



The Book Reviewer

ST. MARY'S PARISH LIBRARY

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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!

A Tribute to Our Mother: Poems Penned by Mary Clare Dinno (Poetry)

On rare occasions. We find a book so beautiful, so filled with love and grace, that it almost hurts to read it. Yet the words and images carry us through the sorrows of human life to a place of grateful serenity in the presence of God.

A Tribute to Our Mother is such a book. It is a collection of original poems written by St. Mary's parishioner, Clare Dinno, exquisitely published by her daughter, Marie Christine Peterson, with carefully selected photographs to accompany each poem.

Clare Dinno is no Valentine's Day poet. Her poems are spare, mature, deeply spiritual, and profoundly con-

nected to the great poets, musicians, and artists she has studied throughout her life. Educated at Columbia, where she read W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, and most of all, the great Jesuit poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Clare writes poems that are accomplished and carefully crafted. More importantly, they are informed by her deep emotional connections to her nine children and to the Communion of Saints.

Clare Dinno is a living Catholic poet who shares with her readers the passion and the joys of the Catholic imagination, carrying on the rich creative history of our faith. In a poem that echoes Hopkins' magnificent "God's Grandeur," Dinno writes:

*While all beneath us softly beats,
A whirr of wings, a metronome;
Love is where all rivers meet,
When you hear them you are home.*

*A deep soft, imperishable thing
Glides gently lower, settles,
dreams,
Broods with warm breast on
folded wing.*

We are fortunate to have a copy of this elegant book available for borrowing. Please contact St. Mary's librarian Susan Triplett (408-395-3737 or srtriplett@gmail.com) for information on how to check out *A Tribute to Our Mother*.

Reviewed by Rose Anna Higashi

The Everlasting Now by George Maloney, S. J. (Spirituality)

If you have ever wondered about Catholic teaching on the subjects of Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory, then this is the book for you!

George Maloney is a superb writer and scholar, deeply into scripture and early church writings. He is especially interested in Eastern church teachings before the schism between Rome and Byzantium. His thoughtful analysis of these important subjects comes as a refreshing breeze to enlighten our spirits.

Jesus clearly testified to the Pharisaic teachings concerning heaven and hell—paradise and Gehenna; the Saducees rejected the idea of

resurrection. The early church fathers followed St. Paul's teaching, and his interpretations of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection. Through the Holy Spirit, present in everyone since the first Pentacost, revelation continues, and our growth in understanding these deep down things hopefully also continues.

The teachings of the Church regarding heaven, hell, purgatory, and the Communion of Saints are here expounded clearly and beautifully, while still remaining mysterious. Similarly, we may "feel" God's presence acutely, and "know" without seeing, but God is, and will always remain a mys-

tery. A mature faith is at one with all other people, and with all of creation.

*Yahweh, what variety you have created,
arranging everything so wisely!
Earth is completely full of things
you have made;
among them the vast expanse of
ocean,
teeming with countless creatures,
creatures large and small.
You give breath, fresh life begins;
You keep renewing the world.*

Psalm 104

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:

Lord, I Hurt!

Be the Leader You Were Meant to Be

Darwin's Pious Idea

Audio Tapes:

Calling Catholics to Be "Bible Christians"

DVDs:

G.K Chesterton

Of Gods and Men (DVD)

This beautiful, critically acclaimed 2010 French film recounts the story of nine Trappist monks living in a small Muslim village in Algeria, at the time of that country's civil war (1991-2002.) Their life intertwines with that of the villagers—beyond their daily work of praying and studying, the monks provide medical treatment and clothing, and are in turn loved and welcomed into local families' celebrations.

The tranquil life of the priests and townspeople is shaken when local Croatian workers are brutally murdered by Islamist rebels. The civil authorities, who are cor-

rupt, offer police protection for the monastery, which is refused by Christian, the elected prior of the monks. His resolve is soon tested when a gang of extremists invades the monastery with threats and demands for medical treatment. Christian, though visibly shaken, authoritatively refuses to acquiesce, and the leader eventually departs peacefully with his men.

What is most engaging and moving about this film is the intimate portrait of the monks as they wrestle with the decision to flee Algeria to preserve their lives or to stand steadfast in their chosen life of service to God and the villag-

ers, knowing that death is almost a certainty. Their complete honesty in sharing their fears, doubts, faith, and love for each other reveals their human weakness and powerful devotion to the Lord and to the essential work of the monastery.

The film gracefully and thoughtfully moves between scenes of the monks at prayer, singing hymns which mirror their joy and anguish; glimpses of the villager's simple, though harsh life; panoramas of the countryside's natural beauty; and the ugliness of cruel civil conflict.

Reviewed by Susan Triplett

Why Does the World Exist by Jim Holt (Philosophy)

This book examines the two basic philosophical questions: why does anything exist rather than nothing, and why does evil occur; or the "problem of existence" and the "problem of evil." It is written in an engagingly lucid style, given the difficulty of the subject matter; the author manages an amusing page-turner, with the sub-title, "an existential detective story."

The cover of the book shows a very seedy Parisian café—Jean Paul Sartre's favorite meeting place—presumably as a portrait of nothingness. "Nothing" is a very difficult concept—someone is, after all, doing the thinking. So the problem is: How does something come from nothing? All of the ancient creation stories

assumed that the world was created from some original chaotic material. The early church theologians were the first to conceive of creation from nothing.

Jim Holt interviews many physicist/mathematician/cosmologists; all but one of these brilliant men indulge in wonderful cosmic possibilities, all of which are even more improbable than the idea that God created the universe out of nothing. A few of these scientists come close to the concept that all matter, originating in the Big Bang, contains consciousness, as did Karl Rahner and Teilhard de Chardin. One scientist thinks that the most likely idea is that out of all possible worlds, this one had to be selected. A

"Selector" is, apparently, a more scientific term than "God."

Only one of these philosopher/mathematicians believes in God. He is an Oxford Don who belongs to an Orthodox parish. The last of the interviewees is John Updike, before he died. Updike was a Catholic, of an unorthodox variety, but he believed in God and in free will.

The latest neuroscientists, while pooh-poohing free will, say that it is better to act as though free will exists. In other words, they really don't know why anything exists, but it is more practical to behave as though one knows!

Reviewed by Clare Dinno