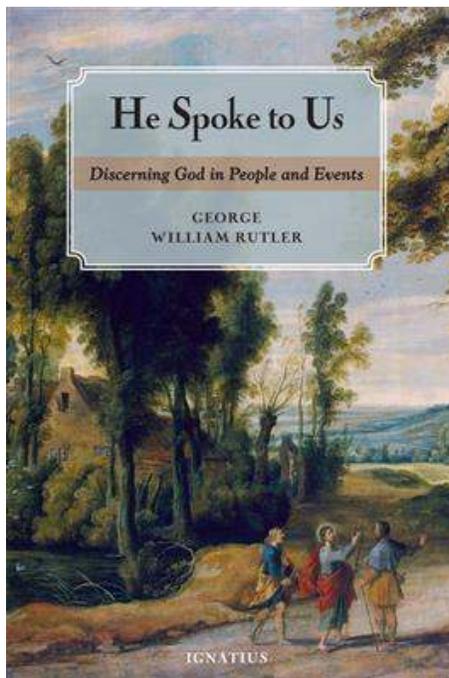
The Allure of Goodness and Love: Pope Francis in the United States—Complete Edition by Pope Francis, Liturgical Press, Collegeville MN: 2016, \$14.95, 116 pp., ISBN 978-0-8146-4667-0

After reading *Love Is Our Mission: Pope Francis in America—Official Commemorative Edition*, the USCCB catholic News Service's *picture-book* of Pope Francis' visit to America last September (ISBN 978-1-63253-054-7), I found that this work put out by Liturgical Press gathers all the *texts* of his speeches during those days, including those to Congress, to the UN, and to the Eighth World Meeting of Families. For me, it provided a wonderful opportunity to see what he actually said in the 20 speeches he delivered from his Welcome at the White House to his In-Flight Press Conference on the way home. He addresses such a myriad of topics as the Church's mission of education in schools (p. 7), the importance of dialogue at all levels and of acknowledging loneliness in bearing one's yoke and of finding ways of encouraging spiritual growth (p. 11). Also addressed are the homeless (p. 31), vocations (p. 38), ecumenism and peace (pp. 55-56), the needs of impoverished children in urban schools (p. 61), freedom of conscience (p. 76), the need not to put off marriage until "ideal conditions" are achieved (p. 89), and the rebuke by both Moses and Jesus of ones who are too narrow in their thinking (p. 96). Other topics addressed among his speeches included immigration, sexual abuse, incarceration and God being the "master at finding a way to resolve things" (p. 107—this was one of his last thoughts as he flew home on the very Dodransquincentennial of his Jesuit community).



Understanding Jesus: 50 Reasons Why Jesus Matters by Andrew Hamilton, SJ, Paulist Press, Mahwah NJ: 2016, \$15.95, 106 pp., ISBN 978-0-8091-4962-9

I read this during Holy Week and Easter Week, and its meditations were perfect for those days. It is written by a member of the Australian Province of the Society of Jesus who is a specialist in Christology, church history, and systematic theology. Though its contents are nothing that ones who have gone through seminary or theological schools haven't heard already in the classroom, this would be a delightful and informative text for our neophytes or any individual or study group to do in the 50 days of Easter (or the 50 non-weekend days from June 27 to September 2 for a summer read). The book is in 3 Parts: What Can We Know about Jesus? (ch. 1-13 [each chapter is 2 pages]), Understanding Jesus (ch. 14-34), and Why Does Jesus Matter? (ch. 35-50). Chapter 48 (Why Do the Poor Matter to Jesus?) is particularly timely given the current focus of both church and civil attention on the needs of the local poor: "because they could hear his message" (p. 101).



He Spoke to Us: Discerning God in People and Events by George William Rutler, Ignatius Press, San Francisco: 2016, \$15.26, 235 pp., ISBN 978-1-58617-983-0

True erudition is a rare commodity these days. This book is a treasure trove. As explained on the back cover, the author—a parish priest in Manhattan with degrees from Dartmouth, Johns Hopkins, the Angelicum in Rome, and Oxford, and having authored 19 books—“touches upon philosophy, theology, history, biography, art, travel, politics, and more as he shows Christ making himself known to us in the events of daily life.” Even be one at the other end of any spectrum from him, one awaits how he will phrase his views on the contents of each. Samples: “If Christ does not govern minds and hearts, mere humans will volunteer to do it, and they will do it badly” (p. 22); “When there is anger in the Church, it tends to reverse what angered the previous generation” (p. 38); “I do not know which is worse: sinful anger, which thinks that it is just, or timidity, which thinks that it is charitable....Prophecy is not birthed by Hegelian synthesis” (p. 40); “Nostalgia is history after a martini” (p. 105); “I suspect that men are being ordained today who have never read a single sentence of the Second Council of Orange. If they had, they might be more aware that the critical issues that seem \ novel had had a long past and have been addressed by better minds” [he’s very intense!] (pp. 106\7); and “A postmodern relativist finds it hard to believe that someone really does believe” (p. 204). As one reads this author’s text, one can easily imagine this man completing the *New York Times* Crossword Puzzle somewhere between the time he picks up the paper at the doorstep and the time he arrives it at the breakfast table!