

Hannah Ward and Jennifer Wild (Eds)
The Monastic Way
Ancient Wisdom for Contemporary Living: A book of daily readings

ISBN 9781 8531 1757 2
Canterbury Press, 2006, 241 pp, £16.99

It is a great temptation to read a whole month in one sitting, but for most people this would not be the best use of this book - rather, each day's paragraph is to be sufficient for the day, and will provoke at least a few minutes reflection on the topic.

Each month has a theme, the readings drawing on a variety of monastic sources - ancient such as the Church Fathers, the desert fathers and mothers, the Rule of St Benedict, and Celtic sources; the Middle Ages including Aelred of Rievaulx, Anselm of Canterbury, Hildegard of Bingen, John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila; and many twentieth century monks and nuns from various parts of the world: Benedictines, Carmelites, Carthusians, Cistercians, Clares, Trappists, and Russian Orthodox. Topics covered include: discernment, listening, relationships, work, balancing life, money, working for justice, saving the planet, giving and receiving, endings and beginnings.

This book is ideal for a lunchtime or a coffee-break reflection, or for those whose meditation-type prayer time needs to be opportunistic; it can also be the basis for a longer meditation for those who have a more structured prayer time in the day. As a hard-back, it travels well.

Maureen CSF