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The Book Reviewer

ST. MARY'S PARISH LIBRARY

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The Healing of the Human Condition--Lectures by Thomas Keating (4 CDs)

The human condition is described by Fr. Thomas Keating as our self-conscious realization that we are separate from God and all of His creation, which is what we have inherited from Adam and Eve. The healing of this condition involves our answers to two questions: Where are you, in your relationship to God? and Who are You? The first one is the question which God asked of Adam, who was hiding from God in the garden. Fr Keating's answer to these questions lies in seeking out the Divine Therapist by going into our inner room, and firmly

closing the door to all of the distractions which inevitably come pouring in.

Centering prayer is the answer, with its technique of diving deep into the subconscious to heal the "false self" of its motivations which are based on primal needs for security, approval (love), and power (control). We are then able to return to our core, in which we are formed "in the image and likeness of God". After we have jettisoned not only our own false selves, but our false images of God which have been based on childhood experiences—often fearsome and trau-

matic—we can begin to heal; to perceive that God is loving and trustworthy and to open ourselves to charity, peace, joy, and all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Two of the CDs are devoted to questions and answers about the process of centering prayer, and about Fr. Keating's psychological approach to spirituality. His answer is that we are physical and psychological beings, and that the "discovery" of the unconscious is critical to an understanding of the spiritual.

Reviewed by Clare Dinno

Sheen Gems: The Best of Fulton J. Sheen (DVD)

The "Sheen Gems" are excerpts from Fulton Sheen's Emmy Award-winning television programs titled, "Life is Worth Living."

Bishop Sheen's weekly television series ran from 1951 until 1957, drawing as many as 30 million people on a weekly basis. When he won an Emmy Award for his efforts, he accepted the

acknowledgment by saying, "I feel it is time I pay tribute to my four writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The DVD's earlier excerpts were filmed in black and white, while the later excerpts are in color. They consist of Sheen simply speaking in front of a live audience, addressing such topics as theology, morality,

and current events. His words of wit and wisdom have managed to transcend the years. He had a fundamental belief that in every human heart there is a struggle known only to the individual's soul and to God.

Reviewed by Pat Dalcher

St. Teresa of Avila's Life & The Stages of Prayer by Fr. Kevin Joyce (5CDs)

Fr. Kevin Joyce presents a recorded CD study guide to St. Teresa's autobiography, which he believes is one of the most fascinating books in all of Christian literature. St. Teresa's book is not a classic autobiography, but rather a systematic pres-

entation of what God does for the human being who enters into a life of prayer. In her autobiography, St. Teresa details the different stages of prayer.

Fr. Kevin's presentation goes chapter by chapter with the book, and highlights what he believes is

important in our own spiritual journey. The ideas and suggestions given in the book are as applicable today as they were during the time of St. Teresa.

Reviewed by Pat Dalcher



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

DVDs:

Life is Beautiful

The Mission

To Kill a Mockingbird

The Agony and the Ecstasy

Parenting Teens by Scott Wood (2 Audio Cassettes)

Catholic convert and international speaker on the family, Steve Wood brings experience, earnest encouragement and good old Protestant enthusiasm to this presentation on how to get teens through the challenges they face in our world: unhealthy peer pressure, poor media-generated role models, homes broken by divorce, and omnipresent coercion to experiment with illegal drugs and pre-marital sex.

Wood draws on his experience as a youth minister and as a husband and father to build his case: in order for a child to successfully navigate the teen years, s/he must be grounded in the confidence that comes from living in a two-parent family where Catholic values are lived

out overtly, thereby providing a model for imitation, which Wood repeatedly asserts is the most natural method of learning. In the spirit of other well-known converts such as Scott Hahn, Wood exhorts parents to learn their Catholic faith, live it to the fullest, and then teach it to their children. Invoking Pope John Paul II's apostolic exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio*, he affirms that it is the *home* that is the primary teacher of Christian values. He goes on to encourage families to regularly participate in the sacraments of the Church that purify and strengthen: Eucharist and Reconciliation.

One section emphasizes the role of fathers in nurturing the faith life of their children. Although there is evidence

that mothers are often the primary models of Christian values and church attendance, Wood shows that there is a scriptural imperative for fathers to actively participate in and model a Catholic-Christian lifestyle. He argues that a child's natural inclination to imitate the parent provides the most powerful foundation for that child's heart to be turned to Christ.

The practical suggestions offered by Wood, backed up by personal experience, scriptural support, and Church teaching will provide motivation and guidance for parents seeking advice on raising strong, self-confident, and wholesome teens.

Reviewed by Susan Triplett

The Life of St. Teresa of Avila by Fr. John Venard O.C.D. (2 Audio Cassettes)

This delightful audio presentation features Fr. John Venard reading directly from texts of the saint's reflections on her spiritual journey, including her teaching on prayer, "The Four Waters." Fr. Venard's voice projects his deep love and respect for St. Teresa, and captures the many moods of this oh-so-human pilgrim as she experiences the trials and joys of her profound relationship with God.

Listeners will gain immeasurable encouragement from hearing St. Teresa's own words regarding the struggles and illnesses that plagued her

(sometimes at her own request). She describes in a very practical manner her lack of imagination in prayer which necessitates her reliance on reading materials as a substitute, and acknowledges that by her own shortcomings she continually subverts her Christian upbringing by her upright parents, as well as the gains she has made in the convent. Always, God is there, forgiving and welcoming her when she repents, with a love and generosity that never ceases.

Reviewed by Susan Triplett

