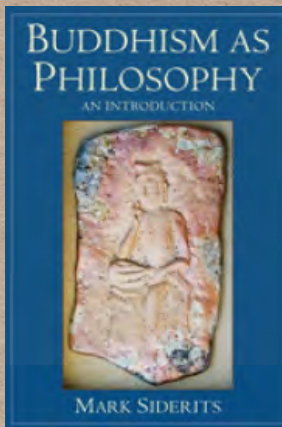


SPRING 2023
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RELIGION CATALOGUE



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BUDDHISM AS PHILOSOPHY

An Introduction

by **Mark Siderits**

Hackett, 304 p

2nd edition

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SANCTIFIED VIOLENCE

by **Alfred J. Andrea** and
Andrew Holt

Hackett, 208 p

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In *Buddhism As Philosophy*, Mark Siderits makes the Buddhist philosophical tradition accessible to a Western audience.

Offering generous selections from the canonical Buddhist texts and providing an engaging, analytical introduction to the fundamental tenets of Buddhist thought, this revised, expanded, and updated edition builds on the success of the first edition in clarifying the basic concepts and arguments of the Buddhist philosophers.

Mark Siderits is professor emeritus, Department of Philosophy, Illinois State University.

"Buddhism As Philosophy makes an excellent text for advanced undergraduate students. [A] main strength of this book is the way it brings Indian Buddhist philosophy into active dialogue and debate with well-established currents of Anglo-American analytical philosophy." - Evan Thompson, *Philosophy East and West*

A comprehensive and readable overview, it provides a lively introduction to the subject of holy war in its broadest sense - as 'sanctified violence' in the service of a god or ideology.

With Andrea and Holt as sure-footed guides, *Sanctified Violence* tackles a vast subject: the global history of holy war in its many forms across the millennia. From cosmic struggles between forces of good and evil at the dawn of mythic time to apocalyptic battles at history's end, this book explores the transcendental impulses and religious ideologies that fuel and shape collective violence in virtually every culture and age. Modern military chaplains and armed Buddhist monks keep company with medieval Templars and Aztec Flower warriors. *Sanctified Violence* never pretends to have all the answers to difficult questions about warfare and the sacred, but rather invites reflective readers to appraise their complicated relationship for themselves. Richly illustrated, each chapter offers a detailed commentary on its major historical sources and poses questions for further analysis, making the volume ideal for the classroom.

Alfred J. Andrea is emeritus professor of History, The University of Vermont, and general editor of Hackett's *Critical Themes in History* series. Among his other books: *The Medieval Record: Sources of Medieval History*, and *Seven Myths of the Crusades*.

Andrew Holt is associate professor of History at the Florida State College at Jacksonville.



IS GOD LOVE?

Looking for Clues in Bible and Tradition

by **Hansjürgen Verweyen**

Pustet, 208 p

**ALL TRANSLATION
RIGHTS AVAILABLE**



MORAL THEOLOGY COMPACT

Basics and current challenges

by **Karl-Heinz Menke**

Pustet, 368 p

**ALL TRANSLATION
RIGHTS AVAILABLE**

Is God really love?

Even when he mercilessly drowned his creatures in the flood? Even if he asks of Abraham to sacrifice his only son? Even if he exposes Job to Satan's sadistic games?

And what about the Apocalypse? Is the God of Love not suppressed by a cosmic judge who stages untold horror scenarios at the end of time?

Can God be love, even when he sends Jesus to die on the cross as an expiatory sacrifice? Hansjürgen Verweyen takes the reader on an exciting search for clues in Scripture and tradition after the God, who is love, and leads him time and again to surprising insights.

Hansjürgen Verweyen is a theologian. He spent many years working in the USA and at the University GH Essen. From 1984 to 2004 he's been Professor of Fundamental Theology at the University of Freiburg.

Moral Theology Compact is aimed at readers who deal with moral theology in the context of school, study and work. In a topic-oriented manner, it facilitates the initial contact with the indispensable conceptual, factual and argumentative foundations of moral theology and can thus stimulate and support one's own ethical judgment in the context of Christian belief in God. Focus is on fundamental morality, medical ethics and sexual ethics.

The fundamentally revised new edition takes into account the latest literature and the latest socio-political, scientific and church developments. Contributions by renowned experts broaden the overall horizon. Individual subject areas such as the Bible and morality, truth and lies, egg cell donation, genome editing, ethical challenges of the pandemic, homosexuality and gender, but also technology issues and animal ethics have been newly included.

Alexander Merkl, dr. theol., is a professor of theological ethics at the University of Hildesheim.

Kerstin Schögl-Flierl, dr. theol., is a professor of moral theology at the University of Augsburg.

With contributions by Franz-Josef Bormann, Stephan Ernst, Alexander Flierl, Bernhard Koch, Gerhard Marschütz



A SMALL HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

by **Jürgen Bärsch**

Pustet, 207 p

2nd edition

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COMFORTING BUT HOW?

A Guide to Accompanying the
Bereaved and the Sick.

by **Klaus Schäfer**

Pustet 160 p

5th edition

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With his history of the Christian liturgy, Jürgen Bärsch offers a compact overview of the major stages and developments in the liturgical life. He also conveys the cultural-historical influences on and through the liturgy in all its facets.

In short, poignant chapters, he shows the numerous and sometimes massive changes in worship in the history of Christianity. For the concrete form of the liturgical celebration has changed many times in its interaction with ecclesial and social upheavals, and it has been influenced by changes in culture and mentality.

Jürgen Bärsch is professor of Liturgical Science at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt.

Consolation may hurt, consolation may heal. Where is the difference?

Using numerous examples, the author compares “false consolation” and “genuine consolation” to show why some formulations hurt, while others comfort and heal. The reader gets a feeling for common mistakes and inappropriate formulations when dealing with the sick and mourning and learns specifically what to say and do instead.

At the same time, this book provides the most important basics for conversations at the bedside or with mourners. Finally, the limits of consoling are also shown.

Klaus Schäfer is a Pallottine priest. He was a clinic chaplain in Karlsruhe and still is at the Regensburg University Clinic.



HEBREWS

Words for Christians in crisis

by **Dirk Visser**

Brevier, 223 p

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FLOATING ON GRACE

The Joy of Election

by **John van Eck**

Brevier, 128 p

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According to dr. Dirk Visser, Western Christianity is in a crisis of faith: decline in faith and church attendance, and apostasy from God.

A similar crisis occurred in the congregation of the Hebrews. The Bible book of Hebrews can therefore give us insight into our own situation and be a remedy to combat the ailment.

Hebrews may be a spicy book of the Bible, but it is also fascinating and has great depth. dr. Visser gives a careful and accessible explanation of the ways in which the Hebrews have dealt with the problem, keeping the current situation in mind. In a concluding chapter he summarizes the message of Hebrews for the church in the crisis.

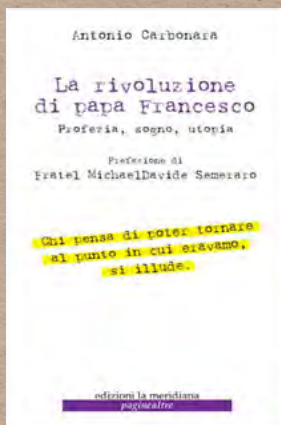
dr. **Dirk Visser** is an emeritus minister in the Christian Reformed Churches. He is also the author of *Is Jesus coming back soon?*

The election is high on the list of spurned theological themes. The doctrine not only gave rise to ecclesiastical strife, it also hindered many from believing. Most people are glad you don't hear much about it in the 21st century.

But theologian John van Eck thinks otherwise. Talking about predestination may be 'out', but for the good listener the theme is still 'in'. That is why, on the occasion of his 70th birthday, Van Eck compiled a collection on request with articles and sermons that he wrote about it in recent decades. They are a glowing testimony to the election, which shines a light on ordinary life.

'The most beautiful thing, that which deeply determines your life, the decisive, that happens to you.'

dr. **John van Eck** is a classicist and theologian. From 1981 to 2008 he served as an army chaplain. He published New Testament in the field of Reformed confession and exegesis.

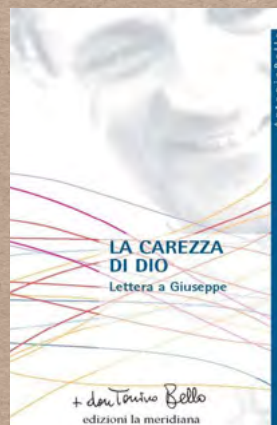


POPE FRANCIS' REVOLUTION Prophecy, Dream, Utopia

by **Antonio Carbonara**

La Meridiana, 82 p

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GOD'S CARESS

Sharing, Gratuitousness and
Service in the throwaway Society

by **Antonio Bello**

La Meridiana, 38 p

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The image of a Pope who, as the bishop of Rome, wants to be the parish priest of a community is indicative of the reformist scope in Bergoglio's proposal for ecclesiastical conversion.

It's a sort of an upside-down careerism: rather than aspiring to dominate, one should aspire to become servant; rather than aspiring to be the first, one should rush to be the last, on the steps of Christ's example.

It is a total revolution.

Antonio Carbonara, A former head teacher, professor of Italian and Latin literature and mayor of Fasano where he founded the Leisure University "S. Francesco d'Assisi", he is the author of technical articles, poems and short stories.

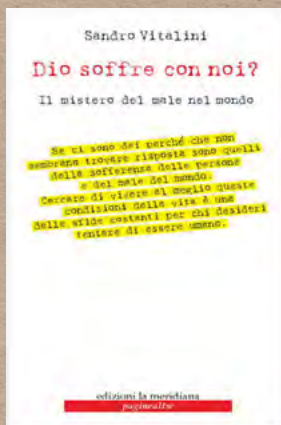
On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Saint Joseph's being declared patron of the universal Church, the Pope announced a special "Year of Saint Joseph", during which - as stated in the Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary, which grants the gift of special Indulgences - "may each believer follow his example and daily strengthen his own life in faith fulfilling God's will".

To guide and accompany our reflections, Francis published an apostolic letter illustrating one of St. Joseph's aspects: paternity. The document opens: "With the heart of a father: this is how Joseph loved Jesus, called in all four Gospels "The son of Joseph".

Hence the initiative to republish a large text by God's Servant Antonio Bello in which the figure of Saint Joseph is the narrative thread. This is the speech he made in Assisi on the occasion of the 42nd Youth Conference in 1987 on the theme: "Captured by the ephemeral?" This explains the subtitle "In the throwaway society", which is the background to the speech and, in some way, inspires its drafting.

(From the preface by Card. Marcello Semeraro)

Mons. **Antonio Bello** was bishop of Molfetta and National President of Pax Christi. His pastoral choice to radically opt for the last, and his commitment to the promotion of peace, nonviolence, justice and solidarity, make him among the most daring prophets of our days.



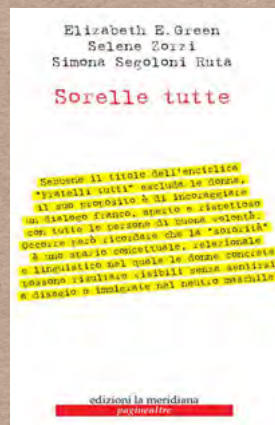
DOES GOD SUFFER WITH US?

The Mystery of Evil in the
World

by **Sandro Vitalini**

La Meridiana, 112 p

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ALL SISTERS

by **E.E. Green, S. Segoloni
Ruta, S. Zorz**

La Meridiana, 140 p

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The God of Abraham, Moses and Jesus continues to suffer with human beings, to be with them and lead them to a life without limits.

Starting from this existential trust, many people have found the strength to live with their limitations and sufferings and to hope. This faith and hope cannot be demonstrated forcefully nor on a theoretical and argumentative level only. Those who do have this hopeful belief may be called to bear witness with their own experience before those who are painfully experiencing its limits.

If on these reflections, readers shall feel that they ought to oppose every form of evil with the vital impulse of a love capable of a total self-gift, if necessary, then these pages will not have been written in vain.

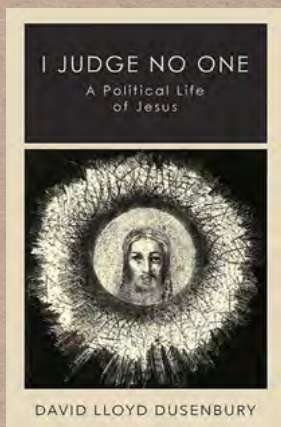
Sandro Vitalini was a professor of Dogmatic Theology and pro-vicar general of the Lugano Diocese. For several decades he carried out a widespread pastoral activity in favour of the cultural and spiritual formation of believers and non-believers. Covid-19 stole him from the earthly dimension of existence in 2020.

Pope Francis' Encyclical "All Brothers" deals with a plurality of topics in which the word "brothers", although meant to be inclusive of all, lends itself all too easily to the exclusion of many. There is, in fact, an important silence concerning women.

"Sorority" is not simply the equivalent and feminine parallel of fraternity. It is a word for breaking with a presumed "neutral and universal" world which actually is only masculine. Although overlooked in the ecclesial tradition, the rigid male-female gender binarism is something else altogether than being evenly witnessed in traditional spirituality and theology, Bringing the "sisters" to light even though in language only would mean influencing the patriarchal conception of relational and symbolic power relations between the sexes, where the feminine is defined and recognized only and exclusively by subtraction.

It is necessary to overcome - with truth and mercy - what divides us and keep alive "a fundamental sense of belonging", bearing in mind that conditions of injustice prevent peace.

Elizabeth E. Green carries out the pastoral ministry at the Christian Evangelical Baptist Union of Italy. She is a member of the Italian Women Theologians Coordination. **Simona Segoloni Ruta** is a layman (Perugia Diocese), and permanent teacher of Systematic Theology at the Assisi Theological Institute. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the ATI and vice-president of the Coordination of Italian Women Theologians. **Selene Zorz** is professor of Patrology at the Theological Institute of the Marches, and teacher of Philosophy, History and Human Sciences.



I JUDGE NO ONE

A Political Life of Jesus

by **David L. Dusenbury**

Hurst, 312 p

**FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN,
PORTUGUESE, RUSSIAN AND
SPANISH RIGHTS AVAILABLE**



THE INNOCENCE OF PONTIUS PILATE

How the Roman Trial of Jesus
Shaped History

by **David Lloyd Dusenbury**

Hurst, 456 p

**FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN,
PORTUGUESE, RUSSIAN AND
SPANISH RIGHTS AVAILABLE**

How can the narratives of the gospels, and their interpretation through the centuries, explain the highly political death of a deeply spiritual figure?

Why was Jesus, who said 'I judge no one', put to death for a political crime? Of course, this is a historical question - but it is not only historical. Jesus's life became a philosophical theme in the first centuries of our era, when 'pagan' and Christian philosophers clashed over the meaning of his sayings and the significance of his death. Modern philosophers, too, such as Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Nietzsche, have tried to retrace the arc of Jesus's life and death.

I Judge No One is a philosophical reading of the four memoirs, or 'gospels', that were fashioned by early Christ-believers and collected in the New Testament. It offers original ways of seeing a deeply enigmatic figure who calls himself the Son of Man.

Dusenbury suggests that Jesus offered his contemporaries a scandalous double claim. First, that human judgements are pervasive and deceptive; and second, that even divine laws can only be fulfilled in the human experience of love. Though his life led inexorably to a grim political death, what Jesus's sayings revealed - and still reveal - is that our highest desires lie beyond the political.

David Lloyd Dusenbury is a philosopher and historian of ideas, whose books include *The Innocence of Pontius Pilate* (also published by Hurst) and *Platonic Legislations*. He writes for *The Times Literary Supplement*, *La Lettura*, and others.

The gospels and ancient historians agree: Jesus was sentenced to death by Pontius Pilate, the Roman imperial prefect in Jerusalem. To this day, Christians of all churches confess that Jesus died 'under Pontius Pilate'. But what exactly does that mean?

Within decades of Jesus' death, Christians began suggesting that it was the Judaeen authorities who had crucified Jesus - a notion later echoed in the Qur'an. In the third century, one philosopher raised the notion that, although Pilate had condemned Jesus, he'd done so justly; this idea survives in one of the main strands of modern New Testament criticism. So what is the truth of the matter? And what is the history of that truth?

David Lloyd Dusenbury reveals Pilate's 'innocence' as not only a neglected theological question, but a recurring theme in the history of European political thought. He argues that Jesus' interrogation by Pilate, and Augustine of Hippo's North African sermon on that trial, led to the concept of secularity and the logic of tolerance emerging in early modern Europe. Without the Roman trial of Jesus, and the arguments over Pilate's innocence, the history of empire - from the first century to the twenty-first - would have been radically different.

David Lloyd Dusenbury is a research fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is the author of *Platonic Legislations: An Essay on Legal Critique in Ancient Greece* and *The Space of Time: A Sensualist Interpretation of Time in Augustine*.



THE
AFFECTED
Spaces of Mental Suffering in
the Catholic Church

by **Martin Flesch**

Echter, 232 p

**ITALIAN, SPANISH AND
PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION
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DOES THE
**CATHOLIC
CHURCH NEED
PRIESTS?**

A New Testament Scrutiny

by **Martin Ebner**

Echter, 110 p

**ITALIAN, SPANISH AND
PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION
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The analysis of abusive structures in the Catholic Church currently focuses mainly on sexual abuse committed by members of the institution. On closer inspection, however, it becomes apparent to an alarming extent that there is a whole spectrum of spaces of suffering that are expressed on a variety of levels and affect almost all areas of the church. So it's time for those affected to have their say.

In this book, victims of abuse describe their shame wounds, their often bottomless suffering and the obliteration of their emotional structures. It takes an analytical look at the personalities of the perpetrators as well as the victims themselves.

Dr. Med. **Martin Flesch** is a specialist in psychiatry and psychotherapy with a focus on forensic psychiatry.

The abolition of celibacy and the introduction of women's priesthood are the subject of intense debate in the Catholic Church.

However, one crucial but fundamental question is rarely asked: Does the Church need priests at all? Martin Ebner looks for answers to this question in the New Testament. He comes to the conclusion that there is no evidence of a priesthood as we know it.

Instead, an understanding of the community unhampered by hierarchies and power structures shows, which could point the way to a real new start for the church along the spirit of Jesus.

Martin Ebner is professor emeritus of New Testament Exegesis (Universities of Münster and Bonn).



GOD'S TENDERNESS

A Theology of Touch

by **Stefan Federbusch**

Echter, 104 p

**ITALIAN, SPANISH AND
PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION
RIGHTS AVAILABLE**



BACK TO PARADISE

About the Happiness of a Reconciled Life

by **Helmut Schlegel**

Echter, 92 p

**ITALIAN, SPANISH AND
PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION
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Every day we are physically, mentally and emotionally touched by people, things and events.

Benevolent touches contribute to the development of our humanity. They are also part of our faith and spirituality. Letting some of this God's tenderness become tangible is the task of all those who want to live the Gospel.

Current developments, however, raise questions about what healing pastoral care looks like.

The extent of sexualized violence denote a contact abuse. Distance regulations set because of corona pandemic, distancing meant as a form of charity cause a lack of encounters and closeness. This book wants to show how healing touch is possible.

Stefan Federbusch runs the Hofheim Franciscan center for silence and encounters. Chief editor of the magazine Franziskaner, he is a member of the provincial leadership and the Commission for Justice, Peace and the Preservation of Creation of the German Franciscan Province.

Why are people happy? Not because they have a lot of money and can afford everything.

The happy ones are people who live reconciled. Reconciled with themselves, with their fellow human beings, with their fate, with God. Reconciliation is an outstretched hand, a constructive debate, a tender hug, but also a hopeful struggle against the causes of injustice and the destruction of creation.

This book follows the biblical trail of good and bad luck, of guilt and forgiveness. It also answers the question: what helps us to reconcile with our fractures?

The return to paradise is not a promise of the "after" or a utopian fiction.

Despite all wounds and disturbances, reconciliation is a way to be happy in the here and now.

Helmut Schlegel OFM, former head of the in Hofheim/ Taunus Retreat and Education Center and former provincial of the Thuringian Franciscan Province, then head of the Center for Christian Meditation and Spirituality in Frankfurt-Bornheim. Since 2019 retreat guide in Hofheim. He is a book and radio author.



REQUIEM FOR MY FAITH

What I can safely bury and thereby gain life

by **Georg Schwikart**

Echter, 112 p

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SCIENCE OF LITURGY 1

Terms, history, concepts

by **Martin Klöckener** and **Reinhard Messner**

Pustet, 720 p

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"I knew by the age of 17 that the faith I had learned was not the only truth, however only now, 40 years later, I do grasp the dimension of what it means when some horizons of faith in fact close, but new ones open up instead."

As if on a hike with too heavy a backpack, Georg Schwikart parted with thoughts that were unnecessarily burdening him - like seeing doubt and belief as opposites, the concept of God's omnipotence, Bible and Christianity's truth claim ...

He gets even with these and such beliefs - and prepares a dignified burial for them.

The results gained are an intense life that courageously faces reality. A faith that doesn't console, but shows what really supports and makes us so strong. And experience: Those who free themselves from theological ballast can enjoy the lightness of God's closeness.

Georg Schwikart, dr. phil., born 1964, theologian and folklorist, is a pastor in Bonn, author of numerous books, member of the Association of German Writers and known for his radio broadcasts.

With the collaboration of leading representatives from the international professional world, this volume offers a comprehensive presentation of the term "liturgy" and shows the profile and understanding of Christian worship in its various denominations. Focus is on the broad processing of the theological discipline "Liturgy Studies". On the one hand, it is about its historical development. On the other hand, different language areas with their sometimes specific research history and their own theological accents are taken into account.

The importance and the development of liturgical science in the churches of the Reformation, the Anglican Church and the churches of the East are also considered. Such a complex overall presentation of the science of liturgy represents a novelty in theological research.

Martin Klöckener, dr. theol., is a professor for liturgical studies at the University of Fribourg/Switzerland.

Reinhard Messner, dr. theol., is a professor for liturgical studies at the University of Innsbruck.



EXPERIMENTS WITH GOD

A Crash Course in Theology

by **Hans-Joachim Höhn**

Echter, 168 p

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PORTUGUESE RIGHTS AVAILABLE



RESPONSIBLE COMPOSURE

Freedom in Times of Crisis

by **Thomas Holtbernd**

Echter, 152 p

ITALIAN, SPANISH AND
PORTUGUESE RIGHTS AVAILABLE

Trying out something, deviating from routines, going productively astray – all of this can lead to surprising success in the pursuit for knowledge. In contrast, a lack of desire and imagination have fatal consequences. They thwart the learning process.

This also applies to theology students. Often, they have lost their interest in studying because it mainly takes place in a sterile exegesis of text, on the well-trodden paths of dogmatics or in the dull rearview mirror of historical-critical Christianity research. There are certainly other methods of gaining knowledge that are less prone to boredom! Imagination and fun thinking can be awakened mainly with thought experiments.

In his basic “Experimental Theology” course, Hans-Joachim Höhn introduces the core topics of the Christian faith in a creative and instructive way.

Hans-Joachim Höhn is professor of Systematic Theology and of Philosophy of Religion at the University of Cologne.

The measures to restrict the corona pandemic have put the whole of society before some poignant questions: in which areas of freedom do we live, which restrictions or obligations do we follow, what is our trust in those in positions of power and in other fellow human beings like? Are we ready to accept unreasonable demands in favor of the common good, and precisely for the sake of the weaker?

Based on this, Thomas Holtbernd makes it clear in his analysis: if we want to survive future conflicts, pandemics and disasters with as little damage as possible, it will be necessary to develop an understanding of freedom that enables us to deal with ambivalences, unstructured requirements and great uncertainty to be able to get around.

How the Church can make its contribution is also a matter of the tasks involved in the transition from a morally oriented society of values to a problem-solving conflict society.

Thomas Holtbernd is a theologian and a psychologist; he worked in hospital chaplaincy, is a management consultant, and runs a psychological practice.



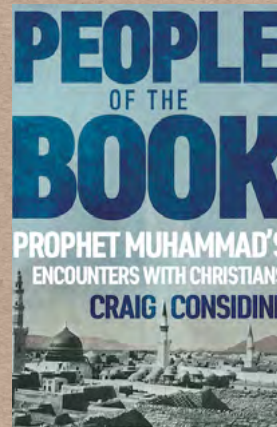
THE SPIRIT LEADS THE WAY

To an Attractive Church and a
Just Society

by **Marius Noorloos**

Brevier

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BOOK OF THE PEOPLE

Prophet Muhammad's
Encounters with Christians

by **Craig Considine**

Hurst, 232 p

**FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN,
PORTUGUESE, RUSSIAN AND
SPANISH RIGHTS AVAILABLE**

A concise but rich book on diversity in the Christian community.

The churches are losing more and more members, partly as a result of not dealing well with differences and disputes. There are also many problems in society due to a lack of solidarity and cooperation. That is why Rev. Marius Noorloos, who has earned his spurs with very successful books on missionary church building, wrote *The Spirit leads the way*, in which he answers the question of how the church can become attractive. How can the church become attractive and society righteous? To this end he develops ten steps that are necessary and possible.

Marius Noorloos is a community preacher & Church consultant in Gelderland, as well as the Dutch authority on Church development. His books on this theme have sold thousands of copies.

A considered study of Muslim - Christian coexistence and dialogue in the time of Prophet Muhammad.

The Christians that lived around the Arabian Peninsula during Muhammad's lifetime are shrouded in mystery. Some of the stories of the Prophet's interactions with them are based on legends and myths, while others are more authentic and plausible. But who exactly were these Christians? Why did Muhammad interact with them as he reportedly did? And what lessons can today's Christians and Muslims learn from these encounters?

Scholar Craig Considine, one of the most powerful global voices speaking in admiration of the prophet of Islam, provides answers to these questions. Through a careful study of works by historians and theologians, he highlights an idea central to Muhammad's vision: an inclusive Ummah, or Muslim nation, rooted in citizenship rights, interfaith dialogue, and freedom of conscience, religion and speech. In this unprecedented sociological analysis of one of history's most influential human beings, Considine offers groundbreaking insight that could redefine Christian and Muslim relations.

Craig Considine is a lecturer in sociology at Rice University and a global speaker, who has contributed to The New York Times, The Washington Post, CNN, the BBC, Foreign Policy and more. An American Catholic of Irish and Italian descent, he has written numerous books and articles on Christian-Muslim relations.



READING
GENESIS 1-11
TODAY

by **Klaus Bäumlin**

TVZ, 172 p

**ITALIAN, SPANISH AND
PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION
RIGHTS AVAILABLE**



**A BRIEF HISTORY
OF RELIGIOUS
INTERPRETATIONS
OF THE WORLD**
From the Beginnings until
Christianity

by **Helmut Fischer**

TVZ, 102 p

**ITALIAN, SPANISH AND
PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION
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“It is part of the deep wisdom of genesis that it depicts the good, the beautiful and the life-friendly, but it does not ignore or withhold the dark, chaotic, threatening and hostile to life. It is a manifesto of hope in a hopeless time with no positive perspectives, to encourage people not to give up on themselves and the future. ”

Creation, Adam and Eve in Paradise, Cain and Abel, the Flood and the Tower of Babel - these well-known stories make up the first eleven chapters of the Bible. Klaus Bäumlin provides an understandable and competent introduction to biblical prehistory.

Particular attention is paid to the literary genesis and compilation of the biblical texts. Bäumlin shows that prehistory does not simply tell of ancient things, but on the contrary encapsulates the human condition in narratives and is therefore not tied to a specific time. It is about what has characterized people in good and bad from the beginning until today: the ambivalences of enlightenment, freedom and progress, the preservation and threat to creation. Read in this way the biblical prehistory becomes a cipher for the present. And it testifies to a God who does not turn away, but remains connected with what he created.

Klaus Bäumlin, a theologian, was pastor at the Nydegg Church in Bern from 1991 to 2001. Previously editor of “Saemann” and “Reformatio”, after retiring he led courses at the adult education center in Bern for 14 years.

Since Homo Sapiens learned to use language, they can imagine things beyond the objective world and also interpret the world in a religious sense.

Helmut Fischer outlines the religious conceptions of the world that played a central role in our culture: from the first agricultural societies and the Sumerian-Babylonian culture, from the mystery cults and Greek philosophy to the monotheistic religion of ancient Israel, and on to the Hellenistic-Roman culture to the Appearance of Jesus and the Christian understanding of the world. What they all have in common is that they interpret the world according to a “subjective paradigm”: the fiction that a subject is intentionally active in or behind everything that happens.

But how can the central Christian content be conveyed to people today who no longer understand the world subjectively, but rather in the functional paradigm of science and technology? At the end of his impressive journey through European religious history, Fischer shows that the message of Jesus can be expressed in an understandable way as an encouragement to be fully human regardless of the understanding of the world - and will remain so.

Helmut Fischer, a theologian, was professor at the theological seminary in Friedberg / Hessen and for many years its director. He has been retired since 1991 and continues to work in teacher training, adult education and as an author and teacher of icon painting.

Eulama's Staff is looking forward to hearing from you!
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