

BookMarks

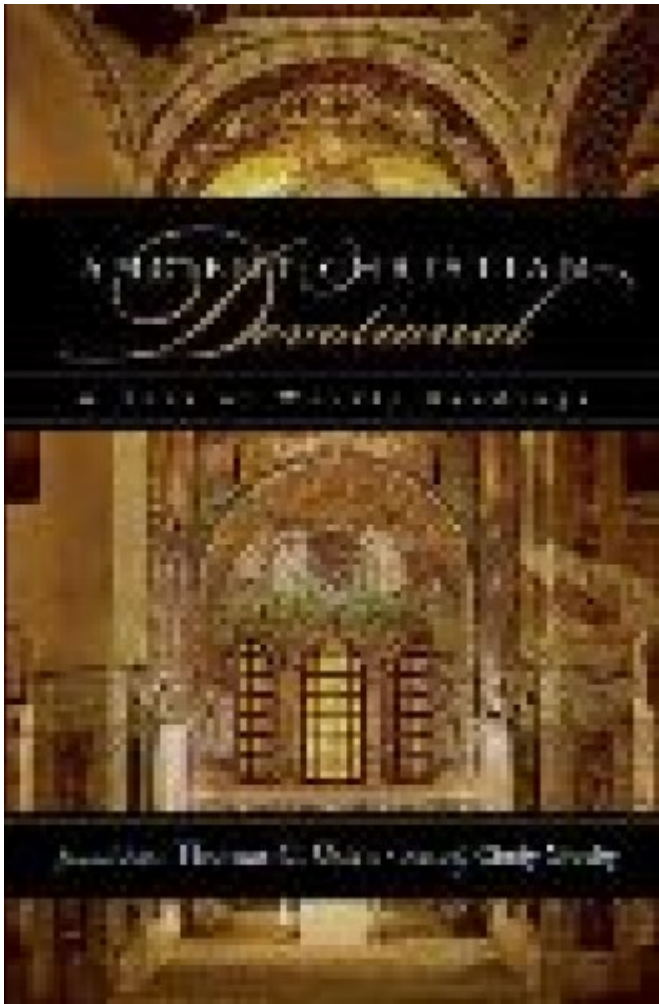
Books in the [May 29, 2007](#) issue

In Review



Inhabiting the Church: Biblical Wisdom for a New Monasticism

Jon R. Stock, Tim Otto and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove
Cascade



Ancient Christian Devotional: A Year of Weekly Readings

Cindy Crosby, ed.
InterVarsity

This is a follow-up volume to *School(s) for Conversion: 12 Marks of a New Monasticism*, edited by Wilson-Hartgrove's Rutba House. Here three leaders in the "new monastic" movement engage with St. Benedict's tripartite monastic vow of conversion, obedience and stability to ask what the new monasticism has to learn from the old. Eberhard Arnold's description of intentional Christian community as "martyrdom by fire" resonates with the authors' experience. So does St. Anselm's description of stability as the act of setting down "roots of love." The authors find far more to praise in old monastic sources than to criticize—one might even wish for more points on which to say no. But the beautiful ordinariness of their communal life together shines through—for example, as Stock writes of his 20-year vow of stability to the Church of the Servant King, "I have not always found this vow convenient, but

I can call it good.” They argue that Alasdair MacIntyre may be wrong when he calls for a new St. Benedict: “What we really need are new Benedictines.” We may already have them.

First there was the Ancient Christian Commentary series, drawing on the writings of the church fathers on each book of the Bible. Now there is this one-year devotional drawing on the commentary series and designed to follow Cycle A of the liturgical year starting this coming Advent. Weekly thematic scriptures are selected from Old and New Testaments, followed by comments from the ancient authors, with opening and closing prayers as bookends.