DEAR READERS,

Since 1968 Cistercian Publications has been publishing books in monastic history and spirituality, reaching backward into the Desert Fathers and forward into the experiences of twentieth- and twenty-first-century laypeople, monks and nuns, and priests. Our initial goal was to provide English translations of treatises and sermons by early Cistercian writers and other Fathers and Mothers of the church, to benefit those who cannot easily read these works in the original languages. Over the years we have expanded into contemporary scholarly and spiritual writing.

We are delighted to announce that this year all of Bernard of Clairvaux’s works will finally be available in English, along with three of the six volumes of Gregory the Great’s Moral Reflections on the Book of Job (all six will be out by 2019), as well as, for example, a volume of meditations on the resurrection by Ludolph of Saxony, Gert Melville’s The World of Medieval Monasticism, and another volume of Thomas Merton’s monastic conferences.

Our works appear in three series: Cistercian Fathers (translations of works by Cistercian authors, both men and women), Cistercian Studies (scholarly works and translations of non-Cistercian authors such as the Venerable Bede, Æthelwold, and Gregory), and Monastic Wisdom (works encouraging spiritual exploration and growth).

One of the characteristics of Cistercian writing through the centuries, and now of Cistercian publishing, is a focus on the interrelationship of knowledge and faith in the approach to God. William of Saint-Thierry (ca. 1080–1148) said that charity is the sight of God and that the two eyes of reason and love combine in that sight (The Nature and Dignity of Love 3.21). Cistercian Publications invites you to employ both eyes as you read our books.

Sincerely,

Marsha L. Dutton
Executive Editor, Cistercian Publications
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The World of Medieval Monasticism
Its History and Forms of Life

Gert Melville
Translated by James D. Mixson
Foreword by Giles Constable

This book surveys the full panorama of ten centuries of Christian monastic life. It moves from the deserts of Egypt and the Frankish monasteries of early medieval Europe to the religious ruptures of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the reforms of the later Middle Ages. Throughout that story the book balances a rich sense of detail with a broader synthetic view. It presents the history of religious life and its orders as a complex braid woven from multiple strands: individual and community, spirit and institution, rule and custom, church and world. The result is a synthesis that places religious life at the center of European history and presents its institutions as key catalysts of Europe’s move toward modernity.

“This is the best of guides to the world of medieval monasticism: a fresh, novel, exciting, detailed, reliable account of how monastic life developed over twelve centuries and of the many paths to perfection and salvation it created for both women and men.”

David Luscombe
Fellow of the British Academy
The University of Sheffield

“The fruit of long study of medieval monks, ascetics, mystics, and the rules that they lived by, The World of Medieval Monasticism is a lively and erudite companion for any reader interested in exploring the many astonishing forms of Western religious life.”

Barbara H. Rosenwein
Loyola University Chicago

“The World of Medieval Monasticism is the crowning achievement of the decades Professor Melville has devoted to the relentless study of medieval religious life in the West, The World of Medieval Monasticism is an essential source for all those interested in the cultural history and spiritual inheritance of medieval religious life.”

Timothy J. Johnson
Flagler College

“The doyen of monastic history has poured learning hitherto scattered among innumerable papers into the form of an elegant synthesis—a path-breaking sociological analysis of one of the most interesting medieval forms of life. Decades of scholarships and accumulated insights have been distilled into this volume.”

David d’Avray
University College London, Fellow of the British Academy
Bernard of Clairvaux
Sermons for the Autumn Season

Translated by
Irene Edmonds, OCSO

Edited by Mark Scott, OCSO
Introduction by Wim Verbaal

On the anniversary of the dedication of the monastery church at Clairvaux, Saint Bernard spoke to the community to explain the meaning of the feast, tying the holiness of the church itself to the holiness of those who worship there: “What sanctity can these stones have that we should celebrate their festival? They do indeed have sanctity, but it is because of your bodies. . . . Your bodies are holy because of your souls, and this house is holy because of your bodies.”

The thirty-eight sermons in this volume carry forth this theme, revealing the holiness of the monastic life as monks alternate through the rhythm of the day and the year between the *opus Dei* and manual labor, journeying faithfully through life to death and the *transitus* to glory.

The twelfth-century *Ecclesiastica Officia* of the Cistercian Order required abbots to speak formally to their communities in chapter on seventeen fixed days, mostly liturgical feasts. This volume witnesses to Bernard’s fulfillment of this requirement, with sermons for the Assumption and Nativity of the Virgin and the Feast of All Saints, with others devoted to the feasts of particular saints celebrated during the autumn months. Three “for the time of harvest” celebrate the annual receipt of the earth’s gifts, which sustain the monks and allow them to sustain the poor, and three funeral sermons recall that death is the end of each human life, leading to eternal joy in the communion of the saints.
Saint Bernard was born in 1090 near Dijon, France. He joined the fifteen-year-old monastery of Cîteaux in 1113. In 1115 he became the founding abbot of Clairvaux Abbey, whence his name, Bernard of Clairvaux. Saint Bernard was a gifted and prolific writer of theological treatises, Scriptural commentaries, letters, and many sermons. The sermons in the collection published here, styled *Sermones de diversis* (Sermons about Various Topics), lack the specific point of departure that characterizes his other sermons. That is, whereas the sermons on the Song of Songs are a verse-by-verse commentary on that biblical book and his Sermons for the Year follow the liturgical calendar, this collection of sermons deals with his various pastoral concerns. Since Scripture is always Bernard’s point of departure and inspiration, the sermons often read like a Scripture study, but what comes through equally is the voice of an understanding spiritual father who is a masterful student of Scripture, biblical language, and the needs of his monks.

**Bernard of Clairvaux**

*Monastic Sermons*

*Translated by Daniel Griggs*

*Introduction by Michael Casey, OCSO*

Daniel Griggs has an MA in medieval studies and a PhD in Byzantine theology, both from the University of Leeds. He teaches Latin at Butte College near Chico, California, and translates medieval texts from Greek and Latin. He is currently translating Aelred of Rievaulx’s sermons from the Reading collection, from Gaetano Racioli’s critical edition in Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 2C.

**SEE ALSO:**

*Bernard of Clairvaux*

**Sermons for Lent and the Easter Season**

Edited by John Leinenweber and Mark Scott, OCSO

Foreword by Wim Verbaal

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**Bernard of Clairvaux**

**Sermons for Advent and the Christmas Season**

Translated by Irene Edmonds, Wendy Beckett, and Conrad Greenia

Edited by E. Rozanne Elder

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Unity of Spirit
Studies on William of Saint-Thierry in Honor of E. Rozanne Elder

Edited by F. Tyler Sergent, Aage Rydstrom-Poulsen, and Marsha L. Dutton
Foreword by Bernard McGinn
Afterword by John R. Sommerfeldt

William of Saint-Thierry (ca. 1080–1148) became abbot of the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Thierry in about 1119, holding that office for about sixteen years and writing a large number of works, some for the guidance of the monks of his abbey and others as theological treatises. But during that same time, after meeting Bernard, abbot of the Cistercian abbey of Clairvaux, he longed to become a Cistercian. He finally satisfied that dream in 1135, when he became a monk at Signy. His final work was the first of the five books that constitute the *Vita Prima Sancti Bernardi*.

The nine chapters in this book explore William’s thought as represented in his twenty works, ranging from his earliest theological writing through his contribution to the *Vita Prima Sancti Bernardi*. The contributors to this volume have moved scholarship on William in new directions, ranging from a comparative analysis of Bernard’s and William’s thought through a study of William’s Christology, an analysis of individual works, a new translation of one of William’s little-known works, an examination of sixteenth-century images drawn from the *Vita Prima*, a study of William’s rhetorical skills, and a recognition of William’s new take on the phrase *unitas spiritus*.

“Unity of the Spirit is an invaluable resource, not only for Cistercian scholars, but for all students of spiritual theology, monasticism, and medieval history. Offering the best of current research on William of Saint-Thierry, this volume makes a significant contribution to the literature on this twelfth-century Cistercian Father. The authors present chapters furthering the scholarship on William’s life, works, Christology, relationship with Bernard of Clairvaux, concept of the *unio mystica*, and spirituality. *Unity of the Spirit* makes a handsome tribute to retiring professor E. Rozanne Elder, whose life’s work has greatly advanced scholarship on William and Cistercian studies worldwide.”

Dr. Glenn E. Myers
Professor of Church History and Theological Studies
Crown College
The First Life of Bernard of Clairvaux
William of Saint-Thierry, Arnold of Bonneval, and Geoffrey of Auxerre

Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Hilary Costello, OCSO

The First Life of Bernard of Clairvaux, traditionally known as the Vita Prima, originated to prepare the case for canonization of Bernard, first abbot of Clairvaux. The work was begun by William of Saint-Thierry, continued by Arnold of Bonneval, and completed by Geoffrey of Auxerre.

When the initial case put forth for Bernard was rejected by Innocent II, Geoffrey undertook a revision of the original vita (Recension A) and submitted another version (Recension B) to Pope Alexander III, who declared Bernard a saint in 1174. This work emphasizes the deep love in which Bernard was held during his life by his monks and the people of France and Italy as well as his role as a powerful public figure.

This book contains the first English translation of Recension B, drawn from what is apparently the only manuscript of the work found today in a Cistercian monastery, Mount Saint Bernard Abbey. The introduction begins with the story of how this manuscript came to Mount Saint Bernard, so fixing this translation of the Vita Prima within Cistercian life from the twelfth century to today.

CF076P, 978-0-87907-176-9 Paperback, 328 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $29.95
CF076E, 978-0-87907-692-4 eBook, $23.99
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Rights: World

Fr. Hilary Costello, OCSO, was born in London in 1926. During World War II he was conscripted into the coal mines, where he worked from 1943 to 1947. Although he had not considered a monastic vocation until he was nearly twenty, in 1947 he entered Mount Saint Bernard Abbey, in Leicestershire. For fourteen years he worked in the abbey’s orchard, after which he was guest master for the abbey. After being ordained in 1955, he began to work on medieval manuscripts, especially the sermons of John of Forde, which he and Fr. Edmund Mikkers, ocsto, edited for Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis (vols. 17 and 18). He has also published articles on John, Gilbert of Hoyland, and other Cistercian authors. Fr. Hilary was also the bursar of Mount Saint Bernard for almost twenty years. He currently does bookbinding for the abbey.
Reading Matthew with Monks
Liturgical Interpretation in Anglo-Saxon England

Derek A. Olsen
Foreword by Luke Timothy Johnson

In Reading Matthew with Monks, Derek Olsen seeks to evaluate whether early medieval monastic biblical interpreters can serve as effective conversation partners for modern readers who are committed to broadening their reading of Scripture. Olsen puts the interpretations of four modern Scripture commentators in conversation with Ælfric of Eynsham’s interpretations of four texts from the Gospel of Matthew. In so doing, he clarifies early medieval monastic interpretive contexts and assesses their usefulness in modern scholarship. As outsiders in modern critical debates, Ælfric and his sources may provide alternative approaches or perspectives that open interpretive possibilities where modern interpreters are locked in disagreement. Early medieval monastic interpreters can serve as excellent guides for understanding the potential for moral, spiritual, or formative meanings of a biblical text. By adding their voices to modern hermeneutics, modern readers can find new depth in biblical texts.

“Olsen’s thesis, carefully researched and elegantly and clearly written, is nothing less than the one and only substantial sequel to Jean Leclercq’s The Love of Learning and the Desire for God. Monastic men and women reading the first two chapters will have an experience of self-discovery: ‘So this is what monastic culture is all about.’”

Mark A. Scott, OCSO, SSL
Abbot, New Melleray Abbey

“Olsen earned a PhD in New Testament from Emory University in 2011. His research focuses on the intersection between Scripture and liturgy, and he currently serves on the Episcopal Church’s Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music.”

Derek Olsen
The Liturgical Sermons
The Second Clairvaux Collection;
Christmas through All Saints
Aelred of Rievaulx
Translated by
Marie Anne Mayeski
Introduction by
Domenico Pezzini

Aelred, abbot of the Yorkshire Cistercian abbey of Rievaulx from 1147 to 1167, wrote six spiritual treatises, seven historical treatises, and 182 liturgical sermons, most of which he delivered as chapter talks to his monks. Translations of the first twenty-eight of these sermons appeared in The First Clairvaux Collection, Advent–All Saints, published in 2001. The current volume contains eighteen sermons given on feasts beginning with the Nativity and concluding with a sermon for All Saints.

The Sermons:
S 29: For the Nativity of the Lord (Nat)
S 30: For the Nativity of the Lord (Nat)
S 31: For the Epiphany of the Lord (Epi)
S 32: For the Purification of Saint Mary (Pur)
S 33: For the Purification of Saint Mary (Pur)
S 34: For the Purification of Saint Mary (Pur)
S 35: For Palm Sunday (Ram)
S 36: For Holy Week (Heb)
S 37: For the Feast of Saint Benedict (Ben)
S 38: For the Annunciation of the Lord (Ann Dom)
S 39: For the Annunciation of the Lord (Ann Dom)
S 40: For the Day of Easter (Pasc)
S 41: For the Day of Easter (Pasc)
S 42: For the Day of Pentecost (Pent)
S 43: For the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (JB)
S 44: For the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (JB)
S 45: For the Assumption of Saint Mary (Ass)
S 46: For the Feast of All Saints (OS)

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Rights: World, English

Available May 2016

Marie Anne Mayeski is professor emerita of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Having written extensively on Aelred and his Cistercian context and on medieval women and their contributions to church, society, and theological developments, she has published three books: Women: Models of Liberation (Sheed and Ward), Dhuoda: Ninth Century Mother and Theologian (University of Scranton Press), and Women at the Table (Liturgical Press).

Domenico Pezzini is professor emeritus of English language at the University of Verona. He has edited and translated works of Aelred and other Cistercian authors; his critical edition of most of Aelred’s historical works is forthcoming in Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis.
A Listening Community
A Commentary on the Prologue and Chapters 1–3 of Benedict’s Rule

Aquinata Böckmann, OSB
Translated by Matilda Handl, OSB, and Marianne Burkhard, OSB
Edited by Marianne Burkhard, OSB

This new commentary by Sister Aquinata Böckmann discusses the Prologue and chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the Rule of St. Benedict. In a lectio regulae she plumbs the depths of Benedict’s vision. Listen, the first word of the Prologue, is a keyword that describes the main stance of the individual monastic, the superior, and the entire community. Listening to the Scriptures and in them to Christ guides individuals and the community on how to “run on the way of God’s commandments” toward the goal of communal life in and with Christ.

The first three chapters of the Rule concretize the principles of this communal spirituality of listening: the importance of a rule and a pastor for maintaining the community’s attentiveness to life; the superior’s responsibility to listen to individuals within the community; and the mutual listening between leader and community members, regardless of their age.

SEE ALSO:

Perspectives on the Rule of Saint Benedict
Expanding Our Hearts in Christ
Aquinata Böckmann, OSB; Translated by Matilda Handl, OSB, and Marianne Burkhard, OSB; Edited by Marianne Burkhard, OSB
978-0-8146-3041-9 Paperback, 264 pp., $21.95

Around the Monastic Table
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Aquinata Böckmann, OSB; Translated by Matilda Handl, OSB, and Marianne Burkhard, OSB; Edited by Marianne Burkhard, OSB
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In his introduction to this commentary on the Rule of Benedict, Abbot Georg Holzherr offers this analogy: “The Rule is comparable to an old heavy red wine that is enjoyed in small sips . . . . Head and heart, soul and mind should taste the words of the Rule, just as the eye enjoys the color of the wine while tongue, nose, and mouth take in the delightful gift of God each in their own way.”

In this new translation, based on the completely revised seventh edition of Die Benediktsregel, Holzherr has created a profoundly rich commentary using up-to-date research methods and the latest translations of ancient monastic texts. At the same time, this commentary is meant not only for experts in the field of ancient monasticism but also for all lay and monastic readers interested in delving into the teachings and spirituality of Saint Benedict and his spiritual predecessors in the East and in the West.

This edition also features a completely revised and expanded introduction and commentary. New research in the field of early monasticism is offered, including new insights into the monastic life of women. Finally, the updated bibliography and a detailed index are valuable tools for anyone wanting to explore the extraordinary world of Saint Benedict.
The Festal Works of St. Gregory of Narek
Annotated Translation of the Odes, Litanies, and Encomia
Abraham Terian

“This Saint Gregory of Narek, a monk of the tenth century, knew how to express the sentiments of your people more than anyone. He gave voice to the cry, which became a prayer of a sinful and sorrowful humanity, oppressed by the anguish of its powerlessness, but illuminated by the splendor of God’s love and open to the hope of his salvific intervention, which is capable of transforming all things.”
—Pope Francis, April 12, 2015

This is the first translation in any language of the surviving corpus of the festal works of St. Gregory of Narek, a tenth-century Armenian mystic theologian and poet par excellence (d. 1003). Composed as liturgical works for the various Dominical and related feasts, these poetic writings are literary masterpieces in both lyrical verse and narrative. Unlike Gregory’s better-known penitential prayers, these show a jubilant author in a celebratory mood. In this volume Abraham Terian, an eminent scholar of medieval Armenian literature, provides the nonspecialist reader with an illuminating translation of St. Gregory of Narek’s festal works. Introducing each composition with an explanatory note, Terian places the works under consideration in their author’s thought-world and in their tenth-century landscape.

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Abraham Terian is professor emeritus of Armenian theology and patristics at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, Armonk, New York. A recipient of the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in the Humanities award and Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, he has extensive publications in the fields of Hellenistic, early Christian, and Armenian religious literature.

“Dr. Terian unlocks the essence of these poems, consistently exposing their biblical matrix and patristic roots, introducing readers to the latest research in these fields, and basing his translation on the most reliable textual foundation.”
S. Peter Cowe
Narekats’i Professor of Armenian Studies
UCLA

“Terian’s volume is a precious gift, worthy of the learned monk whose work it is no exaggeration to describe as an act of Divine grace. It is thanks to the efforts and the very considerable talent of authors like Abraham Terian that St. Gregory of Narek is gradually becoming the universally accessible mystical poet and theologian that his Armenian oeuvre proclaims.”
Theo Maarten van Lint
Calouste Gulbenkian Professor of Armenian Studies
University of Oxford

“Professor Terian’s work elucidates the hymns for the first time and with a precision and insight far beyond any study ever done before; all subsequent work on Narekats’i will be measured by its high standard.”
James R. Russell
Harvard University

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Gregory the Great was pope from 590 to 604, a time of great turmoil in Italy and in the western Roman Empire generally because of the barbarian invasions. Gregory's experience as prefect of the city of Rome and as apocrisarius of Pope Pelagius fitted him admirably for the new challenges of the papacy. The *Moral Reflections on the Book of Job* were first given to the monks who accompanied Gregory to the embassy in Constantinople.

**Gregory the Great**  
*Moral Reflections on the Book of Job, Volume 3*  
(Books 11–16)  
*Translated by Brian Kerns, OCSO*  
*Introduction by Mark DelCogliano*

This third volume, containing books 11 through 16, provides commentary on six chapters of Job, from 12:6 through 24:20. Whereas volume 1 concentrated largely on the moral reading of the first four chapters of Job and volume 2 on the mystical interpretation of the next seven, volume 3 offers a rapid overview of nearly thirteen chapters in their original oral format, including a brief comment at the beginning of each of the six books to explain its contents.

**CS258H, 978-0-87907-358-9**  
Hardcover with dust jacket, 336 pp., 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, $39.95  
*Available November 2016*

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 Paraña, Brazil. He hails originally from Pottsville, in the anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania. For many years he worked in the library at Genesee and Novo Mundo, and he has interested himself in various translation projects, among which is the life of Dom Gabriel Sortais, abbot general of the Trappists in the early 1960s. That volume has also been published by Cistercian Publications, in the Monastic Wisdom series. The first volume of his translation of Gregory the Great’s *Moral Reflections on the Book of Job* was published by Cistercian Publications in 2014 and the second in 2015.

**Gregory the Great**  
*Moral Reflections on the Book of Job, Volume 2*  
(Books 6–10)  
*Translated by Brian Kerns, OCSO*  
*Introduction by Mark DelCogliano*

This second volume, containing books 6–10, provides commentary on Job 5:3–12:5.

**CS257H, 978-0-87907-357-2**  
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*Rights: World, English*
Dom André Louf (+2010), well-known abbot of Mont-des-Cats, still speaks to us on prayer. In this book he brings together talks given to a variety of audiences in which he shares his spiritual experience from both his life of prayer and his life in community. In so doing the chapters offer inspiring insights into the spiritual experience and on the priority of love as well as other areas of our Christian life: community life, obedience, prayer, psalms, the liturgy, etc.

In this book we enter “a school of contemplation” wherein the monastic experience enlightens our lives and service to the world and the Church.

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8. Notes from a Pilgrimage
9. Monks and Ecumenism
10. In the School of the Psalms
11. The Word Beyond the Liturgy
12. If You Want to See, You Have to Love

André Louf, OCSO, served as abbot of Cistercian Abbey of Mont-des-Cats in northern France for thirty-five years until his retirement in 1997. His previous books in English include The Cistercian Way, Tuning in to Grace, Mercy in Weakness, Grace Can Do More, and The Way of Humility, all published by Cistercian Publications.
Monastic Practices
Revised Edition

Charles Cummings, OCSO

For three decades, *Monastic Practices* has been a valued resource for English-speaking aspirants to monastic life. In this revised edition, updated and expanded, Charles Cummings, OCSO, explores the common practices of the monastic life in order to rediscover them as viable means of leading persons to a deeper encounter with God. How do monks and nuns occupy themselves throughout the day? Have they modernized their lifestyle or is it still cluttered with medieval customs? Could any of the monastic practices be of use to those outside the monastery? A certain wisdom is necessary to know how to use such practices and how to give oneself to them until they lead one to God.

After long monastic experience, Cummings shows us how the ordinary things we do constitute our path to God. In the art of living life, he argues, we are always beginners, searching for God through our concrete circumstances and actions.

“As an aspiring monk, I found the first edition of *Monastic Practices* to be a treasury of both wisdom and practical information for living the monastic life. Each chapter covers an aspect, beginning with ‘Sacred Reading’ and concluding with ‘From Death to Life.’ And now, as a professed monk of several years and vocation director of New Melleray Abbey, I am excited to have the opportunity to recommend the new edition of this fine book to the next generation of aspiring monks.”

Br. Paul Andrew Tanner, OCSO
New Melleray Abbey
Peosta, Iowa

“Fr. Charles Cummings’s revised *Monastic Practices* is an insider’s guide to life in the monastic world. Although specifically directed at monastics, it offers secular readers much worthy of pondering value. Drawing on his lifetime in a Trappist abbey, Fr. Charles offers a richly austere, very beautiful volume. For many topics, Fr. Charles provides both the historical practice and the ways in which it has been modified more recently, assisting someone living in community to understand some of the more mystifying customs, or a secular reader to comprehend something of the way monks adapt to the changing world. The meditative bits that appear scattered throughout—discussion of silence, the quality of the cell, and the presence of death—add to the overall balance between instruction and reflection, history and now, individual and community that make *Monastic Practices* a distinctive and valuable contribution to the body of monastic literature.”

Marjory Lange
Western Oregon University

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MW047E. 978-0-87907-484-5 eBook, $15.99
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Charles Cummings, OCSO, is a Trappist-Cistercian monk and priest of Holy Trinity Abbey, Huntsville, Utah. He grew up in northern Minnesota and joined the monastery in 1960. He has a master’s degree in formative spirituality and has been engaged in writing, editing, teaching, counseling, chaplain ministry, and monastic interreligious dialogue for most of his monastic life.
Palladius of Aspuna
The Lausiac History

Edited and Translated by
John Wortley

Born in Galatia in the 360s, Palladius enrolled as a monk on the Mount of Olives in his early twenties. As a monk, he traveled to Alexandria, the desert of Nitria, the Cells, Palestine, Rome, and the Thebaid. During his travels he encountered Rufinus of Aquileia, Melania the Elder, the hermit Dorotheos, Macarius of Alexandria, Evagrius of Pontus, Jerome of Bethlehem, and John Chrysostom. He wrote this elegant account of his visits to various monastic sites in Egypt toward the end of the fourth century AD for the imperial chamberlain Lausus. It is both the most sophisticated and the most informative of the few documents illustrating the earliest chapter in the history of Christian monasticism. Palladius’s work is the only one of the major monastic writings not written for fellow monks to inspire them with models for their emulation but rather for a man very much of the world, with the explicit intention of exerting not only religious but also political influence.
“Your Hearts Will Rejoice”
Easter Meditations from the *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony

*Translated by Milton T. Walsh*

The *Vita Christi*, a spiritual classic of the fourteenth century by the Carthusian Ludolph of Saxony, was an early and extremely comprehensive book of meditations on the events recorded in the gospels. A popular and influential book for centuries, it was instrumental in the conversion of Ignatius Loyola, and Teresa of Avila directed that every convent of her reform include “the Carthusian” in its library.

This volume, which consists of excerpts from the full *Vita Christi* (forthcoming from Cistercian Publications), presents Ludolph’s meditations on the resurrection and the appearances of the risen Christ, concluding with Pentecost. Although shelves of books are dedicated to Christ’s passion, comparatively little spiritual reading for the Easter Season exists. This book is intended to help fill that lacuna and to introduce readers to this classic text.

“A wonderful achievement. With scholarly dedication, Milton Walsh is providing an excellent translation of Ludolph’s entire *Life of Christ*, as well as identifying almost all of its sources. Walsh has enriched enormously for many people ways of meditating on the gospels.”

Rev. Gerald O’Collins, SJ
Jesuit Theological College
The Cistercian Fathers and Their Monastic Theology

Initiation into the Monastic Tradition 8

Thomas Merton
Edited by Patrick F. O’Connell; Preface by James Finley

These conferences, presented by Thomas Merton to the novices at the Abbey of Gethsemani in 1963–1964, focus mainly on the life and writings of his great Cistercian predecessor, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153). Guiding his students through Bernard’s Marian sermons, his treatise On the Love of God, his controversy with Peter Abelard, and above all his great series of sermons on the Song of Songs, Merton reveals why Bernard was the major religious and cultural figure in Europe during the first half of the twelfth century.

MW042P, 978-0-87907-042-7 Paperback, 584 pp., 5 ½ x 8 ½, $49.95
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See more information on other books in this series on page 32.
Thomas Merton
Early Essays, 1947–1952

Edited with an Introduction by Patrick F. O’Connell
Foreword by Jonathan Montaldo

This volume gathers together twelve essays that Thomas Merton wrote for various journals between 1947 and 1952, the years that saw the publication of his best-selling autobiography The Seven Storey Mountain, his ordination to the priesthood, and his initial appointment as spiritual and intellectual guide of the young monks at the Abbey of Gethsemani. The essays, most of which have never been reprinted, focus above all on aspects of the contemplative life but also consider the spiritual dimensions of literature and the social implications of Christian life.

Issued to coincide with the one hundredth anniversary of his birth in 2015, this collection brings to fruition at long last Merton’s own original plan of publishing these essays as a group and so makes available a previously little recognized and underutilized resource for understanding and appreciating a crucial transitional phase in his life as both monk and writer.

Part I: Articles from The Commonweal
“Poetry and the Contemplative Life” (July 4, 1947)
“The Trappists Go to Utah” (August 29, 1947)
“Active and Contemplative Orders” (December 5, 1947)
“A Christmas Devotion” (December 26, 1947)
“Is Mysticism Normal?” (November 4, 1949)
“Self-Denial and the Christian” (March 31, 1950)

Part II: Articles from Other Periodicals
“Death of a Trappist” (Integrity: November 1947)
“A Trappist Speaks on People, Priests and Prayer” (The Messenger of the Sacred Heart: April 1948)
“Contemplation in a Rocking Chair” (Integrity: August 1948)
“The Primacy of Contemplation” (Cross and Crown: March 1950)
“Christ Suffers Again” (Action Now! March 1952)
In the School of Prophets
The Formation of Thomas Merton’s Prophetic Spirituality
Ephrem Arcement, OSB

The distinctive prophetic quality of Thomas Merton’s spirituality, shaped by figures ranging from the Hebrew prophets to Thich Nhat Hanh, emerges from this fresh examination of the works Merton read, responded to, and celebrated in his own writing.

In the School of Prophets examines the final decade of Merton’s life, mainly through the lens of his journals and letters, and helps to fill a gap in contemporary Merton studies. William Blake and various Latin American poets; novelists Boris Pasternak, Albert Camus, and William Faulkner; existentialists Søren Kierkegaard and Gabriel Marcel; monks of the Egyptian desert; and Bernard of Clairvaux number among those who helped shape Merton’s prophetic consciousness, leading him to reexamine what it means to be both a human being and a contemplative monk of the twentieth century.

“Ephrem Arcement situates Merton’s prophetic life and witness, most pronounced in the final decade of his life, within a much broader understanding of the prophetic vocation, integrating many seemingly diffuse elements from throughout Merton’s life. In the School of Prophets is a thoughtful, challenging treatise that underscores Merton’s stature as a true man of God, like the prophets of old, calling us forward and challenging us to labor for the fidelity to God to which Merton himself strived. This is a refreshing and vital approach to understanding Merton’s prophetic vocation.”

Dr. Paul M. Pearson
Director and Archivist
Thomas Merton Center
Bellarmine University

“In the School of Prophets throws fresh light on the integral relationship between prophecy and mysticism in Merton’s life and writings. Mining a range of sources sometimes overlooked in Merton studies, Ephrem Arcement ably guides the reader beneath the surface of the many-faceted diamond that is Merton’s paradoxical spirituality of solitude and social engagement, resistance and hope. Especially in Merton’s engagement with poetic visionaries like Blake and Vallejo, Arcement gestures to Christian hope as seeking to cut through the ‘great tangled knot of lies’ in mass society even while recognizing the ‘flowering of ordinary possibilities’ hidden in everyday life. An aptly rich and multilayered study of Merton’s Christ-haunted spirituality, still drawing us in, one hundred years after his birth.”

Christopher Pramuk
Associate Professor, Theology
Xavier University
**At Play in Creation**

Merton’s Awakening to the Feminine Divine

*Christopher Pramuk*

In this series of deeply meditative retreat conferences, Christopher Pramuk leads the reader through a sustained meditation on Wisdom-Sophia, the feminine face of God’s presence alive in the world, who speaks and sings in the writings of Thomas Merton.

With the sensitivity of a poet and the intellectual acuity of a seasoned teacher and Catholic theologian, Pramuk invites readers to taste and see for themselves the hidden presence of Christ and the dynamism of Love at play in creation; the biblical and mystical tradition from East to West calls this presence Sophia. Looking beyond Merton to seek out her presence in the silent and broken landscapes of our world today, Pramuk shows Sophia above all to be the bearer of hope in an age of unspeakable violence and planetary destruction.

“Priming our theological imaginations with the rich and sensuous language of poetry and with Merton’s poem *Hagia Sophia* as a guide, Pramuk opens us to the divine music hidden in each of our encounters and allows us to glimpse the unseen Reality whom Merton calls Sophia. . . . Pramuk explores her many manifestations within the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures and to people of various faith traditions, inviting us to peer into the liminal spaces of our own lives, the dark places, the places of our poverty where Sophia dwells and from which love springs.”

Kathleen Duffy, SSJ

Author of *Teilhard’s Mysticism: Seeing the Inner Face of Evolution*

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“This book is a great gift, a bell summoning us to prayer and praise.”

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Editor, *The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day*

“In Christopher Pramuk’s marvelous new book, lyrical theology and thoughtfully grounded spirituality merge into one. His ‘voice’ resonates in harmony with Thomas Merton’s. As a professor of theology, Pramuk reads Merton well, but then as poet and musician, he sings and plays with Merton’s most significant themes in a fresh, new key. . . . Pramuk is now my go-to theologian/poet for a trustworthy rendition of Merton’s legacy. I smell a ‘classic’ about to be born before my grateful eyes.”

Jonathan Montaldo

Author of *Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton*

“Pramuk brings together in his writing the poet and the scholar, the artist and the critic, the monk and prophet Merton was. His study of Wisdom in Merton is outstanding. This collection of reflections is a feast; Wisdom truly has set her table for us in them.”

Michael Plekon, PhD

Professor, Sociology/Anthropology, Coordinator of the Program in Religion & Culture

Baruch College of the City University of New York

“At Play in Creation is a lovely and inviting journey.”

Laura Swan, OSB

Author of *The Benedictine Tradition and Wisdom of the Beguines: The Forgotten Story of a Medieval Women’s Movement*
Living Wisdom
The Mission and Transmission of Monasticism
Cristiana Piccardo, OCSO

Cristiana Piccardo was the long-time abess of an unusual Cistercian community in Italy. “We have always believed,” she writes, “that the monastic charism can be a precious ‘talent’ offered to our contemporary world, and there are moments in history when what normally remains hidden should come into the light.” These words accurately describe both the force behind the story of the Vitorchiano monastic family and the account of it given in Living Wisdom, her reflection on the meaning of that story.

Translated from the Italian, Living Wisdom reveals the vitality of these unique Cistercian communities and initiates us in a most concrete way into a wisdom that seeks the kingdom of God ardent yet realistically, without ever bypassing the essential human foundations that the life in Christ transforms and elevates but never supplants: hard work, communal striving, friendship, honesty in communication, a sense of humor, and, above all, love—the willingness both to ask for forgiveness and to give it with joy.

The author, Mother Cristiana, speaks to the reader in a simple conversational tone about the way a community guides today’s new members in the ways of true love and charity. She is forthright and practical about modern attitudes and how they must be addressed. . . . This book typifies what is happening to monastic life in this time of change and globalization, and also celebrates the universal wisdom of monasticism that can continue to give meaning to modern lives.

The American Monastic Newsletter

The Song That I Am
On the Mystery of Music
Élisabeth-Paule Labat, OSB

Translated and introduced by Erik Varden, OCSO

With admirable restraint Élisabeth-Paule Labat shares her interior experience of music and thus continually opens up fresh vistas through worlds of sound and spirit. With her uncanny gift of language, Labat precisely describes soundings and yearnings of the soul that many of us glimpse fleetingly.

“A breathtaking surge of inspired (and learned) exploration, triggered by the sound of a violin playing Mozart during an evening walk in wartime—pithy, challenging, and quite fascinating, carrying us, through music, towards ‘not something, but Someone.’”

Jennifer Smith
Professor at the Royal College of Music
London

“A remarkable . . . deeply Christian meditation on the liberating power of music. Labat’s essay engages profoundly but also humbly with the transformative power of music that, assisted by grace, opens us to the call of beauty. Indeed, Labat’s essay presents a discerning account of the experience of beauty especially as achieved through listening to and performing music and a theologially well-grounded account of the Christian significance of beauty in the contemplative life.”

Michael C. Jordan
Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture
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Reclaiming Humility

Four Studies in the Monastic Tradition

Jane Foulcher

Does humility have a place in contemporary life? Were Enlightenment thinkers wrong to reject humility as a “monkish virtue” (Hume) arising from a “slave morality” (Nietzsche)? Australian theologian Jane Foulcher recovers the counter-cultural reading of humility that marked early Christianity and examines its trajectory at key junctures in the development of Western monasticism. Humility emerges not as a moral virtue achieved by human effort but as a way opened by grace—as a divine “climate” (Christian de Chêrgé) that we are invited to inhabit.

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“I hope that every monastic house and theological library offers this fine study of humility, in its many facets, for its readership to read, ponder, and reflect with others.”
Mary Forman, OSB, Prioress
Monastery of St. Gertrude
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“Turning to such sources as the desert fathers, John Cassian, Benedict of Nursia, and Bernard of Clairvaux, Foulcher recovers the crucial links that unite Christian humility with human dignity and charity. . . . Highly recommended.”
Ann Astell
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“This wonderfully clear and insightful introduction to so central a topic will be of immense help to students and scholars.”
Mark A. McIntosh
Professor of Christian Spirituality
Loyola University

Living in the House of God

Monastic Essays

Margaret Malone, SGS
Foreword by Michael Casey, OCSO

In Living in the House of God, Margaret Malone draws on her study of and research on the Rule of Saint Benedict to show the ways in which this ancient rule can illuminate modern life. The broad gamut of topics this book examines—from Benedictine life as sacrament to Augustine’s influence on Benedict to obedience and the art of listening, among others—is itself a witness to the generous flexibility of the Rule, as Benedict proposes a way of life that truly corresponds to the deepest needs of the whole of human nature.

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“After more than half a century living and teaching the Benedictine Rule, Sister Margaret Malone has collected some of the articles written over the years, demonstrating her ability to bring the Rule to bear on the contemporary world. This book is a fine example of the Benedictine tradition of humanitas.”

Michael Casey, OCSO
Author of Seventy-Four Tools for Good Living

“Sister Margaret Malone has a clear and concise writing style and deals beautifully with various monastic themes. I appreciated especially her presentation of the sacramentality of the monastic life and her reflections on the relationship of the community meal and the community Eucharist. It is evident that a lot of study lies behind the chapters of this book, but Sister Margaret has the gift of presenting technical material in a very accessible form.”

Abbot Jerome Kodell
Benedictines
The Lives of Monastic Reformers, 2
Abbot Vitalis of Savigny, Abbot Godfrey of Savigny, Peter of Avranches, and Blessed Hamo

Introduction, translated, and edited by Hugh Feiss, OSB, Maureen M. O’Brien, and Ronald Pepin

This volume offers translations of the twelfth-century Latin vitae of four monks of the Monastery of Savigny: Abbot Vitalis, Abbot Godfrey, Peter of Avranches, and Blessed Hamo. Founded in 1113 by Vitalis of Mortain, an influential hermit-preacher, Savigny expanded to a congregation of thirty monasteries under his successor Godfrey (1122–1138). In 1147, the entire congregation joined the Cistercian Order. Around 1172, two monks of Savigny, Peter of Avranches and Hamo, friends but very different personalities, died. Their stories were told in two further vitae.

The vitae of these four men exemplify the variety of people and movements found in the monastic ferment of the twelfth century.

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Translated by Beverly Mayne Kienzle with Jenny C. Bledsoe and Stephen H. Behnke

Introduction and Notes by Beverly Mayne Kienzle with Jenny C. Bledsoe

Perhaps the least studied of Hildegard of Bingen’s writings, Solutions to Thirty-Eight Questions is translated in this volume into English for the first time from the original Latin.

In this work of exegesis, Hildegard (1098–1179) resolves thorny passages of Scripture, theological questions, and two issues in hagiographic texts. Solutions to Thirty-Eight Questions joins Hildegard’s Homilies on the Gospels, which were directed to her nuns, as evidence of the seer’s exegetical writing as well as her authority as an exegete. The twelfth-century saint wrote in standard genres of exegesis—homilies and solutions—and her interpretations of Scripture were widely sought, including by male audiences.

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“Anyone studying Hildegard’s works and/or the various styles of textual interpretation in the Middle Ages will need to consult this small book and be grateful to Kienzle and her translators for their work which not only elucidates Hildegard’s ‘range of exegetical knowledge and methods’ for modern readers but also shows how she both used and transcended the categories and literary models used by the men of her times.”

Marianne Burkhard, OSB
St. Mary Monastery, Rock Island, IL
American Benedictine Review
Born from the Gaze of God
The Tibhirine Journal of a Martyr Monk
Christophe Lebreton, OCSO
Translated by Mette Louise Nygård and Edith Scholl, OCSO

Christophe Lebreton, OCSO, aged forty-six, was the youngest of the seven Trappist monks assassinated in Algeria by terrorists in 1996. He was also the poet of the group. Anyone who was enthralled by the film Of Gods and Men should find in Brother Christophe’s Journal ample and deeply moving material for meditation on both the light and the darkness inherent in the human condition.

The Journal begins in 1993, four months before the terrorists’ first visit to the monastery at Tibhirine, and it ends on March 19, 1996, just seven days before the monks’ abduction. Entry after entry touches readers both by its vivid sincerity and by the fresh and inventive quality of its poetic expression. Through these pages readers become privy to the daily events in the soul of a generous searcher after God under very trying conditions. His style is highly personal, playful, ardent, full of color and whimsy.

“Some books are read first for instruction and then a second or third time for nourishment; this is such a book, and it is a more than worthy addition to the mounting literature on Christian martyrdom in our time.”

Lawrence S. Cunningham
John A. O’Brien Professor of Theology (Emeritus)
The University of Notre Dame

Sophia
The Hidden Christ of Thomas Merton
Christopher Pramuk

This book looks to Thomas Merton as a “classic” theologian of the Christian tradition from East to West and offers an interpretation of his mature Christology, with special attention to his remarkable prose poem of 1962, Hagia Sophia.

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“I love this book. Pramuk’s writing is at once deeply insightful and beautifully poetic. . . . It marks a fresh new insight into the depth of Merton’s theological vision.”

Catholic Studies

“Pramuk’s Sophia stands out as an exemplar of the best of what scholars of Merton can offer. . . . The book is a reflection on the nature of theology and a call to the renewal of the practice of theology through the sophiological approach. As such, it should be of interest not only to those interested in the retrieval of Merton’s ideas and in the reconstruction of his monastic, theological, and personal identity, but also to those who remain convinced that theology still has something important to say in response to the most pressing questions that we face today.”

American Benedictine Review

“Pramuk has written an audacious, radical and ultimately inspiring book. Audaciously, he takes on the complex and controversial task of translating Merton’s richly literary and poetic writings into theology. In doing so, he calls Christians, and especially Christian theologians, radically to deepen or repossess the mystical sources for their life and work. The result is an inspiring invitation to find new and deeper meaning in both doctrine and practice.”

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Mary Margaret Funk is a Benedictine nun of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, Beech Grove, Indiana. From 1994 through 2004, she served as executive director of Monastic Interreligious Dialogue, which fosters dialogue among monastics of the world’s religions. In addition to the volumes of the Matters Series, she is the author of Islam Is...: An Experience of Dialogue and Devotion and Into the Depths: A Journey of Loss and Vocation.
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