



The Book Reviewer

ST. MARY'S PARISH LIBRARY

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- The library is open for all masses
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Someone by Alice McDermott (Fiction)

This book continues mining the rich ore of the experience of growing up in Brooklyn. The charm of a candid child's-eye view lies in the total grasp of detail, without judgment, prejudice, or analysis. Just the facts. It is left to the reader to do the analysis, and to have the "ah-hah" moments.

Five-year-old Marie, sitting on the steps of her tenement apartment house while she waits for her beloved father to return from

work, gives us her short-sighted panoramic view of the street and its character—some comic, some tragic. There is Bill Corrigan, blinded by gas in WWI, who is brought out by his old mother each day, to sit in a kitchen chair and "watch" the neighborhood boys play stickball. The boys, because they are bullies, but compassionate withal, choose Bill to be their umpire. There, too, is Pegeen, the ungainly daughter of a mismatched Irish and Syrian couple, who

later that same day dies from a fall down basement stairs.

With father safely home, we meet Marie's family: the kind father; the efficient mother; the sensitive brother, Gabe, who is always studious and later becomes a failed priest. It is Gabe, with Mr. Fagin, the neighborhood mortician, and Tom, the Someone of Marie's long life, who teach her compassion, and a generous acceptance of all that is.

Reviewed by Clare Dinno

The Science of God by Gerald L. Shroeder (Theology)

Gerald Shroeder is a nuclear physicist, with a Ph.D. from MIT. He teaches physics in Israel and the U.S. In this book he manages persuasively to reconcile science and religion. The new quantum physics is religion-friendly, unlike the mechanistic science of the age of enlightenment. Einstein's discoveries opened up a whole new way of thinking about the universe.

The thesis of the book is that the Bible, especially Genesis and Deuteronomy, are totally compatible with the new science. Einstein wrote that it was mathematically impossible for our world to have come about by chance. Shroeder goes

to great lengths to prove that this is true. After the Big Bang it took billions of years for cooling to take place and for the formation of billions of galaxies of stars. It took many billion more for single-celled life forms to appear. Then during the Cambrian geological period there occurred an explosion of increasingly complex life forms, including all of the species that exist today, and many that have died out. Homo Sapiens arrived at the end of the long chain, or perhaps not at the end. Life and conscious mind are apparently pre-programmed in the evolution of matter.

The science and the mathematics are brilliantly explained, as are all of the reasons why both the new Darwinists and the Creationists are mistaken. The Darwinists are wrong because of their insistence on random selection—which is mathematically impossible—and the Creationists are wrong because of their mistaken idea that each creature, each species, was created fully-formed, one at a time, without evolution. Less persuasive is Shroeder's attempt to reconcile, quite literally, Genesis and the new science. However, it is all very interesting reading.

Reviewed by Clare Dinno



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

Are any of these missing library materials hiding on your shelves at home?

Books:

Alone But Not Lonely

Becoming a New Person

DVDs:

October Baby

The Jewish Roots of Catholicism

Scarlett Music

The Singing Heart of the World by John Feehan (Theology)

John Feehan is an environmental scientist, and his book brings a joyful radiance to the subject of science and religion. He explores the meaning of man's relationship to the world; and his theology fills out the limitations of science. Science alone doesn't even begin to explain mind and consciousness, or the experience of beauty, music, language, art, etc. For the most part, scientists are

not interested in these matters, limiting their research into how things work and can be seen and measured. Mind is explained, or rather explained away, as bundles of neurons and synapses—just bundles of meaningless connections.

Taking for granted evolution and all of the latest discoveries of physics and astrophysics, Feehan explores the meaning of this

new-found reality for man, and for his relationship to nature and to God, who is both transcendental and imminent—imminent in nature and personally. He concludes that because of our analytical ability we have lost, almost completely, our sense of Presence, of living in the present moment with wonder, and our sense of the oneness of all of creation.

Reviewed by Clare Dinno

Search and Rescue by Patrick Madrid (Relationships)

Since the time of Pope Paul VI's "*On Evangelization in the Modern World*" Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and now Pope Francis have renewed exhortations for Catholic lay people to engage in what has always been the most basic mission of Christ's church - sharing the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ with the world, especially among those living today in a sort of confusing moral relativism. Patrick Madrid's *Search and Rescue* is an excellent starting point for those who have taken seriously the call to share personal stories of their own lives in Christ, inviting friends and family into, or back into, the Church He established.

Visions of Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons standing at your door, earnestly sharing their view of God's plan for your life may be rising in your imagination, but fear not! Though Madrid isn't against the idea of going door-to-door to share the Good News, in this "primer" of evangelization, he simply presents the

basics of preparing yourself for natural encounters with others whose lives can be made whole by a relationship with Christ.

Each chapter builds on the ones that come before, beginning with "Let Love Fill Your Heart". Saint Frances de Sales is the model that Madrid holds up for us to emulate, since through love and patience he brought sixty thousand hostile anti-Catholic Protestants into the Catholic Church. His example teaches us much about how to love people into wanting the best possible relationship with God, and also puts our own efforts into perspective - most of us would be thrilled to bring even a few loved ones into a life devoted to following Christ.

Subsequent chapters include practical advice on having the proper attitude (you are doing this for God, not yourself); assessing the situation before you reach out (discern where your loved one is at—unbeliever? Protestant or other religion? Disgruntled

Catholic?); preparing yourself (pray much, practice what you preach, spend time really listening at Mass, read the Bible, study the Catechism); and more. Madrid's last encouraging pointer is to "let God do the heavy lifting." By openly telling someone what Christ means in our own life, we are planting seeds that the Holy Spirit alone can make grow and be fruitful. But it does take us to do that initial sowing, and that is what our Lord and our faith and Patrick Madrid are calling us to do. If we take the leap, God promises that He will give us the words to say.

At the end of the book there is a "Search and Rescue Reading Plan" - a list of resources grouped together by level from preliminary to advanced, that would benefit every Catholic, particularly those who would like to feel more confident in telling others about Catholic Christianity. Several of these excellent books can be found in our Parish Library.

Reviewed by Susan Triplett