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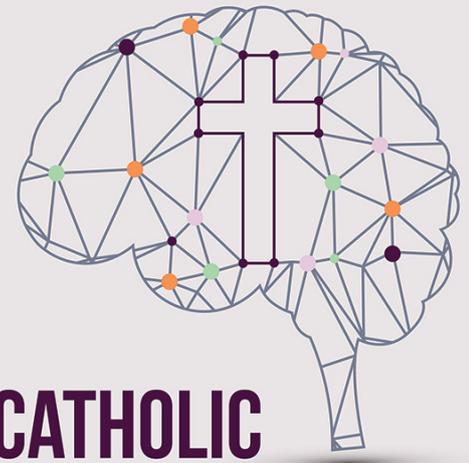
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CATHOLIC NEUROTHEOLOGY

Andrew B. Newberg, Mary Clare Smith

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Catholic Neurotheology

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SERIES IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

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About the authors

Andrew B. Newberg is Director of Research at the Marcus Institute of Integrative Health and Professor of the Department of Integrative Medicine and Nutritional Sciences at Thomas Jefferson University. Dr. Newberg has studied mystical and religious experiences throughout his career, in addition to using neuroimaging studies in evaluation of neurological and psychiatric disorders. He is considered a pioneer in the field of neurotheology, which seeks to link neuroscience with religious and spiritual experience. He has published over two hundred articles, essays, and book chapters. He is the author or co-author of ten books including the bestselling, 'How God Changes Your Brain' (Ballantine, 2009), and 'Why God Won't Go Away' (Ballantine, 2001). He has presented his work at scientific and religious meetings throughout the world and has appeared on 'Good Morning America,' 'Nightline,' ABC's 'World News Tonight,' 'Book TV,' 'Fresh Air,' London Talk Radio, the Discovery Channel, the National Geographic Channel, the BBC, National Public Radio, and the nationally distributed movies, 'What the Bleep Do We Know?' and Bill Maher's movie 'Religulous.' His work has been written about in the 'Los Angeles Times,' 'Time,' 'Newsweek, Discover Magazine,' 'Reader's Digest,' 'The Washington Post,' and 'The New York Times.'

Sr. Mary Clare Smith is a licensed psychologist and Sister of Notre Dame. She holds a PhD in counseling psychology from Cleveland State University and a master's in religious education from the University of St. Thomas (Angelicum, Rome) through the Notre Dame Catechetical Institute, Virginia. She has served as a parish Director of Religious Education and taught graduate and undergraduate courses in religious studies, theology, comparative religions/philosophy, and psychology. She has served as a psychologist and art therapist/counselor with various populations and recently engaged in a neuropsychology postdoctoral fellowship. She has given numerous professional presentations, recently on Neurobiology and Spiritual Growth.

Summary

The topic of "neurotheology" has garnered increasing attention in the academic, religious, scientific, and popular worlds. It is the field of study that explores the intersection between the brain and religious and spiritual phenomena. However, there have been no extensive attempts at exploring specifically how Catholic religious thought and experience may intersect with neurotheology. The purpose of 'Catholic Neurotheology' is to fully engage this groundbreaking area. Topics are related to a neurotheological approach to the foundational Catholic beliefs derived from Scripture and Tradition, an exploration of the various elements of Catholicism and of Catholic rituals and practices, and a review of Catholic spiritualities and mysticism. Specific Catholic scholars are considered in terms of the relationships among their ideas/teachings and different brain processes. 'Catholic Neurotheology' engages these topics in an easy-to-read style and incorporates scientific, religious, philosophical, and theological aspects of the emerging field of neurotheology. By reviewing the concepts in a stepwise, simple, yet thorough discussion, readers regardless of their background will be able to understand the complexities and breadth of neurotheology from a Catholic perspective. More broadly, issues include a review of the neurosciences and neuroscientific techniques; religious and spiritual experiences; theological development and analysis; liturgy and ritual; philosophy, epistemology, and ethics; and social implications, all from a Catholic perspective.

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