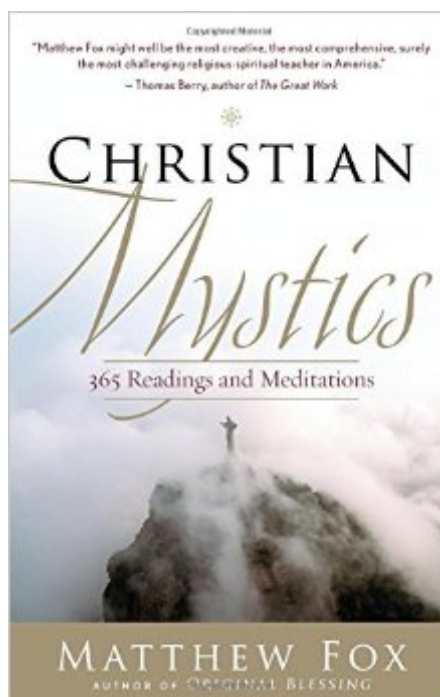


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Christian Mystics: 365 Readings And Meditations



Synopsis

Spiritual maverick Matthew Fox believes that through the ages religious patriarchal hierarchy and rigidity have obscured Christianity's most beneficial and essential teachings: those that arise out of personal, mystical experiences of the Divine. A true religious renewal, according to Fox, can arise only through the mystical dimension of faith. In *Christian Mystics*, he offers a wide-ranging collection of quotations from Christianity's greatest mystics and prophets of the past two thousand years. Fox explores and celebrates the mystical path with insightful commentary on the thoughts and revelations of some of history's greatest religious visionaries.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I came to Matthew Fox's work like many ex-Catholics, having tossed the spiritual baby out with the dogmatic bathwater and moved on to pursue Spirit through other paths. His work, particularly in *Christian Mystics*, has reaffirmed for me that there is worth and beauty and true inspiration even in the Christian tradition. It is found in the voices of those who speak for the people, for the earth, for the heart's direct perception of Spirit, for oneness with the Cosmos, for the strength found in darkness, silence and letting go, and for the paths of creativity and prophesying truth to power. It is found in the mysteries of human love as well as Divine love. There is not an aspect of life that these meditations leave untouched. I found myself lifted into joy and awe...found affirmation that Spirit is present even in the darkest times...found creative inspiration and the challenge to speak my convictions. There were mornings when, reading the meditation, I was moved to tears and emerged

with a heart at peace. I have picked up many books of daily readings over the years...very few have I actually stayed with from Day 1 to Day 365. This is one of those few...and I am by far the richer for the experience.

Christian Mystics: 365 Readings and Meditations By Matthew Fox "Relation is the essence of everything that exists." Meister Eckhart There are times when it isn't vitally important what is said, but who said it. I fully expected to see in the volume the likes of Thomas Aquinas, Julian of Norwich, Meister Eckhart and other mystics, including Thomas Berry. Who I didn't expect to meet in these pages was William Everson, at one time Brother Antonius. The first time I met him in print was as a Beat author, akin to Jack Kerouac (first-thought, best thought, a true mystical insight!). At that time Everson was being published by Black Sparrow Press, infamous for carrying the horny corpus of Charles Bukowski, who shocked me out of my almost monastic Catholic idealism which I held in my head, but which my other member wildly rejected. It's been a few decades but I've come to what Everson calls "the bridge between the sacred and the profane...the problem of greater consciousness." Matthew Fox's comments and provocative questions on the mystics are concise and precise. He asks the reader is he or she "senses this division between the sacred and profane in your life and your spirituality? Who do you know who bridges that divide? Have you done so yourself?" As a devotional volume of 365 readings and meditations Christian Mystics is something of an advanced placement course on the subject. It doesn't fall into the "I'm OK, You're OK" sort of placating booklets that you find in the nave at so many churches, nor is it a guilt-producing set of testimonies that wear you down day by day to a set of total submission. As a minister in the United Church of Christ, I would encourage every person to obtain a copy of this book if only as an antidote for the many vapid, non-challenging spiritual devotionals we see today. In this regard, Fox quotes Clarissa Pinkola Estes as saying, "Negative complexes are banished or transformed--your dreams will guide you the last part of the way--by putting your foot down..." The wise thing to do would be to put down your foot and pick up Christian Mystics!

Who would suspect that a collection of quote-a-day mystical writings could be so uplifting, so inspiring, so thought-provoking as "Christian Mystics" proves to be? Some quotes are deceptively short, yet profoundly transformative when allowed to percolate inside, such as Master Eckhart's, "Whatever happens to another, whether it be a joy or a sorrow, happens to me." Matthew Fox adds insights in the manner of a congenial spiritually oriented professor, guiding us to view hidden connections and better grasp deeper meanings that might otherwise remain concealed. There is

genius in the organization of "Christian Mystics," as quotes by particular authors such as Hildegard of Bingen, Julian of Norwich, Thomas Aquinas, and Thomas Merton are grouped in sections, so many pages in a row continue with gifts from a particular perspective. Matthew Fox adds his own mystical views via questions he poses following each quote, so each day's quote takes readers on delightful journeys of spiritual discovery. "Christian Mystics" succeeds both as a spiritual guide through mystical realms to be explored one page a day, and as a beloved addition for conversational stimulation and inspirational reference for any seeker's coffee table, desk, or nightstand. Highly recommended!

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