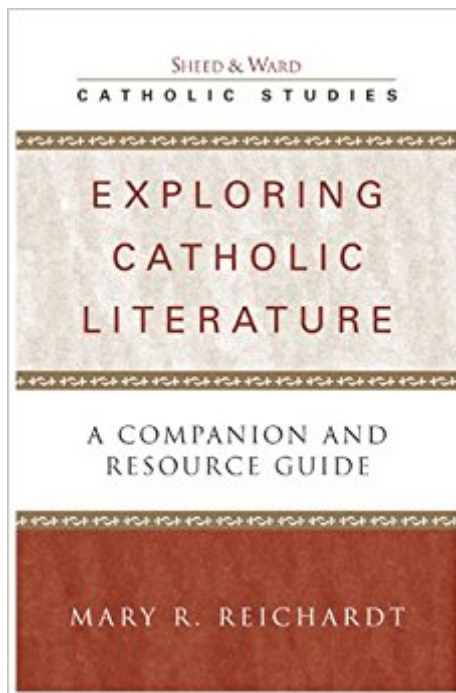




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# **Exploring Catholic Literature: A Companion And Resource Guide (Catholic Studies)**



## Synopsis

Designed for students of all ages, *Exploring Catholic Literature: A Companion and Resource Guide* provides an engaging and succinct introduction to twelve recognized masterpieces of Catholic literature, from Augustine's 4th century conversion narrative, *The Confessions*, to the recent poetry of Denise Levertov collected in *The Stream and the Sapphire*. Each chapter contains a brief biography of the author, an extended critical essay highlighting the work's Catholic and literary aspects, suggestions for further reading and study, and questions for discussion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

How refreshing! In the midst of so much critical cant, here is for once a true 'resource guide'. Remarkably transparent, it doesn't flaunt Reichardt's personal agenda or sophisticated style. As clearly, precisely and concisely as possible, it presents twelve texts in their own light, after a short introduction to their authors. This does not keep Reichardt from demonstrating their potential as launching pads for serious religious discussion. Her astute choice of works for this anthology reflects much classroom experience. All of them are highly teachable: attractive, personal, non-dogmatic, full of questions, they involve their reader inextricably and openly into exploring fundamental and challenging dimensions of Catholicism. Reichardt's analyses demonstrate the value of such literature for deepening one's grasp of this incarnational and sacramental tradition.

Here is indeed an excellent tool for a new generation attempting to reclaim the right to a Catholic reading of literature. (Janine Langan, University of Toronto) As interest in Catholic Literature and thought grows, this propitious volume cuts across genres, cultures and centuries to reveal the true catholicity of both faith and literature, and the fruitful interaction between them. Students will find the individual chapters accessible and engaging while being challenged by Reichardt's keen analyses of the writers and their works. Scholars will regard her trenchant introduction, especially her insistence that these authors' religion was central to their creative vision, as a thoughtful contribution to attempts to define 'Catholic literature.' This is a timely treatment of timeless texts. (Adam Schwartz, author of *The Third Spring: G. K. Chesterton, Graham Greene, Christopher Dawson, and David Jones*) A lucid and illuminating treatment of a range of twelve Catholic writers from St. Augustine and Julian of Norwich through Undset, Greene, and Endo. Mary Reichardt demonstrates a sure grasp of the theological currents and ideas these writers address and of the commonality yet distinctiveness of their visions. The concreteness of her particular interpretations is as impressive as her understanding of the Catholic tradition these works share and so strikingly articulate. (Thomas Werge, University of Notre Dame) It is easy to imagine very innovative curricula developing from the use of this volume as a textbook, especially for students. Reichardt's scholarly support for her readings resounds with critical voices heard only faintly beneath the loud drumming of deconstruction and theory in the recent decades. Those unfamiliar with the subject will be surprised to discover that writers as disparate as Augustine of Hippo, Sigrid Undset, and Shusaku Endo might be more alike than they are different. (Kathleen Burk, University of Dallas)

Mary Reichardt is professor of Catholic Studies and English at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota. An accomplished literary critic, she is also the author of the *Encyclopedia of Catholic Literature* (forthcoming).

The volume *Exploring Catholic Literature: A Companion and Resource Guide* (Catholic Studies) arrived yesterday and I knew very little about it. I can't even remember exactly how I came across it--the ways of the Internet are intricate--but I do remember thinking, "this is good..." Opening it it was a nice surprise after another! At first glance the words in the introduction ringed true and beautiful. Then there were the selections: the expected Saint Augustine, and Dante, but some unknown to me sandwiched here and there, and towards the end of the chronologically-ordered titles both Hopkins and Flannery O'Connor, and Sigrid Undset too! Then there is the UD professor (where one of our sons attends college) praising it on the back cover, and to top it all off, the book is

written by a UST professor (where one of our daughters is about to start college). What a joy to begin a book on literary criticism that we already know will be good, and open new insights into authors we already love... and introduce us to authors soon to-be-loved!

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