

Saints and Biographies – September 2023

Books recently added to our collection are marked with an asterisk.

In the library section called “Saints and Biographies” we have life stories of saints, sinners and all sorts in-between. Some titles are so self-explanatory that the notes are abbreviated.

Adam, David – Aidan, Bede, Cuthbert

There are not many British saints that are widely known among Catholics. These three lights of the early Church are worth becoming better acquainted with. Aidan, an Irish Celtic Rite monk from Iona, was a missionary to Northumbria, England, in the Seventh Century. Cuthbert, one of the first generation of Anglo-Saxon Christians, followed in Aidan’s footsteps at Lindisfarne, the great centre of monastic learning and manuscript production in the early medieval period. Their stories were recorded by the Venerable Bede, another Northumbrian a generation later, writing the first history in England.

Alexander, Eben – Proof of Heaven: A Neurosurgeon’s Journey into the Afterlife

The story of a doctor’s journey from skepticism to Christian belief, based on his experience of a near-fatal brain disease which left him in a seven-day coma, during which he appears to have had an astounding spiritual awakening.

Ball, Ann – Modern Saints: Their Lives and Faces (2 volumes)

Short biographies, many with photographs, of mainly religious or clerical saints of the Catholic church. Given in chronological order, the earliest entry is of Julie Billiart who died in 1816 and goes up to the date of publication 1983.

Bedouelle, Guy – Saint Dominic: The Grace of the Word

A spiritual biography of Dominic who early in his life became saturated with Scripture, and indeed lived his whole life and mission to proclaim the power of the Gospel to transform lives and society.

Benedict XVI, Pope with Peter Seewald – Last Testament in his Own Words

A series of interviews with Benedict in 2016 on his life and opinions on Church matters. Makes for interesting reading because one seldom has the opportunity to hear such comprehensive detail from a person in Benedict’s position.

Blessed Marie Celine of the Presentation

A member of the Poor Clares who personified love in dreary and hopeless situations.

Bobko, Jane editor – Vision: The Life and Music of Hildegard Von Bingen

An extraordinary role model for modern women, Hildegard was a prominent writer, preacher, healer, poet, and composer. This book gives a biography, a discussion of her visions, a discussion of medieval music and Hildegard's music in particular.

Bodo, Murray – Francis: The Journey and the Dream

Not a biography in the usual sense, this is an imaginative distillation of what Francis was in a series of fragmentary memories that make a mosaic of the saint's journey and dream.

Brockman, James – Romero: A Life

A detailed account of the life and death of Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, during the tragic conflict in El Salvador between left and right factions for government control, in which many Catholic priests and religious were killed because of their support of the poor.

Bunson, Margaret and Matthew – St. Damien of Molokai: Apostle of the Exiled

Gandhi said that the world had few heroes to compare with Damien who gave his life totally to the service of lepers exiled by the government and society to the island of Molokai.

Campbell, James – Pope Francis: A Living Legacy

A look at Pope Francis in the light of his inspiration by the lives of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Ignatius Loyola and their responses to world problems similar to ours.

Cardovani, Rinaldo – Saint Felix of Cantalice: The Bread Man

A short biography of a Renaissance Italian Capuchin, friend of the poor and close friend of Saint Philip Neri. Illustrated with several Renaissance paintings of this saint who really embodied his name (Felix being Latin for "happy").

Casey, Solanus – God Bless You and Yours: Letters from Solanus Casey, OFM Cap.

A selection of letters showing the spirituality of Casey, his life and journey of faith.

Cavanaugh, Arthur – Thérèse: The Saint who Loved Us

A short biography of Saint Thérèse with the effects of her life and intercession as experienced by the author.

Chesterton, G.K. – Saint Thomas Aquinas: “The Dumb Ox”

A very readable biography of one of the great philosophers of the medieval period and indeed of all time.

Chittister, Joan – A Passion for Life: Fragments of the Face of God (with icons by Robert Lentz)

A beautiful book for meditating on. Presented are the lives of over two dozen saints, prophets, and witnesses who speak to the urgent problems of our day. They are men and women, Christian and non-Christian, religious and lay, who have given themselves “entirely to the impulses of God for the sake of the world.”

Cingolani, Gabriele – St. Paul of the Cross

A short hagiography of the founder of the Passionist order. Living in the period of the Enlightenment and of an emphasis on rationalist secularism, St. Paul of the Cross preached a spirituality/life saturated with Christ crucified.

Clarke, Kevin – Oscar Romero: Love must win out

An in-depth look at San Salvador’s Archbishop, martyred March 24, 1980 while saying mass, gives the reader an understanding of liberation theology as developed in South America and what it means to be a church of the poor for the poor.

Collins, David – Magnificent Failure: The Story of Father Solanus Casey

An encouraging story for young people of a man who was not good in school or in the seminary but who became known for his patient listening and good counsel, and the miraculous results of his prayers.

Cowley, Deborah and George Cowley – One Woman's Journey: A Portrait of Pauline Vanier

The life of a compassionate and self-giving Canadian woman, a cameo of a past age.

Craughwell, Thomas – Pope Francis: The Pope from the End of the Earth

Highly illustrated with photographs, this short book details Francis' early days, his priesthood, elevation to the archbishopric of Buenos Aires, and eventual election to the papacy.

Des Rivieres, Madeleine – Ozanam

A biography of Frederic Ozanam who founded the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in order to stand in solidarity with the poor, for their civil and religious liberty, their right to organize, and the need for the rich to properly assume their responsibility in society for the less fortunate.

Dewar, Diana – The Saint of Auschwitz: The Story of Maximilian Kolbe

An inspiring account, based on reports of those who knew Kolbe, which brings to the life the Franciscan martyr who lived in service of Christ through love of Mary Immaculate.

Douglas, Philip – Saint of Philadelphia: The Life of Bishop John Neumann

Redemptorist John Neumann is the third American citizen and first member of the American Church hierarchy to be declared as a saint for his work as bishop in total dedication to his people in the growing Catholic community in America.

Duffy, Eamon – Ten Popes who Shook the World

A very readable book on an interesting selection of popes from Peter to John Paul II, who have had considerable impact on their Church, on religious thought, and on political concerns of their day.

Ellesberg, Robert – All Saints: Daily Reflections on Saints, Prophets and Witnesses for Our Time

A great browsing book as well as a handy quick reference check. Besides all the saints you would expect to find in a book with this title, there are also unexpected figures outside of the Catholic tradition. So, for example, Oskar Schindler finds a

place on the April 28th entry, the White Rose martyrs, Hans and Sophie Scholl, on February 22nd, and Sojourner Truth on November 26th.

Evert, Jason – Saint John Paul the Great: His Five Loves

A very readable biography of John Paul II and the five loves that saturated his life and spirituality: young people, human love, the Blessed Sacrament, the Virgin Mary, and the Cross.

Fatula, Mary Ann – The Way of the Christian Mystics: Catherine of Siena's Way

The first part of the book is given to Catherine's life of political activism and truth-telling to civil and ecclesiastical power. The second larger part deals with her beliefs in such areas as the Will of God, His Mercy and Providence, and Truth in such a way as to challenge us to live our calling as Christian more fully.

Faupel, J.F. – African Holocaust: The Story of the Uganda Martyrs

The story of twenty-two boys and men who were martyred by Mwanga, the king of the Baganda, because of their conversion to Christianity and resistance to the homosexuality encouraged by the king.

Feeney, Leonard – Mother Seton: Saint Elizabeth of New York

Story of the first native born saint in America, Seton has a story to appeal to many – the convert, the establishment person, the married, the widowed, the religious and the teacher and social activist.

Feiler, Bruce – Walking the Bible: a Journey by Land through the Five Books of Moses

A *New York Times* bestseller, this is an intriguing journey through the first books of the Old Testament, visiting sites mentioned in the Bible and located through archaeology or local tradition. It becomes also an account of a man's growth from practical agnosticism to a greater spiritual awareness.

Fichter, Joseph – The Characters of the Crucifixion

A collection of short vignettes taken from the Bible and from historical sources of persons or groups mentioned in the Passion narratives. These are followed by questions for reflection by the reader based on the experiences of these characters.

Fickett, Harold – The Living Christ: The Extraordinary Lives of Today's Spiritual Heroes

This is a collection of six people who are probably unknown to most of us but whose lives are impregnated with God's love in very different ways. From a woman rescuing girls from prostitution in Thailand to a handicapped woman cleaning toilets in a McDonalds and visited by apparitions of the Virgin Mary to a priest healing by prayer in Mexico to a martyred evangelical minister in Iran, these people lead Fickett to meditations on Jesus as liberator, contemplative, healer, and martyr.

Ford, Michael – Wounded Prophet: A Portrait of Henri J.M. Nouwen

This book is intended to be a study in personal woundedness and how it can be used for the benefit of others. Ford looks at the intense loneliness, isolation, and homosexuality that at times drove Nouwen into deep depression but also great creativity.

Furlong, Monica – Thérèse of Lisieux

A biography which analyses the immediate popularity of Thérèse as representative of a "conservative womanly ideal of obedience, modesty and passive sweetness" balanced with girlish determination and headstrongness.

Gallares, Judette – Images of Faith: Spirituality of Women in the Old Testament

Written by an Asian woman, this book looks at eight figures from the perspective of what their lives say to Third World women now. Also included is a section on praying on and with these women.

Gervais, Marty – Seeds in the Wilderness: Profiles of World Religious Leaders

Marty presents an idiosyncratic choice of religious leaders including figures like Tino Wallenda Zoppe, Margaret Atwood, and Suzanne Scorsone, as well as more obvious ones like Bishop Tutu and Paul-Emile Cardinal Leger.

Giorgi, Rosa – Saints: A Year in Faith and Art

A year's calendar of some saints or holy days celebrated in the Roman liturgical calendar, consisting of a short biography of the saint or event with a facing illustration from manuscripts, mosaics, or paintings.

Gould, Jean - ...Forty Years Since My Last Confession: A Memoir

The story of a woman's return to Catholicism after years away.

Griffin, John – Follow the Ecstasy: The Hermitage Years of Thomas Merton

The last years of a Twentieth Century icon, written by a friend whose own life and interests mirrored in many ways Merton's.

Griffin, Michael – Saint Joseph: A Theological Introduction

A short study of Saint Joseph based on what is said in the Bible about him, the thoughts of theologians on him and the devotion to him from the Church through history.

Hahn, Scott and Kimberley Hahn – Rome Sweet Rome: Our Journey to Catholicism

A memoir of the individual and collective journeys of the Hahns from Protestantism to membership in the Catholic Church.

Hajjar, Robert – I Can, You Can, I Love my Life

An inspiring collection of diary entries by a remarkable Down's Syndrome Londoner sharing his ideas on life and his relationship with God. Against all odds, Hajjar is a Member of the Order of Ontario, a Special Olympics gold medal winner in swimming, the co-founder of the charity Ideal Way, and a motivational speaker across North America.

Hanley, Boniface – Ten Christians: By Their Deeds You Shall Know Them

Biographies of some lesser-known figures like Pierre Toussaint, Damien De Veuster and Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, as well as more well known like Francis of Assisi and Mother Teresa.

Haughton, Rosemary – Thérèse Martin: The Story of St. Thérèse of Lisieux

A hagiography of perhaps the best loved saint of the 20th Century.

Higgins, Michael – The Unquiet Monk: Thomas Merton's Questing Faith

Not simply a biography, this book looks closely at Merton's criticism of his society, his religious views and his wide-ranging sympathies in the arts and religion.

Higgins, Michael and Douglas Letson – Portraits of Canadian Catholicism

A useful section on the religious history of Canada is followed by biographies of twelve contemporary Canadians from various walks of life connected only by their faith and their activism, variously expressed in their lives.

Homan, Helen – Francis and Clare, Saints of Assisi

Written for the younger reader, this is a somewhat fictionalized biography of Francis and Clare.

Ilibagiza, Immaculée – The Boy who Met Jesus: Segatashya of Kibeho

An account of visionary experiences of a child in the 80s in Rwanda in which Jesus answered questions particularly on the Last Days.

Ilibagiza, Immaculée – Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust

The moving story of a woman who discovers God during the terrible civil war/holocaust in the 90s in Rwanda.

John Paul II, pope – Gift and Mystery: on the Fiftieth Anniversary of my Priestly Ordination

John Paul writes of his early life, service as a priest in Poland, and his eventual elevation to the papacy. Included are his thoughts on the nature of the priesthood in the modern world and his encouragement to priests and seminarians to persevere in their vocation.

Kittler, Glen – The Wings of Eagles: Portraits of Six Great Catholics of the 20th Century

An eclectic list of persons who have had considerable influence on the world, including Pope John XXIII, Teilhard de Chardin, John Kennedy, Dr. Tom Dooley, Katherine Drexel, and John LaFarge.

*Kodell, Jerome – John the Baptist: Forerunner

A small booklet on what we know about John the Baptist, what his contemporaries thought of him, and his relationship to Christ. Guidance is given in praying with the relevant Scripture passages, and on practically applying the insights to our daily lives.

Kolodiejchuk, Brian, editor – Mother Teresa: Come be my Light: The Private Writings of the “Saint of Calcutta”

This book is a collection of letters, commented upon by the editor, that Mother Teresa wrote to her spiritual advisors, reflecting the innermost details of her spiritual journey through her period of aridity.

Kowalska, Faustina – Diary of Blessed Sister M. Faustina Kowalska

Kowalska’s diary has become the basis of the modern devotion to The Divine Mercy, promoted by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Dives in Misericordia*.

LaFreniere, Bernard – Brother Andre, According to Witnesses

This is the content of seven conferences given to the Brothers of Holy Cross, on Brother Andre whose sanctity has been amply witnessed to by many whose statements of their relationships with Brother Andre were recorded soon after his death.

Le Joly, Edward – Mother Teresa of Calcutta: A Biography

A biography emphasizing Teresa’s living out of Gandhian ideals of simplicity, option for the poor, work at the lowest level of society.

Lewis, C.S. -Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life

The book aims at explaining Lewis’ conversion from atheism to Christianity and is not a general autobiography, but is more focused on the process of conversion.

Lives of the Saints, May – August and September – December

Short biographical sketches of saints remembered in the liturgy May to December.

Lord, Bob and Penne Lord – Saints and Other Powerful Men of the Church

12 figures are featured from St. Paul through to Fulton Sheen, most canonized or beatified, some martyred, some living lives of complete devotion to God.

Lukas, Mary and Ellen Lukas – Teilhard: The Man, the Priest, the Scientist

The extraordinary life of a Jesuit priest/archaeologist/philosopher silenced for his ideas by the Church but now half a century later lionized for his thought on evolution and the cosmos.

McKenna, Briega – Miracles do Happen

This is the story of Sister McKenna, her gift of spiritual healing and witness to God's love in an international evangelical ministry.

McSheffery, Daniel – St. Katherine Drexel: Pioneer for Human Rights

The biography of a rich young woman, founder of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, who gave her life to championing the rights of Black Americans and Indigenous people.

Merton, Thomas – The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton

This is Merton's diary of his last journey ending in Bangkok where he died by misadventure. Also included is extra material like letters and notes for presentations from the same period.

Merton, Thomas – The Monastic Journey

A collection of Merton's late work on the "inward journey of solitude" that is, the way to the summit of perfection for both the monk and the lay Christian through the characteristics of monastic/Christian life.

Moore, Beth – To Live is Christ: Joining Paul's Journey of Faith

A fictionalized biography (given how little we know about his life) with connections made to the author's life experience and that of the reader, with the aim of transforming the reader's life, like Paul's, into a life for Christ.

Mother Teresa – Come Be My Light: The Private Writings of the "Saint of Calcutta"

Compiled from Teresa's letters over a lifetime, these reveal the difficulties she experienced in her spiritual life and the intensity of her holiness.

Mott, Michael – The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton

An authoritative life of Thomas Merton.

Muggeridge, Malcolm – Conversion: A Spiritual Journey

Influenced by Mother Teresa and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and by his own awareness of a dimension to life beyond the noisy limits of his unbelief, Muggeridge became a Catholic. This book is the account of the history of his conversion.

Muggeridge, Malcolm – Something Beautiful for God: Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Not strictly a biography, this is an account of the work which Teresa and her Missionaries of Charity do in the service of Christ in Calcutta and elsewhere in the world. The photographs were taken for a documentary on her work by the BBC and much of the text comes from interviews with Teresa by Muggeridge.

Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome – Paul: His Story

An imaginative recreation of Paul's life as drawn from both Luke and the letters.

Neal, Mary – To Heaven and Back: A Doctor's Extraordinary Account of Her Death, Heaven, Angels, and Life Again

The book is summarized in the title and is a testimony of a life changed by tragic accidents into a life lived for God.

Nelson, John – The Little Way of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux: Into the Arms of Love

A biography that focuses on five core elements of Thérèse's thought: humility, confidence in God's mercy and loving kindness, tranquil trust, persistence in prayer, and daily actions of love.

Norris, Kathleen – The Cloister Walk

A very interesting and inspiring journey with a Protestant poet through a liturgical year spent in communion with a Benedictine monastery in North Dakota and her immersion in its life.

O'Brien, Bartholomew – The Curé of Ars: Patron Saint of Parish Priests

The aim of this small book is to give English-speaking readers a concise factual biography of the life of St. John Vianney and to explore his thought and actions which make him an excellent role-model for priests.

O'Donnell, Christopher – Love in the Heart of the Church: The Mission of Thérèse of Lisieux

Against a backdrop of petitions to have Thérèse recognized as a doctor of the Church because of her contributions to theology through her thoughts on spirituality, O'Donnell writes of her thoughts on subjects such as the communion of saints, charisms, charity, intercession, martyrs, and sins.

O'Sullivan, Paul – Saint Philomena: The Wonder Worker

Little is known about the life of this early Christian martyr, but her intercession after the discovery of her bones in the Roman catacombs in 1802 has apparently produced many miraculous interventions.

Oppitz, Joseph – Autumn Memoirs of St. Alphonsus Liguori

A fictionalized biography of the founder of the Redemptorist order, looking back on his life.

Pauli, Hertha – Bernadette: Our Lady's Little Servant

Written for the younger reader, this is the biography of Bernadette Soubirous who had visions of Mary as the Immaculate Conception.

Pelucchi, Giuliana – Saint Gianna Beretta Molla: A Woman's Life 1922-1962

A fairly recently canonized saint who exhibited family love to the extreme, giving her life for the life of her unborn child.

Piazza, Jo – If Nuns Ruled the World: Ten Sisters on a Mission

Portraits of ten American nuns who have challenged the social *status quo* in the States, such as cuts in federal budgets for poor relief, the holding of nuclear weapons, and the discrimination against gays and lesbians.

Proudfoot, Alice-Boyd – Patrick: Sixteen Centuries with Ireland's Patron Saint

A wide-ranging selection of comments and illustrations on Patrick, the background to his missionary work and his influence continuing to this day.

Radcliffe, Timothy – I Call You Friends

Radcliffe, one-time superior general of the Dominican order, offers insight into his own life leading to the call to a Dominican vocation. In the second half of the book, he discusses Christian commitment, mission to the world, and living the Gospel within the framework of Dominican spirituality and vocation.

Rahner, Karl – I Remember: An Autobiographical Interview

A revealing interview on his life and thought by a man, perhaps the most well-known theologian of the Twentieth Century, who refused to write about himself or have a biography written about him.

Remembering Henri: The Life and Legacy of Henri Nouwen

A quite moving book on the life, personality and impact of one of the most popular spiritual writers of our time. The reminiscences of friends reinforce much of Nouwen's central message in his books, based on his own spiritual journeying. A "must read" for Nouwen fans.

Saint of the Day: July – December, volume 2

Short biographies of the major saints commemorated daily with short comments on their significance for us and a prayer to them.

Schorn, Joel – God's Doorkeepers: Padre Pio, Solanus Casey & André Bessette

Three men who in humility gave themselves completely to God, two as physical doorkeepers and one a spiritual doorkeeper, opening the love of God to all needing love and healing.

Serrou, Robert – Teresa of Calcutta: A Pictorial Biography

Though titled a pictorial record, there actually is a goodly amount of text on this saint.

Singular, Stephen – By Their Works: Profiles of Men of Faith who Made a Difference

Covering from the late 1800s to the early 2000s, these short biographies include many figures that may be unknown to readers and perhaps the only easily available information on them.

Spink, Kathryn – Mother Teresa: A Complete Authorized Biography

The title says it all.

Stauffer, Kathleen – Padre Pio: An Intimate Portrait of a Saint through the eyes of his Friends

A portrait with some emphasis on Pio's stigmata.

Stulberg, Miriam – God Calls Me Miriam

The story of a Jewish convert to Catholicism in the environment of The Madonna House. She served in the Madonna House in Magadan to survivors of the Russian Gulag.

Tangari, Katharina – Stories of Padre Pio

A first-hand account of the ability of Padre Pio to solve personal problems, enabling the flow of grace and favors from God.

Tarry, Ellen – Saint Katharine Drexel: Friend of the Oppressed

Written for the young reader, this is the biography of a young heiress who founded the order of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament to serve of the unprivileged, the black and Indigenous peoples of the States.

Teresa of Avila, Saint – The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, volume 1

Volume 1 includes *the Book of Her Life, Spiritual Testimonies, and Soliloquies*.

Tornielli, Andrea – Francis, Pope of a New World

The story of the life of Francis, the process of election to the papacy, and the renewal of the Vatican and the Church presently underway under his leadership.

Trapè, Agostino – Saint Augustine: Man, Pastor, Mystic

An expert on Augustine examines the saint's life, his carrying the difficult burden of being a bishop against his will, and his ascetical practices in his mystical development. It does not deal, except in passing, with his life as a thinker or writer.

Vanier, Jean – In Weakness, Strength: The Spiritual Sources of Georges P. Vanier, 19th Governor-General of Canada

An account of the inner life of probably Canada's best loved and admired Governors-General.

Weiser, Francis – Kateri Tekakwitha

A biography of the first Mohawk believer to be canonized by the Church.

Woodward, Kenneth – Making Saints: How the Catholic Church Determines Who Becomes a Saint, Who Doesn't, and Why

A close look at the process of canonization, revealing the reluctance of the Vatican to canonize visionaries and wonder workers, questions on the meaning of miracles, the resistance in some countries to the idea of canonization, the lack of many intellectuals or married people among the canonized.

Wright, Jonathan – God's Soldiers: Adventure, Politics, Intrigue, and Power – A History of the Jesuits

Yet another book on the Jesuits who are probably the religious order that has most fascinated the world, both inside and outside the Church.