

A Franciscan's Bookshelf

Some Books for Personal and Fraternal
Ongoing Formation



Offered by Bob Brill, OFS

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Sapulpa, OK

The Writings of Francis and Clare



- ❧ “Francis and Clare: the Complete Works”
 - ❧ Translation and notes by Regis J. Armstrong, OFM CAP and Ignatius C. Brady, OFM
- ❧ This is part of The Classics of Western Spirituality series published by Paulist Press
 - ❧ This is an excellent series that translates and offers explanatory notes on the works of Catholic Saints who have made significant contributions to the spiritual and contemplative life of the Church

The Early Biographies



- ❧ “The [First] Life of Saint Francis”
 - ❧ By Thomas of Celano, 1229, at the request of Pope Gregory IX
- ❧ “The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul”
 - ❧ By Thomas of Celano, 1247, at the request of the General Minister of the Franciscan Order
- ❧ Both of these are found in the “The Francis Trilogy”, New City Press, translation and notes by Regis Armstrong, OFM CAP

The Early Biographies Cont'd



- ❧ “The Life of Saint Francis”, by Saint Bonaventure, commissioned by the General Chapter of Narbonne in 1260.
- ❧ Found in The Classics of Western Spirituality series under the name “Bonaventure”, translation and notes by Ewert Cousins, preface by Ignatius Brady, OFM

The Early Hagiographies



- ❧ “The Legend of the Three Companions”
- ❧ “The Legend of Perugia”
- ❧ “The Little Flowers of Saint Francis”
- ❧ “Sacrum Commercium” (Francis and His Lady Poverty)
- ❧ All of these can be found along with the three early biographies in “St. Francis of Assisi Omnibus of Sources”, Franciscan Herald Press

The Early Theologians



☞ Saint Bonaventure 1217-1274

- ☞ Elected 7th Minister General in 1257 and became cardinal bishop of Albano in 1273
- ☞ “The Soul’s Journey into God” (aka “The Itinerarium”) found in “Bonaventure”, in The Classics of Western Spirituality series, translation and notes by Ewert Cousins, preface by Ignatius Brady, OFM
- ☞ For an introduction to the life and theology of St. Bonaventure see “Simply Bonaventure: An Introduction to His Life, Thought and Teaching”, by Ilia Delio, OSF

The Early Theologians Cont'd



- ✧ Duns Scotus circa 1266 - 1308
- ✧ For a survey of his theological works see “Duns Scotus Philosophical Writings”, translated and notes by Allan Wolter, OFM
- ✧ For a more gentle introduction to the “Subtle Doctor” see “Scotus of Dunces: An Introduction to the Subtle Doctor”, by Mary Beth Ingham with preface by Allan Wolter, OFM

Modern Biographies



- ❧ “St. Francis of Assisi: A Biography”, by Fr. Omer Englebert, 1965
- ❧ “Francis of Assisi: A New Biography”, by Augustine Thompson OP, 2012
- ❧ “Francis of Assisi”, by Arnaldo Fortini, translated by Helen Moak, first published 1959. A very in depth biography.
- ❧ “St. Francis of Assisi”, by Raoul Manselli, translated by Paul Duggan, 1981

Saint Clare of Assisi



- ❧ “Francis and Clare: the Complete Works”
 - ❧ Translation and notes by Regis J. Armstrong, OFM CAP and Ignatius C. Brady, OFM
- ❧ “Clare of Assisi-The Lady: Early Documents”
 - ❧ Translation and notes by Regis J. Armstrong, OFM CAP
- ❧ Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love”, by Ilila Delio, OFS, 2007
- ❧ “St Clare of Assisi: Light from the Cloister”, by Bret Thoman, OFS, 2017

Topics



❧ History of the Franciscans

❧ “Franciscan History: The Three Orders of St. Francis of Assisi”, by Fr. Lazaro Iriarte de Aspurz OFM CAP, 1979

❧ Francis and Islam

❧ “The Saint and the Sultan”, by Paul Moses, 2009

❧ “Francis and Islam”, by J. Hoeberichts, 1997-very scholarly

❧ Brother Elias of Cortona

❧ “The Enthusiast: How the Best Friend of Francis of Assisi Almost Destroyed What He Started”, by Jon Sweeney, 2016- a light read

Contemporary Meditations of the Life of St. Francis



- ❧ “The Journey and the Dream”, by Fr. Murray Bodo OFM, 1988
- ❧ “To Live as Francis Lived: A Guide for Secular Franciscans”, by Leonard Foley OFM, 2000
- ❧ “Francis and Jesus”, by Fr. Murray Bodo OFM
- ❧ “Eager to Love: the Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi”, by Fr. Richard Rohr OFM, 2014

Francis Inspired Novels



- ❧ “The Passionate Troubadour”, by Ed Hays
- ❧ “The Wisdom of the Poor One of Assisi, by Eloi Leclerc
- ❧ “Chasing Francis: A Pilgrim's Tale” by Ian Cron
- ❧ “God’s Pauper, St Francis of Assisi”, by Nikos Kazantzakis

Contemporary Meditations on the Contemplative Life from a Franciscan POV



- ☞ “The Franciscan Heart of Thomas Merton”, by Fr. Dan Horan OFM, 2014
- ☞ “Falling Upward: A Spirituality of the Two Halves of Life”, by Fr. Richard Rohr OFM, 2011
- ☞ “The Humility of God: A Franciscan Perspective”, by Ilia Delio, OSF, 2005

Final Thoughts



- ❧ St. Bonaventure in “The Soul’s Journey Into God” likens the journey to an ascent up a 6 rung ladder
 - ❧ The first two rungs begin with knowledge of creation
 - ❧ The third and fourth to knowledge of ourselves
 - ❧ The fifth and sixth to knowledge of God’s Being and Goodness
- ❧ Exercising our minds with the help of good books, of which these slides are a humble offering, can help us with the journey.
- ❧ But, when we reach where the ladder leads he in essence kicks it away:

Final Thoughts



“...leave behind your senses and intellectual activities,
sensible and invisible things,
all nonbeing and being,
and in this state of unknowing be restored,
in so far as is possible, to unity with him
who is above all essence and knowledge
..if you wish to know how these things come about,
ask grace not instruction,
desire not understanding,
the groaning of prayer not diligent reading,
the spouse not the teacher,
God not man,
darkness not clarity,
not light but the fire
that totally inflames and carries us into God.

St. Bonaventure from “The Soul’s Journey Into God”, chapter 7
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