

My Life with the Saints

...more about discovering the holiness in daily life

My Life with the Saints opens the door to the life of Father Jim Martin and his relationship with the saints of Christian history.

For Further Reading

I hope that the reflections in this book will encourage readers to learn more about these saints, blessed, holy persons, and companions. There are few things more satisfying, I think, than reading the lives of the saints and seeing how God's grace manifests itself in different ways and in different lives. To that end, I've listed a few books that may be helpful in coming to understand and appreciate these holy men and women. I drew heavily on all of these books in my research and thank the authors for their work.

The standard reference for the lives of the canonized saints (that is, those officially recognized by the church) remains *Butler's Lives of the Saints*. Its original form is a colossal, multivolume work organized according to the saints' feast days, with each volume corresponding to a month. There is also a shorter version, called *Butler's Lives of the Saints: Concise Edition, Revised and Updated*, edited by Michael Walsh of Heythrop College, in London (HarperSanFrancisco, 1991). Though it is, like the original work, heavily oriented toward the English saints (such as St. Michael of Wyche, bishop of Chichester, and St. Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne), its concise descriptions are models of clarity.

Fr. Richard McBrien's more recent *Lives of the Saints: From Mary and St. Francis of Assisi to John XXIII and Mother Teresa* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2001) is similarly lucid, helpful, and wide-ranging, and not quite so Anglocentric. It is a worthy successor to Butler's *Lives* and even improves on the original by including chapters on the history of Christian spirituality and the particulars of the canonization process. (It is also, like Walsh's revision, more readable than the original.)

Robert Ellsberg's *All Saints: Daily Reflections on Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for Our Time* (Crossroad, 1997)

is a rich compendium of traditional saints (Thérèse, Joan of Arc), as well as other, less traditional holy individuals (Mozart, Gandhi), organized day by day: it's a perfect companion to prayer and reflection. So is *Blessed among All Women: Women, Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for Our Time*, by the same author (Crossroad, 2005). Ellsberg's *The Saints' Guide to Happiness: Everyday Wisdom from the Lives of the Saints* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003) is a look at the way the saints viewed our quest for joy in life and is a sort of narrative version of *All Saints*.

Lawrence S. Cunningham's *The Meaning of Saints* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1980) is a more theological look at the place of saints in the life of faith. And Cunningham's *A Brief History of Saints* (Blackwell, 2005) is perhaps the best short introduction to the historical development of devotion to the saints. Kenneth Woodward's fascinating book *Making Saints: How the Catholic Church Determines Who Becomes a Saint, Who Doesn't, and Why* (Touchstone, 1996) offers a detailed look at the making of saints in the Catholic Church. Finally, *Saints and Feasts of the Liturgical Year*, by Joseph Tylenda, SJ (Georgetown University Press, 2003), is a perfect pocket-sized overview, arranged according to the liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Church.

About James Martin, SJ

James Martin, S.J., is a Jesuit priest, author and associate editor of *America*, the national Catholic magazine (he also blogs at "In All Things," the new editorial blog from *America* magazine). Father Martin graduated from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business in 1982, where he received a bachelor's degree in finance. After working for six years in corporate finance with General Electric Co., he entered the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) in 1988.

For his regency, he worked for two years with the Jesuit Refugee Service in Nairobi, Kenya, where he helped East African refugees start small businesses. In 1995, Father Martin began his theology studies at the Weston Jesuit School of Theology, in Cambridge, Mass., where he received his master's degree in divinity in 1998, and his master's in theology in 1999. While in Cambridge, he also worked as a chaplain at a Boston prison. After completing his Jesuit studies, he was ordained a Catholic priest in June 1999.

Besides his articles in *America* and other Catholic publications like *Commonweal*, U.S. Catholic and The (London) *Tablet*, Father Martin has written for *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, The Philadelphia Inquirer, and other national newspapers and websites, including beliefnet.com and salon.com. He has commented on religion and spirituality in the national and international radio media, and has appeared in venues as diverse as National Public Radio's "Fresh Air with Terry Gross," PBS's "The Newshour with Jim Lehrer," Fox News Channel's "The O'Reilly Factor," as well as on all the major networks, CNN, MSNBC, the History Channel, the BBC and Vatican Radio. Besides his editorial, publishing and media work, Father Martin conducts seminars and retreats and assists on Sundays at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola in New York City.

A Guide for Reading Groups

For the past several years, I have run two book clubs at a local parish in New York, and if I've learned anything, it's that the discussions of longer books sometimes need to be spread out over two meetings. Otherwise, people may feel daunted by a book's length. For reading groups, then, *My Life with the Saints* can be read all at once or divided into two sections: from the introduction to chapter 9, and from chapter 10 to the conclusion. I hope that these questions might stimulate good discussion and, also, fruitful personal reflection.

First section

1. The first saint mentioned in this book is Jude. Who was the first saint to whom you felt drawn? How did you "meet" him or her? If you've been unfamiliar with the saints until now, which person in *My Life with the Saints* did you find most appealing?
2. Joan of Arc stayed true to her decision to follow God even in the midst of persecution. Have there been times when your faith put you in conflict with others? How did you deal with this?
3. The "Little Way" of Thérèse of Lisieux stresses not only

doing small things with love but also adopting a stance of "littleness" before God. Does this kind of humility appeal to you? How does humility fit into your spiritual life?

4. Like even the holiest of persons, Thomas Merton was not perfect, and, like many saints, he could be disagreeable at times. Do you think imperfections make a saint less likable or more accessible?
5. The spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola can be summed up as "finding God in all things." What things enable you to find God in your life?
6. In the 1960s and 1970s, Pedro Arrupe challenged the Jesuits to promote "the faith that does justice." Where does work with the poor and on behalf of justice fit into your religious beliefs?
7. Do you believe the story of the visions of Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes? What role do miracles play in your faith?
8. Were you surprised to read about Mother Teresa's "dark night"? Have you ever experienced anything similar? She eventually understood her desolation as a way of identifying with Jesus. How did you deal with your desolation?
9. Pope John XXIII was a joyful person with a good sense of humor. Do laughter and playfulness play a part in your spiritual life? How might humor lead people closer to God?

Second section

10. Dorothy Day is one of the few people mentioned in *My Life with the Saints* who raised a child. Has the notion of the parent as a holy person been overlooked in religious traditions?
11. Do you think it's true that Jesus chose Peter as an apostle as much for his weaknesses as for his strengths? Are there ways that your weaknesses have moved you closer to God?
12. In the life and writings of Thomas Aquinas, reason and faith were closely linked. Why do you think that some believe that religious people are not able to use their minds?
13. Like many saints, Francis of Assisi challenges us to live more simply. What role does a simple lifestyle play in your spiritual life?
14. The idea of the "hidden life" of Jesus of Nazareth, and of Joseph, is that sanctity can be found, with God's help, in everyday life. What aspects of your life, which may be hidden from others, serve to make you a more faith-filled person?
15. The Ugandan martyrs are a key symbol of faith for the people of Uganda and other African countries. Which saints are most popular in your locale? What are their stories?
16. Some saints, like Aloysius Gonzaga, followed religious practices that can seem foreign or even repellent to us. Does this make it more difficult for you to appreciate their lives?
17. The story of the Annunciation shows that we are free to accept or reject God's invitation in our lives. During what times have you, like Mary, listened well to God?

General questions

1. In Elizabeth Johnson's formulation, there are two traditional ways of relating to the saints: as patrons and as companions. How do you relate to the saints?
2. One underlying theme of *My Life with the Saints* is Thomas Merton's adage "For me to be a saint means to be myself." How could Merton's insight be applied in your life?
3. Have you ever met any "saints" in your life? What made them holy in your eyes? How did their lives influence you?
4. Mother Teresa said, "In order to be a saint, you have to seriously want to be one." Thomas Merton's professor, Mark Van Doren, said roughly the same thing. What might this mean in your life?

The Saints

ALOYSIUS GONZAGA

The best short version of Aloysius's life can be found in *Jesuit Saints and Martyrs: Short Biographies of the Saints, Blessed, Venerables, and Servants of God of the Society of Jesus*, by Joseph Tylenda, SJ (Loyola Press, 1998). Also, Aloysius, edited by William Hart McNichols, SJ, and Clifford Stevens (Our Sunday Visitor, 1993), is a quirky and fascinating collection of essays, reflections, and drawings by a variety of authors about the young Jesuit saint. There you will find the essays by Daniel Berrigan, SJ, and Richard Hermes, SJ, quoted from in this book.

BERNADETTE SOUBIROUS

There are at least three superb books about St. Bernadette and what transpired at Lourdes. The first is *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age*, a fascinating study by Ruth Harris, an Oxford University historian, that looks at the life of Bernadette, the history of the apparitions, the religious traditions of the region, the documentation behind the healings, and the sociological and ecclesial factors that helped popularize pilgrimages to Lourdes in the late nineteenth century. It is an exhaustive, scholarly, and sympathetic study. René Laurentin's *Bernadette of Lourdes: A Life Based on Authenticated Documents* (Winston Press, 1979) is widely acknowledged as the best individual biography of the saint (though the English translation is clunky in places). Laurentin uses numerous original documents to give an accurate portrayal of her life. And, of course, *The Song of Bernadette*, by Franz Werfel (St. Martin's, 1989), is the often sentimental but finally touching book that brought the story to millions and inspired the movie of the same name.

CHARLES DE FOUCAULD

The most comprehensive biography is *The Sands of Tamanrasset: The Story of Charles de Foucauld*, by Marion Mill Preminger (Linden Books, 2002). For his own writings, you might try *Charles de Foucauld*, edited by Robert Ellsberg (Orbis, 1999), whose introduction offers a concise overview of the life of this remarkable man. (The book is one in the publisher's series Modern Spiritual Masters.) You might also want to read a beautiful book by one of Charles de Foucauld's latter-day followers, Carlo Carretto, called *Letters from the Desert* (Orbis, 2002). In the 1960s, Carretto, an Italian, left behind a prominent career as a Catholic activist for a life in North Africa with the Little Brothers of Jesus. It is a magnificent book, deeply moving, that perfectly illustrates the notion of "the hidden life."

DOROTHY DAY

Dorothy's autobiography *The Long Loneliness* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1997) is the best way to meet one of the most extraordinary Catholics of the twentieth century. Her book *On Pilgrimage* (Eerdmans, 1999) is also lovely and fills in some of the gaps of *The Long Loneliness*.

Robert Coles's book *Dorothy Day: A Radical Devotion* (Perseus, 2000) provides an admiring and personal introduction to the cofounder of the Catholic Worker movement by someone who knew her well. The most comprehensive anthology of her works, including articles from the *Catholic Worker*, is *Dorothy Day: Selected Writings*, edited by Robert Ellsberg (Orbis, 2005), which includes a précis of her life and a short history of the *Catholic Worker* movement. Also, Paul Elie's book *The Life You Save May Be Your Own: An American Pilgrimage* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003) is a brilliantly realized history of the interwoven lives of Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Flannery O'Connor, and Walker Percy. You will get to know these four American Catholics better, and you will find few books that better describe what it means to live a holy life in the modern world.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI

There are probably hundreds of books about St. Francis. *The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi*, edited by William Heywood (Vintage, 1998), is a compendium of beloved stories about the saint (preaching to the birds, converting the wolf of Gubbio, and so on) compiled by some of his earliest admirers. Adrian House's *Francis of Assisi: A Revolutionary Life* (Paulist, 2001) is a successful account that considers both the facts and the fictions of his life. Nikos Kazantzakis, in *Saint Francis* (Touchstone, 1971), offers a compelling

(though fictionalized) portrait of the saint as a lively and fearless young man. Valerie Martin's *Salvation: Scenes from the Life of St. Francis* (Knopf, 2001) is a marvelously poetic retelling of his life. Lawrence S. Cunningham does an exceptional job in *Francis of Assisi: Performing the Gospel Life* (Eerdmans, 2004) of situating Francis within the Catholic tradition that he rejoiced in. Finally, Julien Green's *God's Fool: The Life and Times of Francis of Assisi* (Harper & Row, 1985) is, to me, the most successful at capturing the overall appeal of Francis, as well as his radiant personality. Sadly, Green's book can be hard to find, but it is worth the effort of tracking down a used copy. (And Francis, no doubt, would be happier if you bought used books!)

IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

Instead of the dry books I plowed through in the novitiate, I wish I had first read *The First Jesuits*, by John W. O'Malley, SJ (Harvard University Press, 1993). It is simply the best introduction to the early Jesuits, with a focus on St. Ignatius. It shows how, contrary to popular belief, the Society of Jesus was not founded to "counter" the Protestant Reformation but for the purpose of "helping souls." The detailed work of an eminent scholar, the book is superbly written and in places even witty. For a more focused look at Ignatius, Philip Caraman's book *Ignatius Loyola: A Biography of the Founder of the Jesuits* (Harper & Row, 1990) is a good resource. *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, translated by Joseph F. O'Callaghan and edited by John C. Olin (Fordham University Press, 1992), is the saint's story as told to his fellow Jesuit Gonçalves da Câmara. (But remember, when it comes to prose, Ignatius is no Thomas Merton.)

For a better understanding of Jesuit spirituality and the "tensions" inherent in Jesuit life, you will do no better than a short book called *Contemplatives in Action: The Jesuit Way*, by William A. Barry, SJ, and Robert G. Doherty, SJ (Paulist, 2002). *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality*, by David Lonsdale (Orbis, 2000), is a much longer treatment but an excellent place to begin one's study of Ignatian spirituality. More of a how-to book on the same topic, covering contemplation, meditation, and the examination of conscience, is *Inner Compass: An Invitation to Ignatian Spirituality*, by Margaret Silf (Loyola Press, 1999).

There are many good resources on the *Spiritual Exercises* themselves. Two of the most useful translations are *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*, by George E. Ganss, SJ (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992), which provides an analysis of key words

and phrases, and *Draw Me into Your Friendship: A Literal Translation and a Contemporary Reading of the Spiritual Exercises*, by David Fleming (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996, from which I've taken some excerpts for this book), which offers an alternate (and very helpful), modern translation alongside the traditional one. (Remember, however, that the Exercises are more appreciated in their doing.) A very fine and very brief book discussing the spirituality of the Exercises is *Letting God Come Close: An Approach to the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises*, by William A. Barry, SJ (Loyola, 2001). For those interested in directing the Exercises, an expert's handbook is *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, by Michael Ivens, SJ (Gracewing, 1998). Finally, Paul Mariani wrote a compelling journal of his long retreat at the Jesuit retreat house in Gloucester, Massachusetts, entitled *Thirty Days: On Retreat with the Exercises of St. Ignatius* (Viking, 2002).

JOAN OF ARC

Donald Spoto's superb biography Joan (HarperSanFrancisco, 2007), which uses all the tools of modern historical research, is the best contemporary introduction to the Maid of Orléans. Vita Sackville-West's *Saint Joan of Arc* (Grove, 2001), first published in 1936, is a lively retelling of her story. *Joan of Arc: Her Story*, the classic biography by Régine Pernoud and Marie-Véronique Clin, has been revised and translated by Jeremy duQuesnay Adams and published by St. Martin's (1999). Written by two distinguished French scholars, it is a model of careful historical research. It also has great appendixes. And no one should miss *Joan of Arc: In Her Own Words*, translated by Willard Trask (Books & Company, 1996), an exceptional book that takes Joan's trial testimony and arranges it chronologically so that the reader feels as if she is telling her life story from inspiring start to moving finish.

JOHN XXIII

Deeply moving in places (though slow going in others), John's autobiography, *Journal of a Soul: The Autobiography of Pope John XXIII* (Doubleday, 1999), is a compendium of his diary entries from his seminary days to his years as pope and is readily available. Just as moving (and even exciting in places) is Peter Hebblethwaite's highly readable biography *John XXIII: Pope of the Century* (Continuum, 2000), which gives an overview of not only the man but also his influence on the church and the world.

Pope John XXIII: A Spiritual Biography, by Christian Feldman (2000), is part of the Lives and Legacies series from Crossroad and provides an overview of the spirituality of Angelo Roncalli. A Retreat with John

Pope John XXIII: A Spiritual Biography, by Christian Feldman (2000), is part of the Lives and Legacies series from Crossroad and provides an overview of the spirituality of Angelo Roncalli. *A Retreat with John XXIII: Opening the Windows to Wisdom*, edited by Alfred McBride, O. Praem (St. Anthony Messenger, 1996), is also part of a series (A Retreat With) and uses John's writings as a way to foster prayer and reflection. The little book that initially drew me to John is called *Wit and Wisdom of Good Pope John*, collected by Henri Fesquet (P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1964). It is out of print but worth the effort to track it down.

JOSEPH

Since there is little known about the life of Joseph, it is not surprising that there are comparatively few books on the saint. For an exegesis of his brief appearances in the New Testament, you will do no better than Raymond E. Brown's landmark work *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (Doubleday, 1993). There is also a description of the carpentry skills Jesus might have learned from Joseph in Nazareth in the first volume of John Meier's magisterial study of the "historical Jesus," *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, called *The Roots of the Problem and the Person* (Doubleday, 1991). There are, however, two short books that attempt to construct a tentative portrait of Joseph and trace the history of Christian devotion to him. They are *Saint Joseph: Shadow of the Father*, by Andrew Doze (Alba House, 1992), the more serious and pious approach, and *Saint Joseph: His Life and His Role in the Church Today*, by Louise Bourassa Perrotta (Our Sunday Visitor, 2000), a book written in a rather more accessible style.

JUDE

Thank You, St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes (Yale University Press, 1996), by the historian Robert A. Orsi, is a study of devotion to the saint in the United States. Also, *Jude: A Pilgrimage to the Saint of Last Resort*, by Liz Trotta (HarperCollins, 1998), is the author's personal journey (literally: she travels to the reputed place of his birth) to come to know what you could call the "historical Jude."

MARY

Elizabeth Johnson's book *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints* (Continuum, 2003) is a magnificent theological reflection on the mother of God by a leading American theologian who is acutely sensitive

to the place of Mary in the Catholic world. After *Truly Our Sister* was published, the author excerpted essays on Mary's appearances in Scripture from the work and collected them in a short book called *Dangerous Memories: A Mosaic of Mary in Scripture* (Continuum, 2004). In Jaroslav Pelikan's *Mary through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (Yale University Press, 1996), a Lutheran scholar looks at how the image of Mary has changed and grown over the years. Sally Cunneen's book *In Search of Mary: The Woman and the Symbol* (Ballantine, 1996) is similarly helpful in tracing the influence of and devotion to Mary throughout Christian history. *Meditations on Mary* (Viking, 1999) is a collection of fascinating essays by the always insightful Kathleen Norris, illustrated with lavish full-color reproductions of Old Master portraits of Mary.

PEDRO ARRUPÉ

An excellent introduction to Fr. Arrupe is *Pedro Arrupe: Essential Writings*, selected by Kevin Burke, SJ (Orbis, 2004), who also included a short biographical introduction in the book. Just as good is a book published by the Institute of Jesuit Sources called *One Jesuit's Spiritual Journey: Autobiographical Conversations with Jean-Claude Dietsch*, SJ (1986), a series of lively and moving interviews. If you want a greater understanding of Arrupe's thoughts on social justice, religious life, education, culture, and a host of other topics, the Institute of Jesuit Sources offers a series of Arrupe's major talks, essays, and letters in *Challenge to Religious Life Today* (1979), *Justice with Faith Today* (1980), and *Other Apostolates Today* (1981).

PETER

Perhaps the best recent study on Peter is Pheme Perkins's book *Peter: Apostle for the Whole Church* (Augsburg Fortress, 2000), an investigation into the "historical Peter," with an emphasis on his role in the early Christian community. Richard McBrien's book *Lives of the Popes: The Pontiffs from St. Peter to John Paul II* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2000) gives a good brief summary of the life of the "first pope." Finally, Richard Rohr's book *Soul Brothers: Men in the Bible Speak to Men Today* (Orbis, 2004), which is illustrated with portraits by Louis Glanzman, includes a touching meditation on how Peter came to God not by doing right, but by "doing wrong."

MOTHER TERESA

Kathryn Spink's *Mother Teresa: A Complete Authorized Biography* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1998) makes for an engrossing read and details especially well the struggles of

Mother Teresa's early efforts to found the Missionaries of Charity. Because it was published shortly after her death, however, it does not include some of the more recently published information about Mother Teresa's "call within a call" and her struggles with prayer.

For that, you can read Carol Zaleski's article "The Dark Night of Mother Teresa," in *First Things* magazine (May 2003), which is based on the research of the Reverend Brian Kolodiejchuk, MC. Malcolm Muggeridge's book *Something Beautiful for God: The Classic Account of Mother Teresa's Journey into Compassion* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1986), though first published in 1971, remains an illuminating look at her ministry and, incidentally, her effect on even nonbelievers, like the author. A helpful book of her writings and prayers is *Mother Teresa: In My Own Words*, compiled by José Luis González-Balado (Liguori, 1996).

THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

The Autobiography of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux: The Story of a Soul, translated by John Beevers (Image Books, 1987), is Thérèse of Lisieux's remarkable story told in her own words, from the simple beginning to the difficult end of her rich life. You might also turn to two critical biographies to better understand the Little Flower: Monica Furlong's *Thérèse of Lisieux* (Orbis, 2001) and Kathryn Harrison's *Saint Thérèse of Lisieux* (Penguin, 2003).

Dorothy Day also wrote a warm and loving portrait of the saint, called *Thérèse* (Templegate, 1979). Kathryn Harrison's book is especially good at focusing on some of Thérèse's ascetical practices and exploring what led to her austere life. However, when I recently asked a Carmelite scholar about his favorite biography of the saint, he suggested Guy Gaucher's *The Story of a Life: St. Thérèse of Lisieux* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1993).

THOMAS AQUINAS

G. K. Chesterton's affectionate biography *Saint Thomas Aquinas: "The Dumb Ox"* (Image, 1974) is a fine introduction to the life of the Angelic Doctor. Focusing more on Thomistic theology is *Knowing the Love of Christ: An Introduction to the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*, by Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering (University of Notre Dame Press, 2002). And Aidan Nichols's book *Discovering Aquinas: An Introduction to His Life, Work, and Influence* (Eerdmans, 2003) is exactly what its subtitle says.

There is also a fine, brief introduction to St. Thomas and Thomistic philosophy in *The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, edited by Richard McBrien (HarperCollins,

1995). The great Jesuit scholar Frederick Copleston, author of the huge, multivolume *History of Philosophy* (Image, 1993), has an extensive chapter on Aquinas and his writings in the second volume of his magnum opus. The chapter is also available as a single work called *Aquinas: An Introduction to the Life and Work of the Great Medieval Thinker* (Penguin, 1955). Another scholarly treatment of Aquinas is Étienne Gilson's *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Random House, 1956).

St. Thomas's major work, the *Summa Theologica*, while long, is often surprisingly accessible, thanks in great part to the author's clear and highly readable style. It is also readily available, and you will look very learned carrying it around. Also, *Summa of the Summa*, edited by Peter Kreeft (Ignatius Press, 1990), is a summary of the most important themes in Thomas's work.

THOMAS MERTON

Thomas Merton's popular autobiography *The Seven Storey Mountain* (Harcourt Brace, 1999) takes the reader from Merton's birth in France up to his first few years in the monastery. *The Sign of Jonas* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979) can be in many ways even more captivating for the reader; it continues the tale of Merton's early years as a Trappist. For the truly ambitious, the multivolume *Journals of Thomas Merton* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1995–98) provides the rest of the story, in Merton's own words. There is also an abbreviated version of these same journals, entitled *The Intimate Merton: His Life from His Journals* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2001), edited by Patrick Hart and Jonathan Montaldo. The excerpt included on page 53 is from *No Man Is an Island* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1955, p. 126).

Moving from autobiography to biography, Thomas Merton, *Brother Monk: The Quest for True Freedom* (Continuum, 1997) is a splendid treatment of the monastic roots of Merton's spirituality, written by a fellow Trappist (and writer), M. Basil Pennington, OCSO. Monica Furlong's *Merton: A Biography* (Liguori, 1995) is also a good brief introduction. Henri Nouwen, the contemporary spiritual writer, offers a series of perceptive meditations in his very short book *Encounters with Merton* (Crossroad, 2004). Finally, for a more complete and more scholarly (but no less interesting) telling of the tale, you should try Michael Mott's utterly fascinating biography, *The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton* (Harcourt Brace, 1993). It's very long and very worth it.

UGANDAN MARTYRS

As a measure of how little they are known in the West, it is

difficult to find books about the Ugandan martyrs. *African Saints: Saints, Martyrs, and Holy People from the Continent of Africa*, by Frederick Quinn (Crossroad, 2002) includes a brief discussion of their story, as do a number of other general books on the saints. The story of Mutesa, the ruler of Buganda, can be found in Edward Rice's *Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton* (Scribners, 1990). The general interest book about Charles Lwanga and his companions, however, has yet to be written, and their lives still remain largely hidden from many of us.

Acknowledgments

This book was a lengthy project that could not have been accomplished without the intercession of the saints as well as the help of many friends a little closer to home.

Since I am not an academic, I was worried that despite my efforts at research, I might make some inadvertent mistakes in retelling the lives of the saints. (In telling stories from my own life, however, I felt on firmer ground!) So toward the end of my writing, I mailed each chapter to an “expert” on each saint for a more scholarly review. The letters and comments I promptly received in reply (which did in fact correct some errors) were always full of the most insightful comments and suggestions.

So I am enormously grateful for the time and effort of my saintly experts: Janice Farnham, RJM (Joan of Arc, Bernadette Soubirous); Steven Payne, OCD (Thérèse of Lisieux); Lawrence S. Cunningham (Thomas Merton, Francis of Assisi); Daniel J. Harrington, SJ (Peter); John Padberg, SJ (Ignatius of Loyola, Aloysius Gonzaga, Pedro Arrupe); Robert Ellsberg (Dorothy Day, Joseph); Kathryn Spink (Mother Teresa); John W. O'Malley, SJ (John XXIII); Joseph Koterski, SJ (Thomas Aquinas); Aylward Shorter, MAfr (the Ugandan martyrs); and Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ (Mary). There is no way I could have completed this book without their generous help and learned insights. I am so fortunate to know them and count them as “friends of God and companions.”

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Hill, for her superb fact checking, a colossal effort for a book like this one. One hears many complaints these days from writers about the supposedly lost art of copyediting and fact checking: I have none. Vinita and Heidi were exceptionally good.

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JAMES MARTIN HAS LED AN ENTIRELY MODERN LIFE: from a lukewarm Catholic childhood, to an education at the Wharton School of Business, to the executive fast track at General Electric, to ministry as a Jesuit priest, to a busy media career in Manhattan. But every step

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