



MARYMOUNT HERMITAGE NEWSLETTER

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BOOKS! BOOKS! BOOKS!

By Sister Mary Beverly, HSM

What month or season are you most likely to read more than usual? Summer, when life is more leisurely and days are longer? Winter, when the nights are dark and cold, and when being warm and cozy by a fire is appealing? What time of day do you normally read? Early morning, before anything has happened yet, and it is still peaceful? With lunch, so you can have a complete break in the day, both mentally and physically? At night, before going to bed, to have new or exciting or interesting facts to know or thoughts to remember before sleeping?

Me? I just like to read. I read in all seasons of the year, all times of the day, for hours a day, and a great variety of books. I live alone, so I read with each meal. I do keep more intellectual or challenging books for morning hours and lighter reading for bed time. The Pope's first encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*, would be a book for the morning and a biography or fiction book would be a book at bedtime.

Here is my disclaimer. I am an old-fashioned teacher. At the beginning of the school year with my students, I would tell them that they could not possibly learn everything they needed to know in one year, this year, or any year, so it was important to know how to read and to continue learning for themselves throughout their lives. I have no idea if any of them implemented my admonition, but I still operate on this personal principle. Life is such a great adventure and there is so much to know! Every type of book adds something significant to my humanity and intellectual knowledge and emotional experience.

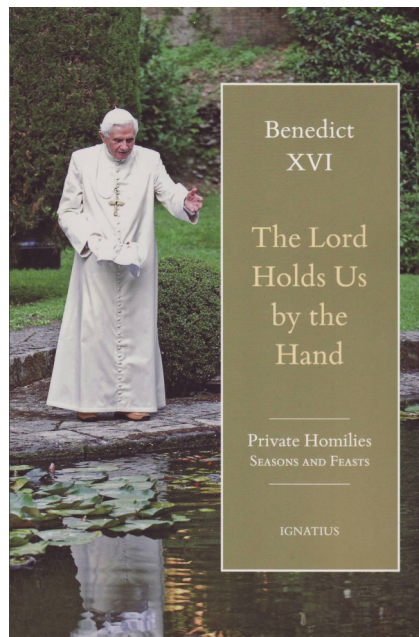
Secondly, I still believe in real books. Do not fool yourself with an AI summary! AI texts are dead with no human spirit. Whatever grace was in the original is now missing! Real writing, something written by another human being, has something of that person's spirit to be part of my experience, memory and learning. This is what is best for us.

I grew up in a large household with parents, who both read, and who had our house with floor to ceiling book cases everywhere possible. When we were small, they read to us before we went to sleep each night. I know when I was teaching, when I read to the children after noon-time lunch and recess, that was their favorite part of

the day. (Mine too!)

In addition to this, I have curated a large library for Marymount Hermitage these last 43 years. I have a new report, which my librarian helper just printed for me. I now know we have 4,000 books processed and on the shelves waiting for people to read them. Recently, I had a correspondence with a friend, who loves buying and donating books to our library. She was worried that the books she buys for her parish library are not checked out to be read or to be purchased. She verbalized the growing concern that nobody is really reading books any more. To encourage her that she is still on the right track, I told her that monks in the Middle Ages saved Western learning and the faith in the books they hand-copied and kept for future generations. Libraries and readers and writers today are doing the same thing for this generation and the next. We cannot give up on learning, which is so human and venerable and valuable.

In honor of the new school year, I decided to entitle this article **Books! Books! Books!** and to give you a short list of the new books I am currently enjoying. If one or other of them appeal to you, ask to borrow it from this library, or buy it on Amazon to own and keep for yourself. Mary-



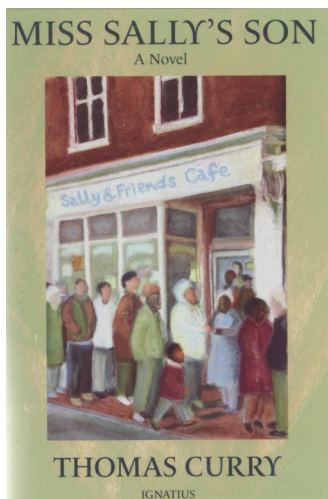
mount's lending library is free and easy to use. You can borrow a book in person or through the mail. You have a year to return the book and, if you cannot deliver it in person, Media Mail is the cheapest rate for USPS delivery and was created for books.

The Lord Holds Us by the Hand by Pope Benedict XVI: This book, published by Ignatius Press in 2026, is the first of two anticipated volumes of homilies given at private Masses for his personal

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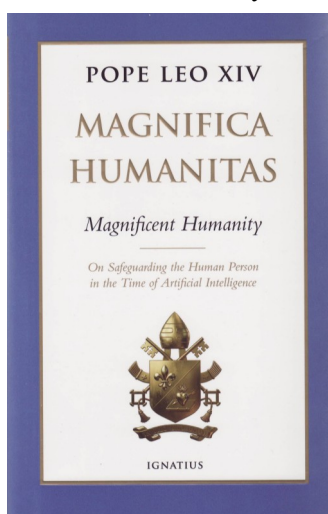
BOOKS! BOOKS! (Continued from page 1)

household by our Pope emeritus after his retirement. The homilies are arranged according to the Liturgical seasons of the Church year. Each homily is fairly short, very simple, and at the same time profound and moving, even mystical. I find myself crying easily when reading these powerful words from such a holy man.



Miss Sally's Son: A Novel by Thomas Curry: This book was also published by Ignatius Press in 2026. This is the story of a man, an only child, who finds that his fairly young mother has died unexpectedly and he travels home from his place of business in Germany to settle his mother's estate. In doing so, he discovers the most amazing details about his father, whom he never knew, about his mother's live-in family, who were all a surprise to him, and also comes to confront God for real, whom

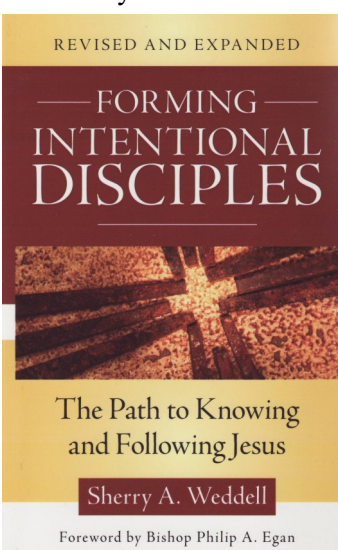
he gave up on in college. Honestly, this is a page-turner! The author, Thomas Curry, is a medical doctor, who was working on this story for over 20 years. It is his first book and he was shocked to discover that Ignatius Press wanted to publish it. The characters are very true to life, in modern times. The unfolding of their backgrounds and relationships is a beautiful, unforgettable story. When have you ever read an adult book in which a child is a main character?! I would be ashamed to tell you how many times I have read and re-read this book since it was delivered in February of this year!



Magnifica Humanitas by Pope Leo XIV: This is our Pope's first encyclical published on May 16, 2026. As I do with all encyclicals, I went immediately to the Vatican website and printed the papal document. Then I punched holes in the 51 pages and put them in a three ring binder. I knew it would come out later in book form, but I was eager to read it and wanted to be free to highlight as I read and write notes and questions in the margins. Later I did order this encyclical as a book from

Ignatius Press. One book will go in the library here and

the others I will give as gifts. Pope Leo has such thought-provoking and powerful points about how the new technology and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) will affect us as human beings, hence his title, which in English is translated as "Magnificent Humanity". I am not a scientist or a technological person. I could easily have thought superficially that I did not need to read this, but the one phrase which jumped out at me in the opening section of the encyclical was this: "...when human dignity is threatened by new forms of dehumanization, ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human." (MH Introduction, page 5) That rings like a trumpet call to battle! It is interesting to note that when Pope Leo uses the term AI, he quickly also uses the term "tool". I personally believe that the new technological tool is misnamed. AI is not a human being. It does not have real intelligence, in the proper sense of that word. AI is a tool that locks in an enormous amount of whatever data is fed into it. It cannot think, discern, decide what is moral, or accept responsibility. I hope this is an encouragement to you to read what our very enlightened Holy Father has written to us.



FORMING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES: The Path to Knowing and Following Jesus by Sherry A. Weddell: This fascinating book was originally published in 2012 and basically grabbed the attention of many U.S. bishops and priests. They believed that her thesis could be the basis of new evangelization efforts in dioceses and parishes. Since then, many others involved as leaders in parish life have come on board to use Ms. Weddell's inspired research. This edition, which I bought for the first time, is a

"Revised and Expanded" edition published by Our Sunday Visitor in 2022. I was alerted to this important book by a very good article in The National Catholic Register paper recently. The reason that this book was so eye-opening for me is that it is a look at how and what Catholics believe in our current cultural era. So many points I really did not realize. Knowing these new and observable facts makes even ordinary conversations with fellow Catholics more spiritually fruitful and effective. Here are basic questions which need honest answers from each of us: *Do I believe in the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit? Do I believe that Jesus is true God? Do I know that I can have a personal relationship with Jesus? Am I willing to talk to others about who Jesus is and how I*

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relate to him? You see what I mean by basic theological and personal questions? So important!



To conclude this article, I would like to quote Pope Leo XIV. I read the L'Osservatore Romano, the monthly Vatican paper, which is now published in a magazine form. Our Holy Father was giving an address in Rome to writers on June 24, 2026. He has a classic style of speaking, usually having three points, which he develops deeply in only a few sentences. His style and words are deceptively simple, but the words and ideas are very deep, moving and memorable.

Here is the outline Pope Leo used in speaking to writers:

“Writing...is an act of truth, revelation, for it reveals who we are, what we believe and hope for, the world we strive toward, and the future of which we dream. In this pursuit of truth, we sense that truth is subtle, revealing itself to us in our inner dialogue with God and in our open and respectful dialogue with our neighbors...”

“Writing is an act of humanity. As the ancient author Terrence observed, ‘I am a human being, and I do not regard anything human as alien to me.’ Literature, then, encompasses the full spectrum of human experience, so much so that Pope Francis highlighted its formative value: ‘Reading a literary text places us in the position of “seeing through the eyes of others” [C.S. Lewis] thus gaining a breadth of perspective that broadens our humanity’...”

“Finally, writing concerns God. It may seem a bold claim to make, but several theologians have reflected on and written about the harmony between the art of writing and the revelation of the biblical God...”

“That is why I repeat to you, who are writers, what Pope Paul VI said to all artists: ‘We need you.’ ...We need your imagination, your narrative creativity and your lively thinking. We need these to create spaces of freedom and authenticity, within which divine grace can make the promise of consolation and peace resound. I thank you for every time you have sown seeds of reconciliation, of encounter, and of friendship...” (Bold words: my emphasis.)

As an Augustinian monk, Pope Leo often quotes their founder, St. Augustine of Hippo, and also repeats the saint’s main theological themes, especially the wide arena of grace. Everything is a grace! May your reading of real “live” books be a grace for you.

COMMUNITY NEWS

NEW “WATER WORKS”: On August 27, Ray Groves of Council, ID began trenching for a new water system for the campus of Marymount Hermitage. Essentially, we are replacing the existing well pump, water pipes to all ten buildings and creating a central location in the old Common House for all the mechanism needed for this upgrade, such as three pressure tanks instead of one. I do not know how many weeks or months it will take to complete the project. More details and photos when the time is right for such in this newsletter. In the meanwhile, please pray for safety for workers and equipment, for good health for the men and success for their work, which will serve Marymount for the future.

NEW MAINTENANCE FUND: Due to the wisdom and foresight of friends and financial advisors and the generosity of donors, we have established a maintenance fund for future building and infrastructure upgrades. This idea has progressed since the completion of the Jubilee House and I believe the advice is sound and reasonable. A Catholic family foundation in Idaho is funding the new water system, but donations from now on that are marked for maintenance will be put in an interest bearing account for future needs. If it is on your heart to help in this way, God will bless you abundantly.

RETREAT RESERVATIONS: I am taking retreat reservations as usual. By God’s providence, the water works on the campus has not interfered with retreatants being here. Many retreatants come on the weekend and the men either are not working on Fridays or leave early that day and are not here on the weekends. I will accommodate each of you as best I can and, if your preferred dates are not available, hopefully we can find an acceptable alternative. Please allow 2-3 weeks before your proposed retreat to submit an application. Group reservations should ideally be 2-3 months in advance.

PRAYERS FOR SEMINARIANS: Please join me in praying for our diocesan seminarians as they begin their academic school year. Our founding bishop, Bishop Sylvester Treinen, asked us to pray especially for priestly vocations for the Diocese of Boise. Priests and seminarians have always had the lion’s share of our prayers and sacrifices.

PRAYER INTENTIONS: You are welcome, as always, to either send an email or leave a phone message with your personal prayer intentions. I appreciate your prayers for me and Marymount Hermitage also. God bless you!

**MEMORIAL
MICHAEL E. NOURSE**
by Ceara M. Nourse