



Bibliographies for Theology

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Spirituality of the Early Church

1. Spirituality of the Church Fathers: Studies
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1. SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHURCH FATHERS: STUDIES

Note: The Church Fathers rarely discuss “spirituality” separate from biblical interpretation or doctrinal debate or liturgical mystagogy. For them, Christian theology was all of a piece. The split between doctrine (or exegesis) and spirituality is essentially a medieval invention—whatever one thinks of the result. Nonetheless, one can study the Fathers’ “spirituality.” The books listed below are limited to studies of spirituality and mysticism; see the “Bibliographies of Early Christianity & Patristic Theology” for a more complete listing of books on the Church Fathers, their biographies, theological writings, and historical context.

Bernard McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century*, Vol. 1 of *The Presence of God* (New York: Crossroad, 1991). This is the first volume of a major multi-volume history of Christian mysticism. This is especially good on Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and Pseudo-Dionysius.

John Peter Kenney, *The Mysticism of Saint Augustine: Rereading the Confessions* (New York: Routledge, 2005). An important revisionist interpretation of Augustine's mysticism. Studies of Augustine as mystic have tended to miss the mark largely because of the tendency of modern scholars to impose modern psychological understandings of mysticism onto ancient authors in general and Augustine in particular. Kenney

- brilliantly avoids such pitfalls and brings his special expertise on Plotinus and Neoplatonist thought to show how unique Augustine's approach was: that for Augustine contemplation was not an end in itself.
- Benjamin P. Blosser, Benjamin P., *Become Like the Angels: Origen's Doctrine of the Soul* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012).
- David Brakke, *Athanasius and Asceticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1998).
- Sebastian Brock, *The Luminous Eye: The Spiritual Vision of Ephrem the Syrian*, Cistercian Studies 124 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publication, 1992).
- Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).
- Elizabeth A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).
- Olivier Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism: Text & Commentary*, trans. Theodore Berkeley (New York: New City Press, 1995).
- Augustine Holmes, *A Life Pleasing to God: The Spirituality of the Rules of St. Basil*, Cistercian Studies 189 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2000).
- John Peter Kenney, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity: A Study in Augustine*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014) hardcover, \$80. NEW.
- J. Christopher King, *Origen on the Song of Songs as the Spirit of Scripture: The Bridegroom's Perfect Marriage-Song*, Oxford Theological Monographs (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
- Dennis E. Trout, *Paulinus of Nola: Life, Letters, and Poems*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 27 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).
- Frederick Van Fleteren, Joseph C. Schnaubelt, Joseph Reino, ed., *Augustine: Mystic and Mystagogue*, Collectanea Augustiniana (New York: Peter Lang, 1994).

2. SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHURCH FATHERS: CLASSIC TEXTS

- Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, Oxford World's Classics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). The *Confessions* is Augustine's long meditation on his life and conversion (Bk. 1-9) on his interior life at the time he is writing (Bk. 10) and on the opening verses of Genesis (Bk. 11-13). One of the masterpieces of Western literature. Another useful translation is by Maria Boulding (New City Press, 1998).
- Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses*, Classics of Western Spirituality, trans. Everett Ferguson & Abraham J. Malherbe (New York: Paulist Press, 1978). Gregory was not only one of the architects of Trinitarian doctrine but was also a mystic. Here he allegorizes the Exodus story, treating it as the story of the journey of the soul to God. Whatever

one thinks of it as biblical interpretation, it is a brilliant analysis of the mystical journey to God.

Origen, *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, Classics of Western Spirituality, trans. Rowan A. Greer (New York: Paulist Press, 1979). A fine selection of Origen's works: it includes *On First Principles*, Book IV—his classic defense of allegorical interpretation and a summary of his controversial views on Trinity; it also has Origen's *On Prayer*, the earliest Christian treatise on prayer—and one of the most influential; while essentially a commentary on the Lord's Prayer, this work also addresses the problem of why one should pray even though God already knows what we need.

Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Paradise*, trans. Sebastian Brock (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990).

Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Soul & the Resurrection*, trans. Catherine P. Roth (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1993).

Peter Gilbert, trans., *On God and Man: The Theological Poetry of St. Gregory of Nazianzus* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001).

Alistair Stewart-Sykes, trans., *Tertullian, Cyprian, and Origen on the Lord's Prayer* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004).

Anna Silvas, ed., *The Asketikon of St. Basil the Great*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). A critical edition of Basil's rules.

3. THE DESERT FATHERS & EARLY MONASTICISM: STUDIES

William Harmless, *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). 4th-century Christians moved in droves to the deserts of Egypt and, in the famous words of Saint Athanasius, made the desert a city. In so doing, they captured the imagination of the ancient world. They forged techniques of prayer and asceticism, of discipleship and spiritual direction, that have remained central to Christianity ever since. Seeking to map the soul's long journey to God and plot out the subtle vagaries of the human heart, they created and inspired texts that became classics of Western spirituality. These Desert Christians were also brilliant storytellers, some of Christianity's finest. This book introduces the key texts of early monasticism: Athanasius' *Life of Antony*, the *Lives of Pachomius*, the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, the writings of Evagrius, Palladius, and John Cassian. Along the way, readers are introduced to path-breaking discoveries—to new texts and recent archeological finds—that have revolutionized contemporary scholarship on monastic origins. Included are fascinating snippets from papyri and from little-known Coptic, Syriac, and Ethiopic texts. Interspersed in each chapter are illustrations, maps, and diagrams that help readers sort through the key texts and the richly-textured world of early monasticism.

Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Cassian probably did more than anyone else to translate the desert experience for the West. Following his teacher, Evagrius Ponticus, he stressed wordless prayer and the

- mystical journey of the soul. St. Benedict, in his *Rule*, would make Cassian's memoirs required reading in all his monasteries. This is a superb of Cassian's spirituality.
- Hilarion Alfeyev, *The Spiritual World of Isaac the Syrian*, Cistercian Studies 175 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2001).
- John Binns, *Ascetics and Ambassadors of Christ: the Monasteries of Palestine, 314-631*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- David Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).
- Gabriel Bunge, *Despondency: The Spiritual Teaching of Evagrius of Pontus* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2012).
- Gabriel Bunge, *Dragon's Wine and Angel's Bread: The Teaching of Evagrius Ponticus on Anger*, trans. Anthony P. Gythiel (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2010) paperback, \$16.
- Douglas Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
- Daniel Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 33 (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2002).
- Augustine Casiday, *Reconstructing the Theology of Evagrius Ponticus: Beyond Heresy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) hardcover, \$99. NEW.
- Derwas Chitty, *The Desert A City* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1966).
- Marilyn Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000). A recent survey that charts movements in Late Antiquity and shows how they coalesce in the early Middle Ages.
- Susanna Elm, *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*, Oxford Classical Monographs (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- James E. Goehring, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999).
- Graham E. Gould, *The Desert Fathers on Monastic Community*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). See especially the superb introductory chapter.
- Antoine Guillaumont, *Aux origines du monachisme chrétien: Pour une phénoménologie du monachisme*, Spiritualité orientale 30 (Bégrolles-en-Mauges: Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1979).
- Antoine Guillaumont, "L'enseignement spirituel des moines d'Égypte: La formation d'une tradition," reprinted in *Études sur la spiritualité de l'Orient chrétien*, Spiritualité orientale 66 (Bégrolles-en-Mauges, France: Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1996) 81-92. A brilliant introduction.
- William Harmless, "Remembering Poemen Remembering: The Desert Fathers & the Spirituality of Memory," *Church History* (2000) 483-518.

- William Harmless & Raymond R. Fitzgerald, "The Sapphire Light of the Mind: The *Skemmata* of Evagrius Ponticus," *Theological Studies* 62 (2001) 493-529.
- Peter Hatlie, *The Monks and Monasteries of Constantinople, ca. 350-850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
- Irénée Hausherr, *Spiritual Direction in the Early Christian East*, CS 116, trans. Anthony P. Gythiel (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1990; original French edition, 1955).
- Irénée Hausherr, *Penthos: the Doctrine of Compunction in the Christian East*, trans. Anselm Hufstader, Cistercian Studies 53 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1982). A classic.
- Jennifer L. Hevelone-Harper, *Disciples of the Desert: Monks, Laity, and Spiritual Authority in Sixth-Century Gaza* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005). A helpful study of Barsanuphius & John of Gaza, their world and their approach to spiritual direction.
- Christopher J. Kelly, *Cassian's Conferences: Scriptural Interpretation and the Monastic Ideal*, New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology, and Biblical Studies (Ashgate, 2012).
- Rebecca Krawiec, *Shenoute and the Women of the White Monastery: Egyptian Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- Harriet A. Luckman & Linda Kulzer, eds., *Purity of Heart in Early Ascetic and Monastic Literature* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999).
- Philip Rousseau, *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth Century Egypt*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 6 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).
- Andrea Sterk, *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).
- Columba Stewart, "Imageless Prayer and the Theological Vision of Evagrius Ponticus," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 9 (2001) 173-204.
- Columba Stewart, "The Monastic Journey According to John Cassian," in Everett Ferguson, *Forms of Devotion: Conversion, Worship, Spirituality, and Asceticism* (New York: Garland, 1999) 311-322.
- Benedicta Ward, "Traditions of Spiritual Guidance: Spiritual Direction in the Desert Fathers," *Signs and Wonders: Saints, Miracles, and Prayers from the 4th Century to the 14th* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1992).

4. THE DESERT FATHERS & EARLY MONASTICISM: CLASSIC TEXTS

- Athanasius, *The Life of Anthony and the Letter to Marcellinus*, Classics of Western Spirituality, trans. Robert C. Gregg (New York: Paulist Press, 1980). Athanasius' *Life of Antony* was one of the earliest Christian best-sellers and was responsible for popularizing the

desert ideal throughout the ancient world; it would go on to shape all later lives of the saints.

The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection [= *Apophthegmata Patrum*] trans. Benedicta Ward, Cistercian Studies 59 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1984). The *Apophthegmata Patrum* ("Sayings of the Fathers") has fascinating anecdotes about and one-liners from the simple, unlearned, and often eccentric leaders of the early desert movement. It has come down to us in three basic forms: the Alphabetical Collection, the Anonymous Collection, and the Systematic Collection. The Alphabetical gathers the various stories and sayings under the names of prominent monks and arranges these according to the Greek alphabet. It contains some 1,000 sayings or brief narratives, grouped under the names of over 130 "abbas." Appended to these named sayings are hundreds of additional sayings without a named authority. These comprise the so-called Anonymous Collection.

- John Wortley, ed. and trans., *The Anonymous Sayings of the Desert Fathers: A Select Edition and Complete English Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) hardcover, \$145. NEW. First complete translation in English, with the parallel Greek text.

The Systematic contains many of the same sayings and stories, but gathers them under themes such as "quiet" or "unceasing prayer." The Greek version has just been translated into English for the first time:

- John Wortley, trans., *The Book of Elders: Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Systematic Collection*, Cistercian Studies series, vol. 240 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press / Cistercian Publications, 2012).

In the 6th century, an early version of the Systematic Collection was translated from Greek into Latin by two Roman clerics, the deacon Pelagius and the subdeacon John (who perhaps became the later Popes Pelagius and John). This version deeply touched the spirituality of Western monasticism. This Latin recension is also available:

- Benedicta Ward, trans. *Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks*, Penguin Classics, (London: Penguin Books: 2003).

Robert E. Sinkewicz, ed., *Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). Evagrius was the first great theoretician of the spiritual life. He stressed the centrality of wordless, imageless prayer, and his writings display a fondness for brief, oracular sayings. Within a year of his death, his friends and disciples—Palladius, Cassian, Rufinus—were persecuted as "Origenists" and run out of Egypt. Evagrius was condemned 150 years later, and his works circulated under others' names. This edition offers the first attempt by a single translator to make the bulk of Evagrius' writings available to the English-speaking public.

Dorotheus of Gaza, *Discourses and Sayings*, trans., Eric P. Wheeler, Cistercian Studies 33 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987).

- John Cassian, *The Conferences*, trans. Boniface Ramsey, Ancient Christian Writers 57 (New York: Paulist Press, 1997).
- John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, trans. Colm Luibheid and Norman Russell, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).
- John Mochus, *The Spiritual Meadow*, trans. John Wortley, Cistercian Studies (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1992).
- Theodoret of Cyrrihus, *A History of the Monks of Syria*, trans. R.M. Price, Cistercian Studies 88 (Kalamazoo, WI: Cistercian Publications, 1985).
- John Chrysostom & Pachomios Penkett, trans., *Abba Isaiah of Scetis: Ascetic Discourses*, Cistercian Studies 150 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2002).
- Augustine Casiday, *Evagrius Ponticus*, Early Church Fathers (New York: Routledge, 2006).
- Robert Doran, ed., *The Lives of Symeon Stylites*, Cistercian Studies 112 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1992).
- Armand Veilleux, ed., *Pachomian Koinonia: the Lives, Rules, and Other Writings of Saint Pachomius*, Cistercian Studies 45-47 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1980-1982).
- Vincent L. Wimbush, ed., *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990). Translations of valuable, but hard-to-find sources.

5. BYZANTINE SPIRITUALITY: STUDIES

- Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite*, Outstanding Christian Thinkers Series (reprint: New York: Continuum, 2002). Denys the Areopagite (also called Pseudo-Dionysius) was a 6th-century Greek-speaking Syrian monk writing under the pseudonym of St. Paul's Athenian convert. He composed a set of treatises that powerfully shaped mystical currents both in the Greek East and the medieval West; they even influenced the development of the Gothic cathedral. Louth offers a valuable introduction.
- Roman Cholij, *Theodore the Stoudite: The Ordering of Holiness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- Paul M. Collins, *Partaking in Divine Nature: Deification and Communion* (New York: T&T Clark, 2012).
- Adam G. Cooper, *The Body in St. Maximus the Confessor: Holy Flesh, Wholly Deified*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (reprint of 1953 edition: Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1997).
- Andrew Louth, *St. John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, 2nd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1987).

- Marcus Plested, *The Macarian Legacy: The Place of Macarius-Symeon in the Eastern Christian Tradition*, Oxford Theological Monographs (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Tomas Spidlik, *The Spirituality of the Christian East: A Systematic Handbook*, Cistercian Studies 79 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1986).
- Tomas Spidlik, *Prayer: The Spirituality of the Christian East, Vol. 2* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2005).
- Columba Stewart, *“Working the Earth of the Heart”: The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts, and Language to A.D. 431*, Oxford Theological Monographs (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
- Torstein Tollefsen, *The Christocentric Cosmology of St. Maximus the Confessor*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

6. BYZANTINE SPIRITUALITY: CLASSIC TEXTS

- Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, Early Christian Fathers Series (London: Routledge, 1996). Maximus was a 7th-century Byzantine monk and a brilliant theologian who was brutally tortured because of his devotion to Chalcedonian christology. He lived in exile in the Latin West and became one of the last to bridge the gap between East and West. This is a good study of his life and work and includes a valuable selection of his works.
- The Pilgrim’s Tale: Russian Spiritual Literature*, Classics of Western Spirituality, ed. Aleksei Pentkovsky, (New York: Paulist Press, 2000). This classic of Russian Orthodox spirituality, popularized some years ago in J.D. Salinger’s *Franny and Zooey*, brings alive the experience of praying the Jesus prayer. The Jesus prayer is the Eastern Christian tradition of ceaselessly repeating the name of Jesus, usually with a phrase such as “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.” This popular piety, similar to—yet simpler than—the rosary, flows from a concern to fulfill the Pauline admonition: “Pray without ceasing.”
- Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, Classics of Western Spirituality, ed. Nicholas Grendle (New York: Paulist Press, 1983).
- Maximus Confessor, *Selected Writings*, trans. George C. Berthold, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1985).
- Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain, *A Handbook of Spiritual Counsel*, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1989).
- Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain & Makarios of Corinth, *Philokalia: The Complete Text*, 4 vol., trans. G.E.H. Palmer & Kallistos Ware (Faber & Faber, 1988-1995).
- Nils Sorsky, *The Complete Writings*, Classics of Western Spirituality, ed. George Maloney (New York: Paulist Press, 2003).

- Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, Classics of Western Spirituality, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1987).
- Pseudo-Macarius, *The Fifty Spiritual Homilies and the Great Letter*, trans. George A. Maloney, Classics of Western Spirituality 75 (New York: Paulist Press, 1992).
- Symeon the New Theologian, *Discourses*, Classics of Western Spirituality, ed. C.J. DeCatanzaro (New York: Paulist Press, 1980).
- Paul M. Blowers & Robert L. Wilken, *St. Maximus the Confessor: On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, Popular Patristics Series (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003).
- Brian E. Colless, trans. and ed., *The Wisdom of the PEARLERS: An Anthology of Syriac Christian Mysticism*, Cistercian Studies 216 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications / Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008).
- Andrew Louth, trans., *St. John of Damascus, Three Treatises on the Divine Images*, Popular Patristics Series (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003).