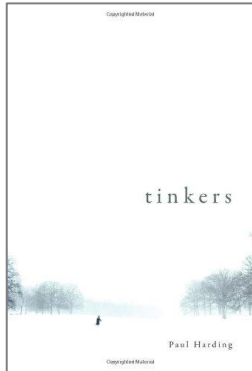


LITERARY



One of the best ways to hone a biblical ear is through the practice of reading poetry. As with all great literary works, the Bible's craft invites us to question and study its compositional conceits. But more fundamental than the art is its inspiration—certainly with the Bible: Its poetic words are spoken from the depths of Truth and Love contemplated.

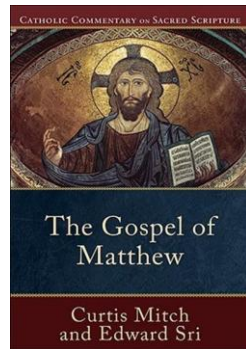
Although many find poetry “difficult,” the poetic word can also be discerned in works of prose, relatively free as they are from the bemusing arcana of versification. Paul Harding's premier novel, having won many awards such as the Pulitzer, is just such a piece of contemplative *poesis* in prose form.

Telling the life of sometime horologist George Washington Crosby through the dying man's demented ruminations, *Tinkers* interweaves the recollected fates of his tinker father and preacher grandfather, thereby spinning a sadly deranged but dignified web of existence (Bellevue Literary Press, 2009; \$14.95). Through the poetic voice of Harding's contemplative awareness, the dark landscape of mortality is brushed with the mysterious light of human being. While detailing the many layers of a time-piece's hidden mechanics, Harding leads us not only to think and ask “How does one tell the time?” but also “Who” and “What do I tell Time?”

BIBLICAL

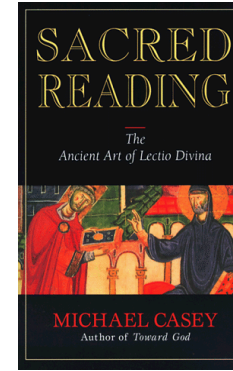
There's a well known quip about the most important language for studying the Bible: you guessed it—German! Protestant scholarship of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (mostly Lutheran) dominated the field, not only with its native language but also with its biases, among which must be counted that against Catholic doctrine. For this and other more contemporary reasons, the faithful have had difficulty in finding Scripture commentaries that are easily accessible, adherent to Tradition, and appreciative of critical scholarship.

Enter the *Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture* by the ecumenical publishing house Baker Academic, and its volume on *The Gospel of Matthew* (\$21.99). Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri's verse-by-verse commentary will definitely enrich your understanding of the inspired text as well as your devotion to the mysteries of faith—two dynamics of Christian life that scholars and preachers have kept separated for far too long.



Matthew's is the Gospel we will hear every Sunday during the current liturgical cycle of Sunday readings. Think about making study a part of your spirituality! Thus is “every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old” (Matt 13.52).

SPIRITUAL



The Second Vatican Council declared that “easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful” (*Dei Verbum*, §22). And, as noted at left, we have thankfully reached a point in our post-conciliar time when critical but traditional commentaries on the Bible are available.

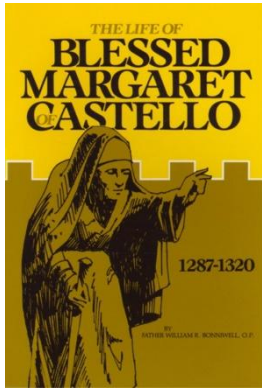
But the Bible is not just another classic, much less another text. The uniqueness of its testimony lies in the fact that ours “is not a ‘religion of the book.’ Christianity is the religion of the ‘Word’ of God, a word that is ‘not a written and mute word, but the Word which is incarnate and living’” (*Catechism*, §108). Consequently, reading the Bible ought to be a fundamentally different exercise than reading everything else, particularly in our electronic age.

Michael Casey's *Sacred Reading* is probably the best introduction to “the ancient art of *lectio divina*” now available in English (Triumph Books, 1995; \$12.95). Accessing the Bible demands a sustained practice of intention and attention, where the goal is an abiding personal encounter with Christ, not the mere digest of information. In less than 150 pages, Casey gives an apology, theology, history, and how-to that will deepen your biblical spirituality and even make it more Eucharistic: “When I found your words I devoured them” (Jer 15.16).

SAINTLY

Several months ago, we had 250 people in our church for a Mass in honor of a little, little-known saint: Margaret of Castello.

Blessed Margaret was born into nobility but, because her soul was embodied with various handicaps, she was rejected by her parents. They never even named her! (“Margaret” was given to her by a maid.) In order that the cripple would not be associated with their august pedigree, the parents locked Margaret away in a dungeon for seven years, until they decided to bring her to a tomb reputed to be miraculous. When that failed to re-figure their daughter, they finally abandoned her. Left to wander and beg, she was adopted by a monastery, where she became known for her holy patience and compassion... only to be later exiled due to the jealousy of others.



Ultimately, she met the Dominican friars and became a member of what later times would recognize as the “Third Order.” A giant in the works of mercy, the blind, lame, and hunchbacked *Margarita* tended with healing love to the

poor, sick, and imprisoned. *The Life of Blessed Margaret of Castello* by Fr. William R. Bonniwell, O.P. will lead you to love and pray to this miraculous little saint (Tan Books, 1952; \$9.95)... and even, perhaps, support the cause for her canonization!

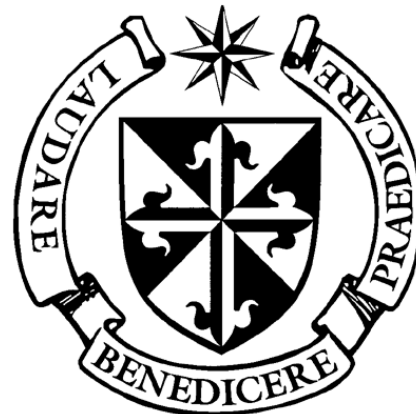
St. Vincent Ferrer is staffed by the Dominican Friars of the Province of St. Joseph (www.op-stjoseph.org).

The Order of Preachers was founded in 1216 by St. Dominic de Guzman. The Dominican charism is to preach the truth for the salvation of souls. This “holy preaching” is an apostolic work that flows from elements of monastic observance and contemplation.

Our mode of contemplation is specified by a commitment to study – “*nailed to the wood of the desk,*” as we say.

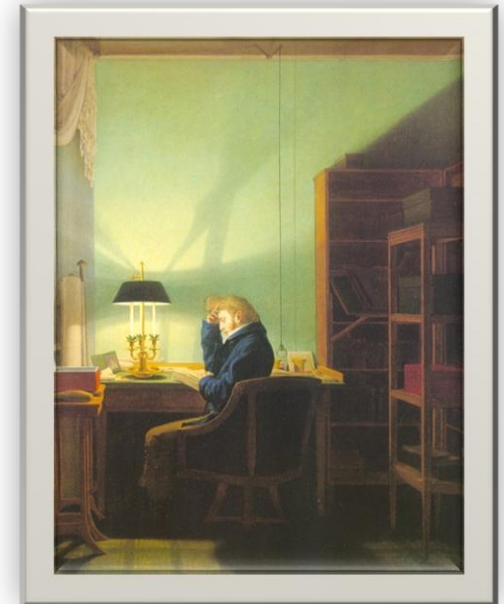
During the year, we offer “Theology in the City,” a theologically rich catechesis series, as well as two major lectures in honor of Sts. Albert and Thomas, delivered by prominent scholars.

Call the parish offices at 212.744.2080, visit www.csvf.org or www.csvfblog.org, or stop in for more details about all our parish’s activities.



SUMMER READING SELECTIONS

Rev. Bruno M. Shah, O.P.



Georg Friedrich Kersting
Man Reading by Lamplight (1814)

The Church of Saint Vincent Ferrer



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