



# The Book Reviewer

ST. MARY'S PARISH LIBRARY

MAY 2015

## WELCOME TO YOUR PARISH LIBRARY!

- Located through the double glass doors in the main vestibule of the church
- The library is open for all masses
- Find detailed check-out instructions posted near the marble shelf
- Materials may be borrowed for up to three weeks
- Donations of books, DVDs, & CDs that reflect Catholic Christian faith and principles are greatly appreciated. Just drop them off in the library!

### **Ask the Beasts** by Elizabeth A. Johnson (Theology)

This wonderful book begins with an admirable, and admiring, analysis of Charles Darwin's *On The Origin of Species*, which shook up the worlds of science and religion in the mid-nineteenth century, and continues to do so. "Aquinas never knew Darwin's theory of evolution, but he would have had no difficulty in understanding it as the way that God created." Evolution is no longer just a theory, but is a fact of history, although the how and the why over immense

periods of time are debated passionately from both sides of science and religion. All quite unnecessarily! "The laws of chemistry and physics are stable, but nothing in them demands that earth be created, let alone with elephants." It is all such an adventure!

The author agrees with the theology of Karl Rahner: that nature has the capacity to transcend itself; in evolution, matter becomes increasingly complex over eons of time. Matter infused with

spirit explains the dynamism or plasticity within matter which puzzled Darwin and still puzzles the Neo-Darwinists.

*"Nature's capacity to transcend itself is the key; and the only force we know which creates and energizes, rather than destroys, is love."*

The failure of human beings to love one another and the planet leads to devastating results in tribalism, wars, greed, and the exploitation of nature and its resources.

*Reviewed by Clare Dinno*

### **The Prodigal You Love** by Theresa Aletheia Noble, FSP (Relationships)

Every practicing Catholic has experienced the pain and disappointment of dear family members and friends who, though raised in the Faith, have either slowly drifted away, left the Church out of confusion, scandal, and anger, or have been shamed out by the "logic" of vocal atheists.

Theresa Noble was one of those people. Though she was raised by devout parents, as a teenager she cast off what she considered a dubious belief system whose participants appeared to be hypocrites.

But as you will discover in reading this inspired and inspirational book, Noble had a complete change of heart. Because of her personal experience of "coming home" she has a special understanding of what underlies our loved ones' reluctance to look again at Catholicism, or even to believe in God. She is a gifted thinker and writer who skillfully explores the different reasons people walk away from their faith, and her writing is most engaging in the chapters on the best and most loving ways to

gently give your loved one support in opening up to the possibility of returning to God's flock.

She suggests that neither of our most common approaches—emotional lectures or hopeful silence—are effective ways of inviting them back. The first pushes them further away, and the second leaves them thinking that their faith life doesn't really matter to you.

Her guidance will help your heart and mind to be ready when your loved one's spirit is stirring.

*Reviewed by Susan Triplett*



PLEASE RETURN YOUR BORROWED ITEMS ASAP! SOME HAVE NEVER BEEN RETURNED, AND IT IS EXPENSIVE AND SOMETIMES IMPOSSIBLE TO REPLACE THEM. THANK YOU!

Are any of these missing library materials hiding on your shelves

**Books:**

*A Peek Into My Church*

*Carl Jung and Christian Spirituality*

*The Love That Awaits You*

*True Devotion to Mary*

**DVDs:**

*Clare and Francis*

**Mystical Theology** by William Johnston, S.J. (Theology)

William Johnston is a Jesuit priest who has written and lectured for many years about Orthodox Christianity and Eastern religions—Hinduism, Islam, and Zen Buddhism—as they relate to Christianity. In this excellent book he has brought all of these elements, plus modern science, into a whole, which is totally relevant to the understanding and experience of the 21st century.

The Catholic theologian, Karl Rahner, has said that the future believer will either be a mystic “or she will be nothing.” Fr. Johnston echoes this idea in showing that mysticism is not just for re-

clusive monks and nuns, but is for everyone, and is not dreamy and introverted, but active and community-oriented. Based upon scripture, especially the Song of Songs, the prophets, St. John the Evangelist, and the mysticism of St. John of the Cross, Fr. Johnston melds all of these elements into a coherent whole, into which the physics of Albert Einstein, quantum physics, and evolution fit nicely.

Not only Fr. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, but also Darwin and Einstein, were enthralled by the beauty and complexity of the world, and the realization of the unity of all things in the universe.

*“My religion consists of an humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are all able to perceive with our feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.”*

-Albert Einstein

So, too, are all of those through the centuries who have known the theology of love—the “new commandment” of Jesus:

*“...that they love one another, just as I in you, and you in me, and we in them.”*

Reviewed by Clare Dinno

**Would You Baptize an Extraterrestrial?** by Guy Consolmagno, SJ & Paul Mueller, SJ

Science geeks, history freaks, and everyday Catholics who are fascinated by the apparent dichotomy of faith and science, this is the book for you!

The two Jesuits who dialog in this delightful book draw on their Catholic faith and their experience as scientists who work at the Vatican Observatory as they illuminate various cosmological phenomena and historical events with clarity and humor.

Reading this book is like enjoying a travelogue, a comedy team, an excellent history lecture, a visit to a planetarium, and an overview of the

Catholic understanding of the universe throughout the ages, all at the same time.

Each chapter is set in a different locale related to the topic at hand. The Art Institute of Chicago is the setting for their discussion of the Biblical Creation story vs. the Big Bang theory—perfect for looking at radically different ways of representing reality. Their exploration of the Galileo Affair is held in The Tower of the Winds in Vatican City where illustrations of our solar system surround them.

Frs. Consolmagno and Mueller also dive into questions like, “What

happened to poor Pluto?” and “What was the star of Bethlehem?” Even if you are not well-versed in science or astronomy, you will find that you can follow the discussion quite well, and you can tell that these two men are enjoying themselves immensely throughout their back and forth conversations explaining the underlying reasons for scientific developments and changing Church views.

So, if a Martian showed up and asked to be baptized, how might we respond? You’ll have to finish the book to learn what the authors think.

Reviewed by Susan Triplett