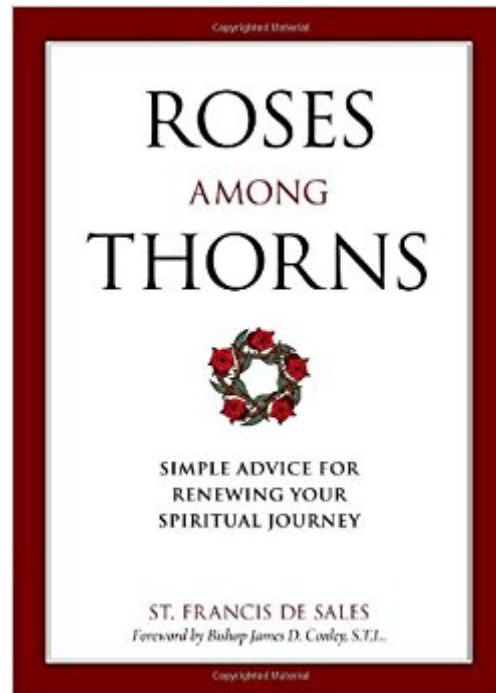




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Roses Among Thorns



Synopsis

From the thousands of personal letters by St. Francis de Sales comes this short, practical guide that will develop in you the soul-nourishing habits that lead to sanctity. St. Francis de Sales is widely regarded as one of the greatest spiritual advisers in the history of the Church, and we have drawn from his letters the wisest advice for those prepared to take the next step on their spiritual journey. As he did for saints and sinners in his own time, St. Francis de Sales will stiffen your resolve, help you gain small victories over unruly passions, and restore in you a trusting confidence in Jesus Christ. Soon you'll find yourself delivered from the chains of self-love as your soul opens to divine goodness and your heart is shaped into a fitting place for Christ to dwell and reign eternally. If you find it difficult to live amid the clamor of the world with your eyes fixed on Christ alone, let St. Francis de Sales teach you how to live as a true rose among thorns as you learn... What to do when you stop finding consolation during prayer How to place yourself in the presence of God How busy people should pray Do you fear vice more than you love virtue? A guide to discernment How to be patient with your family The dangers of too many devotions How to know when your feelings are from God or the devil What to do about repeated spiritual dryness The three things you must do to be at peace How to avoid thoughts that give us anxious and restless minds Absorb the wisdom in these holy pages, and you'll soon make true progress on your spiritual journey and navigate with confidence the treacherous waters of our secular world.

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Customer Reviews

Roses Among Thorns is the second book from St. Francis de Sales that has been recently released

by Sophia Institute Press. The first was *The Sign of the Cross*. In this 100ish page book, the reader will find a series of 60 reflections drawn from the personal letters of St. Francis de Sales. Each reflection is 1-3 pages long, making this a quick read that you could tackle in a couple of hours. However, just because one can read a book in a few hours doesn't mean one should. The premise of this book, as the title suggests, is that we Christians are supposed to be the roses among the thorns (the world). That phrase is repeated several times in his letter, along with other nature metaphors. It was hard to pick a favorite reflection of the 60 in this book, but the one that spoke to me at this point in my life was the sixteenth, "Facing Temptations." In this two page meditation St. Francis de Sales says, "Your temptations have returned, and although you have not said a word of consent to them, still they oppress you. You do not consent to them, and that is good, but you fear them too much. They would not be able to harm you if you did not fear them." He then uses an analogy of bees landing on his face, and instead of shooing them away, he left them alone (at the beekeeper's advice) and was not stung. For most sinners, especially ones who had habitual sins, St. Francis de Sales, encourages people to not be afraid of the temptation that will always be there, but to stand strong with God's help and resist the sin! Overall, I really enjoyed this book. I have enough thick and deep books that look great on the shelf, but sometimes go over my head.

St. Francis exhorts us to determine God's Will for us and to conform our will to His. In this book, he provides helpful guidelines at the various stages of our lives. On earth, hardship is necessary for the work of abnegation and for the development of virtues (Chapter 1). We ought to love above all the virtues of meekness of heart, poverty of spirit, and simplicity of life, together with visiting the sick, serving the poor, and consoling the afflicted (3). Suffocate your bad inclinations by practicing the contrary virtues (4). Your daily pattern should be a brief prayer in the morning, mental prayer for one hour before the noon meal, a dozen aspirations before supper concerning the noon meditation (5), including invoking the name of Jesus (14). Jesus is our model for meekness (6). Self love and self regard are sources of anxiety that disturb our peace. We should desire the honor and glory of God, do the little we can unto that end, and leave the rest to God's care (7). God's action in our lives will not always be evident (2); interior and exterior pains should be accepted peacefully (8). A drop of modesty is all we need to bear with what happens to us (15). God will do everything for us and for our happiness (10); hold His hand tightly (12). With a little patience, we will get through troubles with honor and contentment (17). We suffer much from children while they are young, but a laborer's love can cause it to bear fruit (20). Take no interest in temptations (16). Disdain for temptations testifies to our affection for divine things (41). Obeying God instead of man, despite the

consequences, glorified God (42). If fear takes hold of you, cry out strongly, â œLord save me!â • If you are constantly distracted, make a habit of frequent short prayers (18).

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