

Inspirational, Grief, Theology of Suffering, Spiritual Direction...

Books by Ron Rolheiser

<http://www.ronrolheiser.com/books/>

The Meaning of Suffering (article)

Brian Pizzalato

Brian holds an M.A. in Theology and Christian Ministry with a Catechetics specialization and an M.A. in Philosophy from Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio

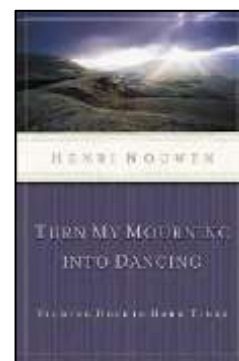
<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/sacraments/anointing-of-the-sick/st-paul-explains-the-meaning-of-suffering/>

Turn My Mourning Into Dancing

Henri J M Nouwen

Paperback (ISBN: 0-8499-4509-7)

In times of suffering, simplistic answers ring empty and hollow. But Henri Nouwen, beloved spiritual thinker and author, offers real comfort in the concrete truth of God's constancy. Nouwen suggests that by greeting life's pains with something other than despair, we can find surprising joy in our suffering. He suggests that the way through suffering is not in denial, Nouwen focuses not on how we can survive hard times but on how we can live fully in the midst of them and beyond.



In Memoriam

Henri J M Nouwen (Author), Michael O'Laughlin (Foreword)

Paperback – Deluxe Edition

When a mother or father dies, the mystery of life reveals itself to us. It is precisely in the moments when we are most human, most in touch with what binds us together, that we discover the hidden depth of life. - Henri J.M. Nouwen. In this intimate, deeply touching account of his mother's death, Henri Nouwen offers a gentle invitation to all those in grief to open themselves to a deeper sense of faith and trust in God. Writing with his characteristic simplicity and honesty, Nouwen shares his own experience of the pain, confusion, and doubt that all those in grief experience. He leads the reader to recognize that despite all the turmoil surrounding the death of a loved one, God is present.



Other books by Henri Nouwen

- 15 Days Of Prayer With Henri Nouwen (9781565483248) Paperback
- Jesus: A Gospel (9781626980143) Paperback
- Our Greatest Gift: A Meditation On Dying And Caring (9780061800269) Paperback
- The Living Reminder: Service And Prayer In Memory Of Jesus Christ (9780866839150) Paperback
- With Open Hands (9781594710643) Paperback
- Bread For The Journey: A Daybook Of Wisdom And Faith (9780060663766) Hardback
- Spiritual Direction: Wisdom For The Long Walk Of Faith (9780060754730) Hardback
- Making All Things New: An Invitation To The Spiritual Life (9780060663261) Hardback
- Creative Ministry (9780385126168) Paperback
- Only Necessary Thing: Living A Prayerful Life (9780824524937) Paperback
- Discernment (9780061686153) Hardback
- Here And Now (9780824519674) Hardback
- Against An Infinite Horizon: The Finger Of God In Our Everyday Lives (9780824519650) Paperback
- Holy Longing (9780385494199) Paperback
- Befriending Death: Henri Nouwen And A Spirituality Of Dying (9781570758409) Paperback
- Discernment: Reading The Signs Of Daily Life (9780281071449) Paperback
- Finding My Way Home: Pathways To Life And The Spirit (9780232524352) Paperback
- Spiritual Formation: Following The Movements Of The Spirit (9780281064212) Paperback

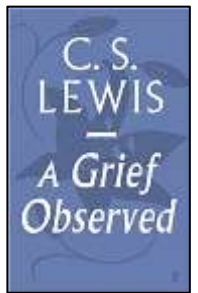
More books by Henri Nouwen go to http://www.goodreads.com/author/list/4837.Henri_J_M_Nouwen

A Grief Observed

CS Lewis

(ISBN: 9780571290680; ISBN10: 0-06-065238-1) Paperback

C. S. Lewis's honest reflection on the fundamental issues of life, death, and faith in the midst of loss. Drawing from his own life experiences.



The Problem of Pain

CS Lewis

(ISBN: 0-06-065296-9) Paperback

C.S. Lewis shares his hope and wisdom to help heal a world hungering for a true understanding of human nature.

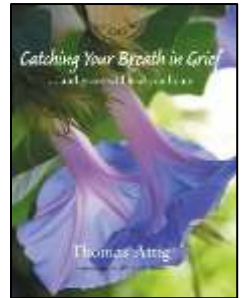
- For further book listing by C. S. Lewis go to <http://www.cslewis.com/us/>

Catching Your Breath in Grief...and grace will lead you home

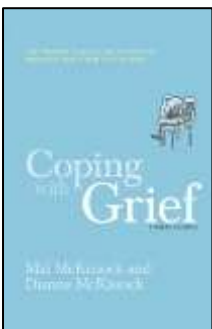
Thomas Attig

(ISBN:978-0-9880760-1-3)

Thomas Attig captures the best of what he has learned in over forty years of reflection on loss and grief. He gently guides you in seeking hopeful paths to walk in the next chapters of your own life story.



Coping with Grief



Mal McKissock & Dianne McKissock

Paperback (ISBN: 0-7333-0438-9)

A great resource and practical support for anyone! This best-selling book offers sensitive and practical advice on how to deal with the grieving process, from coping with the funeral to managing anniversaries and special dates. Suitable for both the bereaved and their support team, it explains what to expect emotionally, psychologically and practically from the first day through the first year, as well as outlining the physical and emotional reactions to grief, why men and women react differently, how children deal with grief and some of the long-

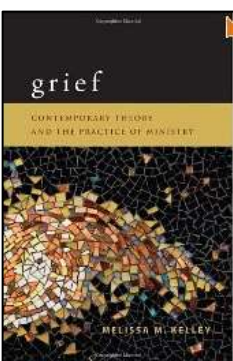
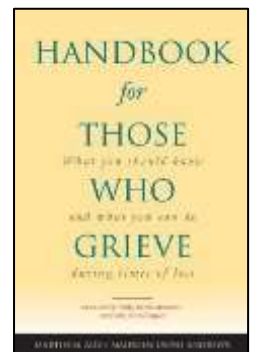
term consequences of bereavement

Handbook for Those Who Grieve: what you should know and what you can do during times of loss

Martin M Auz & Maureen Lyons Andrews

Paperback (ISBN: 0-8294-1793-1)

A resource for family, friends, ministers, caregivers and colleagues providing practical information for people who are grieving and the people who support them.



Grief: Contemporary Theory and the Practice of Ministry

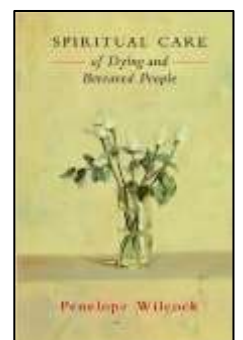
Melissa M Kelly

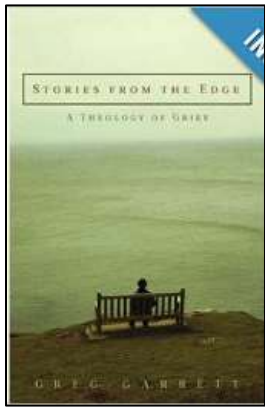
Cutting Edge; Beautiful; Highly Inspirational! Kelley's last statement captures the heart of the book: "God, the Master Artist, is constantly at work in all our lives, bringing hope out of brokenness, in love. All will be well" (141). The artist reference tied together each chapter's summary using her ongoing image of mosaic being a metaphor for grief, i.e. each person suffers uniquely (each mosaic is different)...

Spiritual Care of Dying and Bereaved People

Penelope Wilcock

When the people who are with us approach death, there is a sense of awe, of expectancy, the solemnity of a great moment approaching. This book provides an honest look at the spiritual care of dying and bereaved people, bringing a depth of experience that sets out to enrich and inspire.

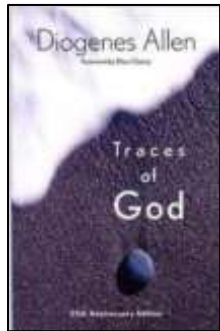




Stories from the Edge: A Theology of Grief Paperback

Greg Garrett

Where is God in the midst of suffering? How do people find strength and comfort in times of terrible adversity? Award-winning writer Greg Garrett addresses these questions and others as he helps readers grapple with the question of where God can be found in times of tragedy. He explores the theological themes of biblical stories and American myths and discusses how these stories have shaped our beliefs about God. He further examines what these foundational narratives reveal about our understanding of God, how they inform how we live our lives, and how we experience God's presence in the midst of grief and suffering. This well-written volume is engaging reading for clergy, chaplains, pastoral counsellors, and all who must find the courage and faith to support individuals and families in times of suffering and grief.



Traces of God

Diogenes Allen (Author), Ellen Charry (Foreword)

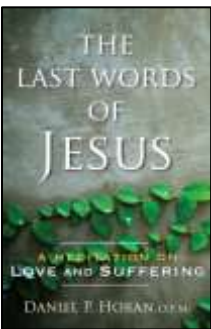
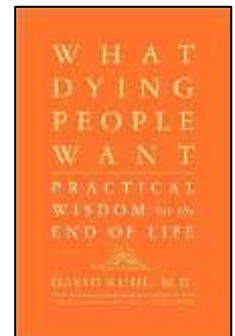
Writing for a wide popular audience, philosopher Diogenes Allen examines the problem of human suffering and helps us to discover "traces of God" in the world, even as we suffer from physical pain and loss, natural disaster, and human evil. Written for beginners in the spiritual life, *Traces of God* describes how we can prepare ourselves for the inevitable sufferings of life. Allen explores the human pilgrimage through adversity and takes a close look at Simone Weil's studies of affliction.

What Dying People Want: practical wisdom for the end of life

David Kuhl MD

Paperback (ISBN: 0-7333-1520-8)

An all-encompassing guide for people with terminal illness and those who know someone who is dying.



The Last Words Of Jesus: A Meditation On Love And Suffering

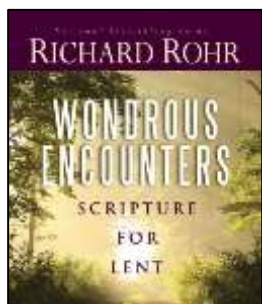
Daniel P. Horan, O.F.M.

Publisher: Franciscan Media (2013) (ISBN: 9781616364090)

Much has been written on the last words of Jesus, the traditional phrases taken from Scripture that depict the final moments of Jesus's life as he dies on the cross. In this new take on the last words, author Dan Horan brings a fresh perspective to this time-honoured meditation as he challenges readers to look at their lives through the lens of Jesus's suffering and death. Yet interlaced with suffering, the focus throughout is on the immense love of God for human beings, shown in the gift of Jesus, God made flesh.

In his preface, Horan writes: "In a world that remains irrevocably shaped by the suffering of the human condition, the misunderstanding between groups and cultures symbolized by the horrific events of September 11, we need to hear Christ's words anew." He gives us a different look into these words by drawing on works by other noted scholars and spiritual writers, then fashioning a view of these phrases that's contemporary and thought-provoking. An ideal Lenten companion, especially during Holy Week, *The Last Words of Jesus* will also serve as a useful meditation throughout the year on the deep love Jesus bore for us in taking on the human condition.

<https://shop.franciscanmedia.org/products/the-last-words-of-jesus-a-meditation-on-love-and-suffering?variant=3846445377>



Wondrous Encounters: Scripture For Lent

Richard Rohr — Book 143 pgs.

Publisher: Franciscan Media (2010)

ISBN: 9780867169874

Rohr's meditations on the daily readings of Lent are not for the sake of mere information, or even for academia (although the author hopes it will satisfy both), but

for the sake of our transformation into our original "image and likeness," which is the very image of God. What always and finally matters for all of us is *encounter!*

Father Rohr begins each meditation with a single title or phrase that sums up the point. Then he offers the meditation followed by key passages from the readings. He ends each meditation with a Starter Prayer that invites you to self-disclosure and to enter the wondrous divine dialogue with clarity, insight—and holy desire! "There are two moments that matter. One is when you know that your one and only life is absolutely valuable and alive. The other is when you know your life, as presently lived, is entirely pointless and empty. You need both of them to keep you going in the right direction. Lent is about both. The first such moment gives you energy and joy by connecting you with your ultimate Source and Ground. The second gives you limits and boundaries, and a proper humility, so you keep seeking the Source and Ground and not just your small self."—From the Introduction. <https://shop.franciscanmedia.org/products/wondrous-encounters-scripture-for-lent>

Other...

Conscience in Conflict: How to Make Moral Choices

Kenneth R. Overberg SJ

This book deals with the questions of authority, magisterium, infallibility and conscience in a balanced and respectful way."—from the Foreword by Bishop William A. Hughes

"What ought we to do?" In *Conscience and Conflict: How to Make Moral Choices*, Jesuit theologian Kenneth Overberg tackles this question and the gray area surrounding ethical dilemmas by providing a readable and up-to-date process for coming to decisions about crucial contemporary personal and social questions. This third edition includes discussion of the sex abuse scandal in the Catholic church, homosexuality, stem cell research, globalization, terrorism and preemptive war. Overberg also addresses euthanasia, artificial conception and contraception, managed care and other tough issues that confront us as individuals and as global communities. *Kenneth is professor of theology at Xavier University, Cincinnati. He holds a Ph.D. in social ethics from the University of Southern California and is the author of numerous articles and books.*

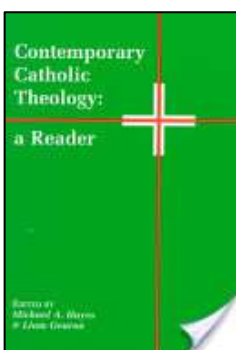
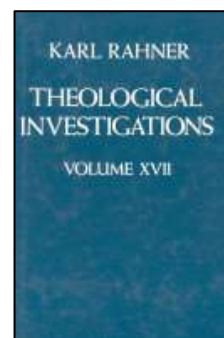


Theological Investigations

Karl Rahner

Helicon Press, 1981 - Religion - 272 pages

A collection of essays, writings, and talks focus on the Holy Spirit and its role in the Church and theology and bring to light such concerns as the experience of grace, anonymous and explicit faith, and acceptance of faith in the truth of God.



Contemporary Catholic Theology: A Reader

Michael A. Hayes, Liam Gearon

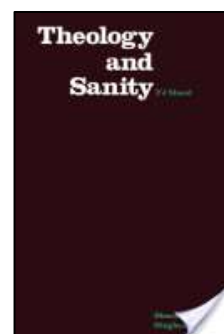
The contents of this volume offer the reader a broad insight into Catholic theology. Established as an indispensable introduction to six areas of study: The Old Testament, The New Testament, The Person of Jesus, The Church, Christian Morality, and The Sacraments. This collection provides key texts from some of the most distinguished writers in Catholic theology today. Contributors include: Philippe BTguerie and Claude Duchesneau, Christopher Butler, Raymond Brown, S.S., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., Gideon Goosen and Margaret Tomlinson, John H. Hayes, Monika Hellwig, Aidan Kavanagh

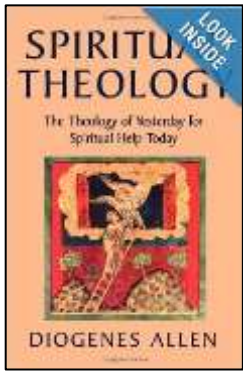
Theology & Sanity

Frank J. Sheed

Continuum, 11/01/1978 - Religion - 333 pages

Frank Sheed has revised and updated his masterpiece. *Theology and Sanity* in its new form retains all the fire and clarity of the original, is still profoundly committed to - and itself a fine example of - the rationality of Christian faith; but now takes full account of the many changes which have taken place in the Church in the thirty-five years since the first edition was published.





Spiritual Theology: The Theology of Yesterday for Spiritual Help Today

Diogenes Allen (Author)

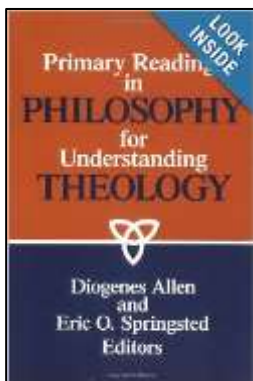
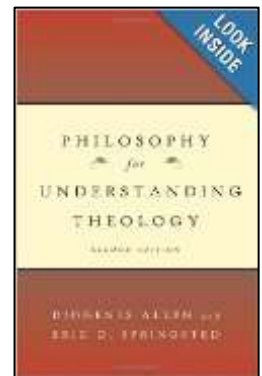
Often spirituality today is isolated from church teaching and doctrine, as in Joseph Campbell's treatment of myth and the many forms of New Age theologies, but doctrine apart from the life of prayer is abstract and sterile. In *Spiritual Theology* Allen turns to the great teachers of the past—the church fathers, Augustine, Maximus the Confessor, Bonaventure, Hugh of St. Victor, Calvin and Luther, George Herbert—to recover a spirituality that is rich with the doctrines and disciplines of theology.

Allen covers the great questions of the spiritual life: what is the Christian goal? what leads us toward that goal, and what hinders us? what is conversion? how can we discern our progress in the spiritual life? what are the fruits of the Spirit? A second purpose of the book is to introduce readers to the disciplines and texts of the threefold way, found in the eastern church from the fourth century on. Allen writes simply and clearly of the active life and the development of virtue, and the contemplative life, which includes coming to know God through the Book of Nature and the Book of Scripture as well as directly, face to face, which is the domain of mystical theology.

Philosophy for Understanding Theology, Second Edition

Diogenes Allen (Author), Eric O. Springsted (Author)

Philosophy for Understanding Theology has become the classic text for exploring the relationship between philosophy and Christian theology. This new edition adds chapters on postmodernism and questions of the self and the good to bring the book up to date with current scholarship. It introduces students to the influence that key philosophers and philosophical movements through the centuries have had on shaping Christian theology in both its understandings and forms of expression.



Primary Readings in Philosophy for Understanding Theology

Diogenes Allen (Editor), Eric O. Springsted (Editor)

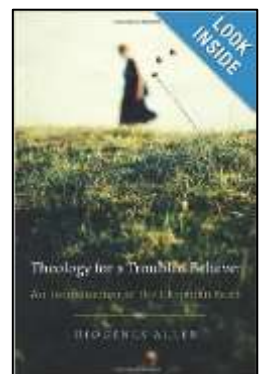
Knowledge of key philosophic terms or concepts is vital to the understanding of many issues in Christian theology. Diogenes Allen's book *Philosophy for Understanding Theology* explores such terms and concepts and their relationship to theology. This new anthology, edited by Allen and Eric Springsted, provides primary texts undergirding that earlier work. The writings included here deal with philosophical issues crucial to the understanding of theology and include responses to those questions from Plato to the present. Whether used alone or as a companion volume, this new reader is a valuable

resource for theological studies.

Theology for a Troubled Believer: An Introduction to the Christian Faith

Diogenes Allen (Author)

The reasons people are attracted to Christianity and its teachings are many and varied. In this book, Allen hopes "to supply more of the information (pieces of the puzzle) that are needed if a person is to make sense of the Christian understanding of God and our life in the universe." More philosopher than theologian, Allen writes for "a troubled believer," dealing with issues and questions that emerge during Christians' daily lives and in the course of contemplating Christian faith.



Articles and reflections by Ron Rolheiser OMI

Website:

<http://www.ronrolheiser.com>

The Problem of Suffering and Evil by Ron Rolheiser OMI

<http://www.ronrolheiser.com/columnarchive/?id=426>

2008-09-14

How can there be an all-loving and an all-powerful God if there is so much suffering and evil in our world?

Perhaps that is the most difficult religious question of all time. Why does God not act in the face of suffering? Why do bad things happen with seemingly no response from God? In a famous book, **After Auschwitz**, Richard Rubenstein asks how it is even possible for a Jew to believe in God after the holocaust. How can we believe in God in the face of God's seeming inaction in the face of suffering and evil?

There have been countless attempts to answer this question, not least inside the tortured experience of those who are suffering. There have also been many attempts at offering some kind of acceptable theoretical explanation.

For example, Harold Kushner (**When Bad Things Happen to Good People**), writing as a Jewish rabbi, tries to answer the question by defending God's love and goodness at the expense of his power. Essentially, God would help us if He could, Kushner believes, but God isn't all-powerful. Innocent suffering exists not because God cannot stop it.

Inside of Christian theology, Peter Kreeft, C.S. Lewis, and Teilhard de Chardin, among others, have written insightful books on this question. Christians believe that what is ultimately at stake is human freedom and God's respect for it. God gives us freedom and (unlike most everyone else) refuses to violate it, even when it would seem beneficial to do so. That leaves us in a lot of pain at times, but, as Jesus reveals, God is not so much a rescuing God as a redeeming one. God does not protect us from pain, but instead enters it and ultimately redeems it. That might sound simplistic in the face of real death and evil, but it is not. We see a powerful illustration of this in Jesus' reaction to the death of Lazarus. In essence, this is how the Gospels tell that story:

The sisters of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, send a message to Jesus telling him that "the man you love" is gravely ill. Curiously though Jesus does not immediately rush off to see Lazarus. Instead he stays where he is for two more days, until Lazarus is dead, and then sets off to see him. When he arrives near the house, he is met by Martha who says to him: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died!" Basically her question is: "Where were you? Why didn't you come and heal him?" Jesus does not answer her question but instead assures her that Lazarus will live in some deeper way.

Martha then goes and calls her sister, Mary. When Mary arrives she repeats the identical words to Jesus that Martha had spoken: "If you had been here my brother would not have died!" However, coming out of Mary's mouth, these words mean something else, something deeper. Mary is asking the universal, timeless question about suffering and God's seeming absence. Her query ("Where were you when my brother died?") asks that question for everyone: Where is God when innocent people suffer? Where was God during the holocaust? Where is God when anyone's brother dies? But, curiously, Jesus does not engage the question in theory; instead he becomes distressed and asks: "Where have you put him?" And when they offer to show him, he begins to weep. His answer to suffering: He enters into peoples' helplessness and pain. Afterwards, he raises Lazarus from the dead.

And what we see here will occur in the same way between Jesus and his Father. The Father does not save Jesus from death on the cross even when he is jeered and mocked there. Instead the Father allows him to die on the cross and then raises him up afterwards.

The lesson in both these deaths and raisings might be put this way: The God we believe in doesn't necessarily intervene and rescue us from suffering and death (although we are invited to pray for that). Instead he redeems our suffering afterwards.

God's seeming indifference to suffering is not so much a mystery that leaves the mind befuddled as a mystery that makes sense only if you give yourself over in a certain level of trust. Forgiveness and faith work the same. You have to roll the dice in trust. Nothing else can give you an answer.

And I do not say this glibly. I know too many people who have been hurt, brutally and unfairly, in ways that make it difficult for them to accept that there is an all-powerful God who cares.

But sometimes the only answer to the question of suffering and evil is the one Jesus gave to Mary and Martha - shared helplessness, shared distress, and shared tears, with no attempt to try to explain God's seeming absence, but rather a trusting that, because God is all-loving and all-powerful, in the end all will be well and our pain will someday be redeemed in God's embrace.