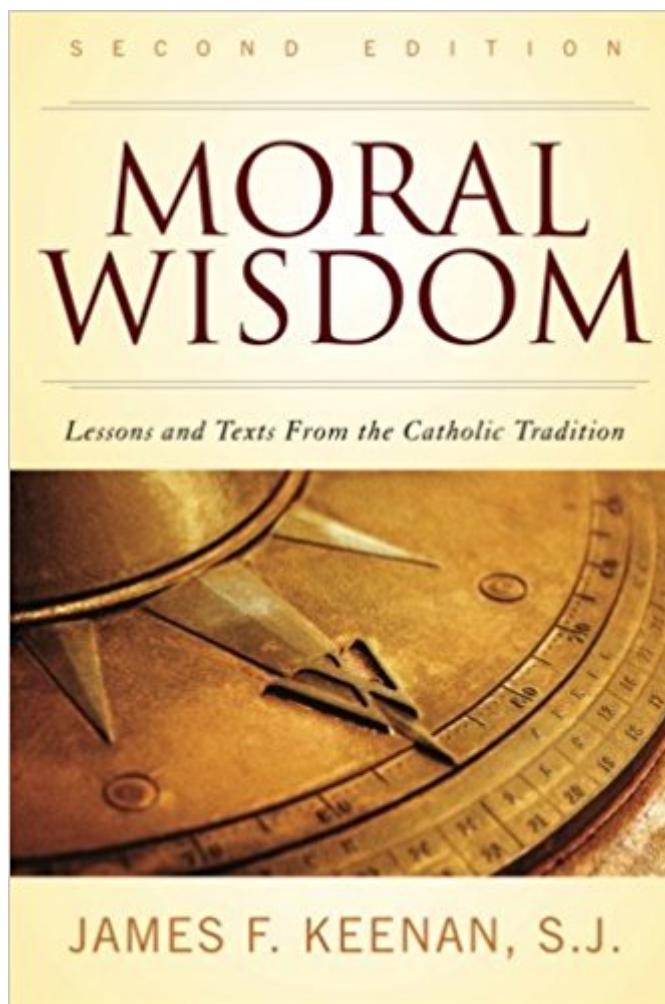


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Moral Wisdom: Lessons And Texts From The Catholic Tradition



Synopsis

The second edition of James F. Keenan's Moral Wisdom has been fully revised and updated, including new discussions of social sin and Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, a clearer exploration of Jesus in the New Testament, and new study questions at the end of each chapter. 'Moral wisdom,' as Father Keenan calls it, is the distinctive gift of the Catholic tradition, a gift that helps us discern what values to pursue and which virtues to embody on the path to becoming who we really are and who God wants us to be.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Keenan's book is sharp, offering constructively critical analyses of fundamental moral theological ideas with a profound respect for the Catholic tradition. Following the current trend in moral theology to use stories to internalize academic concepts, Keenan uses his own personal stories in ways that are more engaging than are many fictional stories. Readers identify well with his struggles with moral issues. Substantial revisions made for the new edition in the chapters on suffering, Jesus, and conscience make what was a great text even better. (Dominic Colonna, Department of Theology, Lewis University)Praise for the first edition: Father James Keenan is one of those rare contemporary theologians who compellingly weave together rich pastoral experience and masterful intellectual inquiry. To read him is to hear not only the considered wisdom of Catholic moral teaching, but to have the privilege of hearing a learned man struggling to work out his own moral practices. In this book, lay readers and scholars alike can see how Catholic moral tradition informs a life of

discernment, love, and everyday courage... (Tom Beaudoin, Fordham University, author of *Consuming Faith*)Praise for the first edition: This is a lovely book! Keenan probes his own experiences of struggle, suffering and love, interweaving them with biblical reflection and theological analysis. He looks fault and sorrow squarely in the face, yet sustains buoyant notes of hope and commitment. The content of this book is an exercise in the virtue of its title. (Lisa Sowle Cahill, J. Donald Monan Professor of Theology, Boston College)Praise for the first edition: Imagine a book that is at once a source of profound wisdom, a systematic presentation of a moral and ethical tradition, and a 'page-turner'! This is what James Keenan's *Moral Wisdom* turns out to be. There is nothing facile about this volume, nothing superficial, nothing manipulative. It weaves together autobiography, the stories of others, interpretation of biblical and theological texts, and a deep understanding of what morality is and what the Roman Catholic tradition of moral theology has been and can be when it is at its best. Few will come away from reading this book without imaginative new hope, salutary appreciation for 'hard sayings', new insight into the meaning of divine mercy, and perhaps experiences of both laughter and the 'gift of tears.' Thought-provoking and informative, opening questions and not shutting them down: here is a significant contribution to ongoing explorations of the moral life.. (Margaret A. Farley, Gilbert Stark Professor of Christian Ethics, Yale University Divinity School)James Keenan's gifts as story-teller and teacher have long awakened readers to the imagination's power to aid in their search for wisdom. My students have found his case quite compelling. This second edition of *Moral Wisdom* demonstrates his ability to synthesize an account of the historical quest for the good with a clear eye to the contemporary reader's journey. Keenan gets to the heart of debates about conscience in light of the person's search for the good and the right during this conflictive twenty-first century. He adds an incisive treatment of social sin that draws on films and an account of our history of racism in an effort to demonstrate society's power to blind us to evil. His chapter on 'Jesus in the New Testament' has been totally revised so that the reader moves directly into the scriptural texts themselves rather than through the interpretive frameworks of diverse scholars. Keenan's memorable chapter on suffering is sharper now in that he carefully integrates personal and biographical narratives with accounts from theology and the social sciences. This excellent edition should captivate its readers. (Rosemarie E. Gorman, professor in the religious studies department, Fairfield University)Praise for the first edition:This is a lovely book! Keenan probes his own experiences of struggle, suffering and love, interweaving them with biblical reflection and theological analysis. He looks fault and sorrow squarely in the face, yet sustains buoyant notes of hope and commitment. The content of this book is an exercise in the virtue of its title. (Lisa Sowle Cahill, J.

Donald Monan Professor of Theology, Boston College)Praise for the first edition:Imagine a book that is at once a source of profound wisdom, a systematic presentation of a moral and ethical tradition, and a 'page-turner!' This is what James Keenan's *Moral Wisdom* turns out to be. There is nothing facile about this volume, nothing superficial, nothing manipulative. It weaves together autobiography, the stories of others, interpretation of biblical and theological texts, and a deep understanding of what morality is and what the Roman Catholic tradition of moral theology has been and can be when it is at its best. Few will come away from reading this book without imaginative new hope, salutary appreciation for 'hard sayings,' new insight into the meaning of divine mercy, and perhaps experiences of both laughter and the 'gift of tears.' Thought-provoking and informative, opening questions and not shutting them down: here is a significant contribution to ongoing explorations of the moral life. (Margaret A. Farley, Gilbert Stark Professor of Christian Ethics, Yale University Divinity School)Praise for the first edition:Father James Keenan is one of those rare contemporary theologians who compellingly weave together rich pastoral experience and masterful intellectual inquiry. To read him is to hear not only the considered wisdom of Catholic moral teaching, but to have the privilege of hearing a learned man struggling to work out his own moral practices. In this book, lay readers and scholars alike can see how Catholic moral tradition informs a life of discernment, love, and everyday courage. (Tom Beaudoin, Fordham University, author of *Consuming Faith*)Praise for the first edition:Moral wisdom is hard to come by because it is so complex. Most of us strive for moral wisdom throughout our lives but never totally attain it. In this book, James F. Keenan skillfully brings together deep theological knowledge, historical lessons, acute pastoral sensitivity, broad spiritual experiences, and true prudence in proposing moral wisdom for Christian life and spirituality today. (Charles E. Curran, Elizabeth Scurlock University Professor of Human Values, Southern Methodist University)Praise for the first edition:A readable, uncommonly good book that should be required reading for anyone preparing for or engaged in pastoral ministry. (Library Journal)Praise for the first edition:[Keenan's books] read like very good sermons or college lectures by a priest both learned and engaged in the world. By making the Catholic tradition come alive, the books invite moral reflection and struggle. (Theological Studies)Praise for the first edition:James Keenan puts 'flesh and bones' on the abstractions of moral theory and demonstrates from his own personal experience how the Christian moral life is a pilgrimage of faith, hope and love. Keenan's book will be used widely in college classrooms and seminaries alike. His clarity, honesty and passion ought to be emulated by every moral theologian. (Stephen J. Pope, Boston College)

James F. Keenan, S.J., is Founders Professor of Theology at Boston College. He is the author of a number of books, including *The Works of Mercy*, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, and with Daniel Harrington, S.J., *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*.

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This book was required as a text for a Masters course on morality. Far from taking a dry lecture approach, *Moral Wisdom* makes a practical and relevant argument for living a moral life. Terrific reflections, current day examples, even a great, serious "book club" source of conversation and growth. I highly recommend it. I highlighted almost the entire book and even contacted the author for permission to use this with catechists and Directors of parish religious education programs. Practical, relevant, timely, accessible; a very worthwhile purchase.

This book introduces moral topics in an attention-grabbing way, allowing the reader to relate, prior to divulging compelling standards of morality.

Using this book with a Loyola class; love the way each chapter covers a topic. Readable! interesting! complete!

Keenan writes with such common sense and solid theology. I balance this book written in narrative style with another that is more case work oriented.

This book was needed for my Christian Ethics class. It was very insightful and had a lot of great stories to bring the concepts alive. Would highly recommend!

rough dry read. i bought it for a college theology class (class was great, this book wasn't). doesn't fully capture catholic tradition or faith.

An excellent and easy to read book, and would highly recommend it to anyone studying beginning moral theology. Fr. Keenan uses his personal life experiences to add insight and enrichment to each topic presented within the book. It was hard to set down, once I started reading it.

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