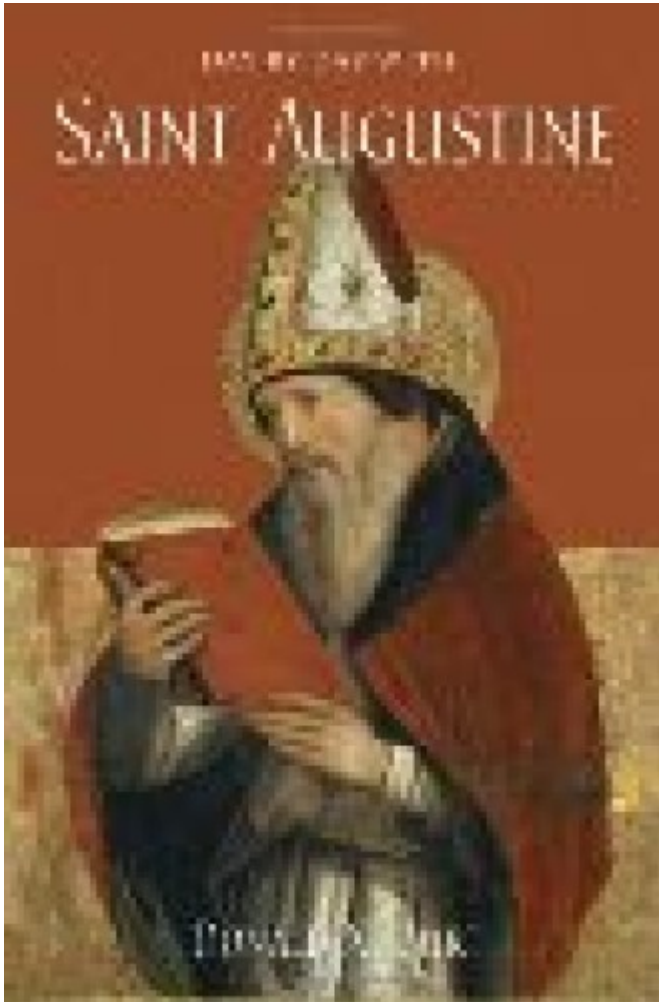


From God, to God

Books in the [April 4, 2006](#) issue

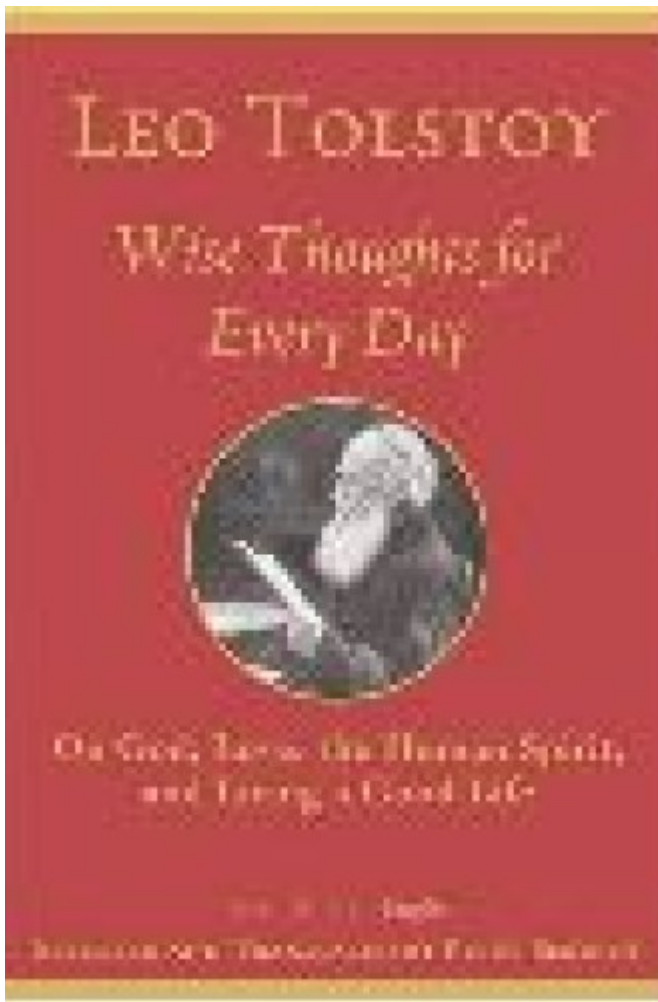
In Review



Day by Day with Saint Augustine

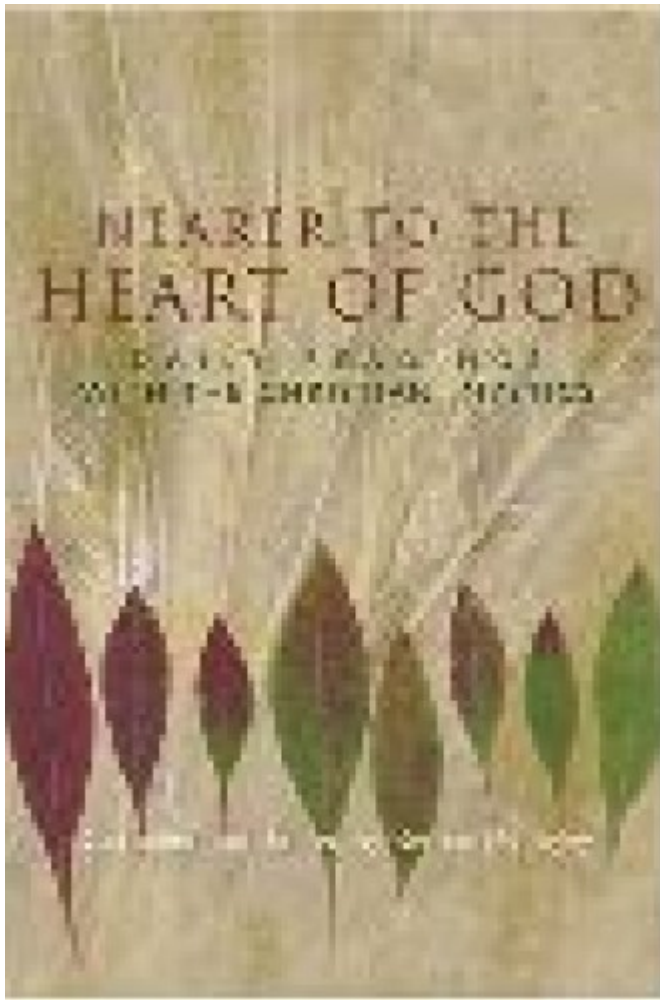
Donald X. Burt, ed.

Liturgical Press



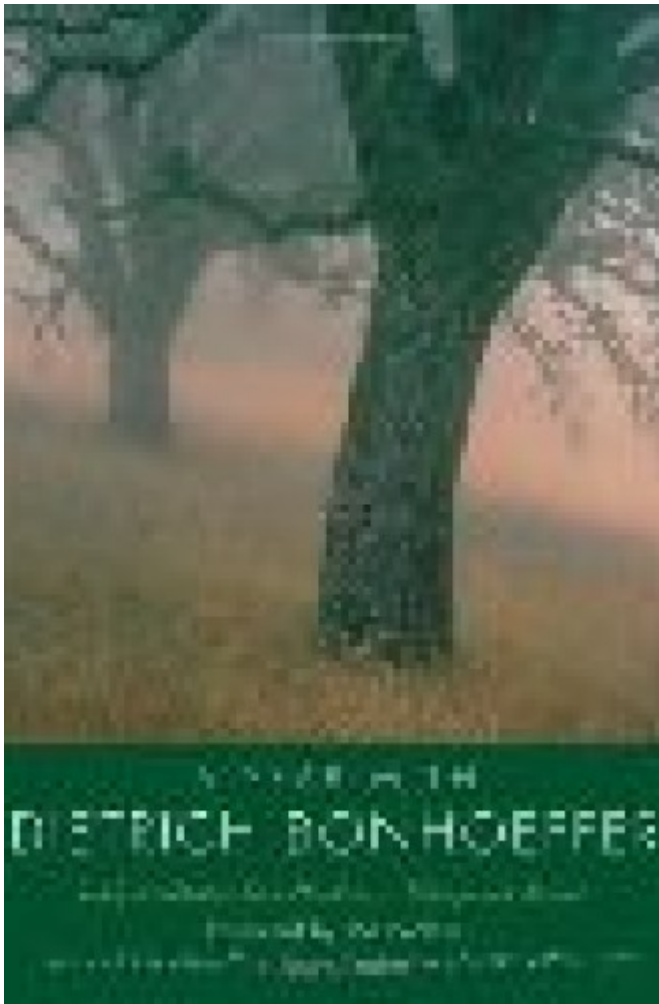
Wise Thoughts for Every Day: On God, Love, the Human Spirit, and Living a Good Life

Leo Tolstoy
Arcade



Nearer to the Heart of God: Daily Readings with the Christian Mystics

Bernard Bangley, ed.
Paraclete



A Year with Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Daily Meditations from His Letters, Writings, and Sermons

Carla Barnhill, ed.
HarperSanFrancisco

Publishers issue a steady stream of books for daily devotional or inspirational reading. These four stand out because they draw on sources that are worthy of rereading and pondering:

Burt combines his own translations of brief selections from St. Augustine's vast corpus with his own comments. Many of the selections come from the *Confessions* and Augustine's sermons and commentaries, particularly on the Psalms and John's Gospel and first epistle. Burt is well suited to be a commentator on Augustine's writings, having been a lifelong Augustinian scholar and a member of the Augustinian Order.

Tolstoy compiled a collection of wise thoughts and reflections that he gleaned from his own readings over the years. Late in his life he developed this compendium, mostly of his own meditations and aphorisms, which he considered to be his most enduring contribution. *Wise Thoughts for Every Day* is organized around cycles of 30 themes that are repeated each month. Each cycle starts with an entry on faith and ends with one on happiness. This compendium was banned in Russia during the communist era.

Reading the classic figures of Christian spirituality is often a reminder that we live in a very different world from theirs, with a very different worldview. Yet this collection of writers—from St. Augustine to John Bunyan, Francis of Assisi to John Fox, and Julian of Norwich to Teresa of Ávila—shows amazing connections between their world and ours. Often that's because they are in touch with their humanness, as well as with their need for God and grace.

This book devoted to Bonhoeffer is part of HarperSanFrancisco's "A Year with" series (previously published are volumes on C. S. Lewis, Thomas Merton and Pope John Paul II). Published to mark the 100th anniversary of Bonhoeffer's birth in February, it draws heavily on his more devotional writings, especially *The Cost of Discipleship* and *Life Together*, plus selections from *Letters and Papers from Prison* and from his sermons.