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Dear Friends,

What is the church? Who is the church? Not unlike Augustine's "What then is time?", these are questions we people-offaith think we have a basic handle on until asked to give a satisfying answer. They stir in us thoughts and feelings of "a place of gathering" where our senses and intuitions about what is visible and possible give way to the invisible and the impossible. Shortcomings, walls, and divisive church structures are still with us, but the vision and witness of those gone before us continue to hold and shape our hope and our longing.

In diverse and varied ways, each of our new spring titles explores this mystery of how God wills to save us and continually chooses to dwell among us in ways beyond our initiative and limitations. And if, by exception, I may draw your attention to a particular title, I would like to mention the last book of ecclesiologist Richard R. Gaillardetz. Rick was uniquely adept at communicating clearly and accessibly the hopes and longings in the theology of the church. Beyond that, in countless presentations around the US and beyond, he excelled in speaking to and in the church about these mysteries. Rick died of cancer on November 7, 2023, a teacher and friend to so many, including us here at the Press, and a communicator, even to the very end (see page 5).

Dum spiramus, speramus.



Hans Christoffersen Editorial Director

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Richard R. Gaillardetz FOREWORD BY MICHAEL DOWNEY

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A Mystagogy of Dying Richard R. Gaillardetz; Edited by Grace M. Agolia Foreword by Michael Downey

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"Rick did not write because he was directed to do so by another, as was the case with other well-known Catholic writers approaching death. He wrote as a free act of love, opening the door of his mind and heart, offering wisdom and insight to all of us living in the shadow of death, preparing us to make passage through dying and death to the new life for which we hope."

from Foreword by Michael Downey

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Nancy Pineda-Madrid, Loyola Marymount University

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Thomas Merton in California

The Redwoods Conferences and Letters Edited and Introduced by David M. Odorisio Foreword by Kathy DeVico, OCSO, Preface by Douglas Christie

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PATRICIA WITTBERG, SC MARY L. GAUTIER GEMMA SIMMONDS, CJ with NATHALIE BECQUART, XMCJ FOREWORD BY PATRICIA MURRAY, IBVM

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