

look beyond the social aspects of the youth meeting. He or she must build a substantive relationship with the young people and their mentors. These strategies are vital in attracting the post-Confirmation group.

Having clearly stated a purpose, creating dynamic teams in providing attractive programs and becoming a visible part of the life of the parish are discussed in the second part of the book. What many parishioners criticize about some youth ministry groups is the absence of integration into the total parish life. They see the youth group as a sub-group with its own agenda that is frequently not obvious to the average parishioner. Youth participation in liturgical ceremonies, service programs, and the social life of the entire parish is extremely important.

The third section of the book, "Planning for the Long Haul," details many of the practical problems that will occur when dealing with already over-committed teens who are involved in academics, sports activities, and busy social lives. The youth minister must remain connected with the parish administration and parents, and be willing to keep in touch with current trends and other successful programs. The youth program should not be competitive for a teen's valuable time. Wesley and his book take on a personal note about the satisfaction of being a youth minister.

This book should be readily available to all parishes for the youth ministers, parents, and the administrators. It is highly recommended as easily useful and a highly profitable read.

Arnold Rzepecki

**Seeking Surrender:
How My Friendship With a
Trappist Monk Taught Me
to Trust and Embrace Life**

By Colette Lafia, Sorin, 2015,
135 pp., ISBN 978-1-933495-88-0,
\$14.95 (paper).

In Lafia's heartfelt book *Seeking Surrender*, the author shares how anxiety with the various personal problems of infertility, precarious finances, and her parents' poor health precipitated an exhausted weariness that led her and her husband to seek a week of refuge and rest at the Trappist monastery

Gethsemani. They found both and met Brother René. The gentle elderly monk offered wisdom and solace. His words of comfort touched and soothed her aching heart.

The retreat ended and the couple returned home rested and soothed. Reflecting on the insights and kindness of Brother René, Lafia wrote him a letter of thanks and appreciation for his guidance. Brother René responded, and thus began a series of more than forty letters in seven years focused on spiritual life and relationship with God, and the strength gleaned from reliance on and surrender to, the Lord's leading. She discovered a transformation of grace, peace, strength, and growth in the surrendering.

This book, both gentle and challenging, is well worth the read, and highly recommended for seminaries, parish libraries, and Catholic college or university libraries, especially those with schools of theology.

Frances O'Dell, OSF

**Spiritual Resilience:
30 Days to Refresh Your Soul**

By Robert J. Wicks, Franciscan
Media, 2015, 93 pp., ISBN 978-1-
61636-886-9, \$12.99 (paper).

While the small size of this book might mislead some prospective readers, this is a wonderfully fine and helpful book with a lovely blend of spirituality and psychology. The subtitle, *30 Days to Refresh Your Soul*, lets us know that we are expected to invest ourselves and our time in the thirty reflections. While the reflections are short, they are very true to the nature of life with its ups and downs, giving what to reflect on and leaving us with a question to ponder throughout the day. The answers depend on the individual reader and where personal reflection leads. Robert Wicks knows the ups and downs of life; he has experienced many himself. *Spiritual Resilience* is a treasure, and one not easily exhausted. Parish libraries will find it valuable, but it has value for any library and especially for personal libraries. Spiritual directors will find it especially helpful for themselves as well as for those they direct.

Stefanie Weisgram, OSB

**Where the Heart Is: How the
Gospel Transforms Our Lives**

By Donal Murray, Veritas, 2014,
159 pp., ISBN 978-1-84730-567-1,
\$20.00 (paper).

In the introduction to *Where the Heart Is*, Bishop Donal Murray expresses his concern about the precarious future of the Christian faith and its perceived irrelevance in contemporary Western culture. He finds that "our culture is a rare phenomenon in history... a world where God is missing but not missed" (17). His book is a clarion call to provide a renewed sense of meaning and direction to our own lives and to our community by entrusting ourselves to the love of God that speaks in our hearts.

A former university lecturer in moral theology and retired bishop from Ireland, Murray skillfully weaves passages from the writings of Pope Francis and his two papal predecessors, as well as from Vatican II, the Catholic Catechism, Saint Augustine, Saint Thomas Aquinas, and others, into a persuasive narrative. He sees God continually speaking to every heart, inviting us to allow the mystery of His love to abide in the very core of our being. If we are open to His invitation, we will find that His word speaks to our deepest longings and that we will have begun our journey towards a new creation.

Murray speaks of the Lord's Passover as a "terrible beauty" that awakens our heart's restlessness to share in a transformed life with others through God's love. We can then respond only in deep gratitude for so great a gift, as we become more acutely drawn to the plight of the poor and marginalized in our midst.

Later chapters deal with today's moral confusion, the true purpose of education, and the unwise separation of the sacred from the secular. As the final chapter makes clear, Murray has written a reflective response to Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel). His book is recommended reading for all those who wish to answer the pope's call to participate joyfully in proclaiming the Gospel that abides in our hearts.

Rafael Ubico