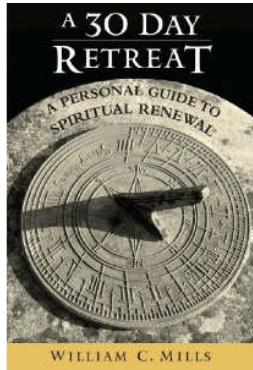
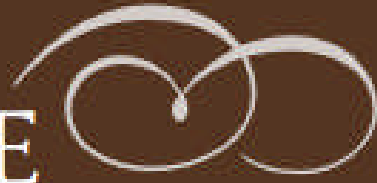


PRESS RELEASE



A 30 Day Retreat: A Personal Guide to Spiritual Renewal
by William C. Mills, 176 pages,
\$16.95, paper, 978-0-8091-4642-0

Available May 2010

For more information visit
williamcmills.com
williamcmills.blogspot.com

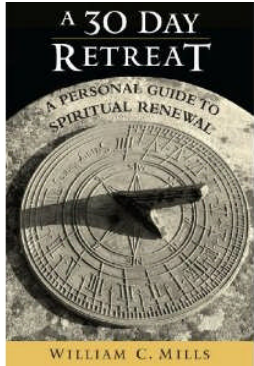
SPIRITUAL RETREAT in the COMFORT of HOME

Charlotte, NC—In what may be the first occurrence of its kind, Rev. William Mills will host an online spiritual retreat in conjunction with his new book, *A 30 Day Retreat: A Personal Guide to Spiritual Renewal* (Paulist Press). Each day from June 1, 2010 - June 30, 2010, Mills will post questions for discussion and reflection on his blog (williamcmills.blogspot.com), which will relate to corresponding chapters in the book. After reading the day's chapter, participants are encouraged to post answers to the questions on the blog, or use them as starting points for daily journal entries. Acting as guide and facilitator, Mills will respond to daily postings with comments and questions of his own, creating a month-long online spiritual community. The book may also be read without online participation in a timeframe determined by the reader.

Mills, rector of the Nativity of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church in Charlotte, NC and an adjunct professor at Queens University in Charlotte, has led many spiritual retreats throughout his career. He decided to write this book as a way for people to experience the growth and learning that come from spending time with God and his word in the comfort of their homes. "Not everyone has the means or the time to take a spiritual retreat," acknowledges Mills. "I created this resource as a way for people to gain sound teaching about God and the Bible and to be able to apply that teaching to life's big questions."

Sprinkled throughout the book are stories from Mill's life as pastor, husband and father, as well as examples from history and popular culture. Participants will gain a deeper appreciation of biblical stories such as the first communion or what exactly happened at the Day of Pentecost. *A 30 Day Retreat* also explains in easy-to-understand language the Christian concepts of sin, forgiveness and grace. For those with busy lives and limited resources, it may be the next best thing to a stay at a retreat center or monastery.

BIOGRAPHY



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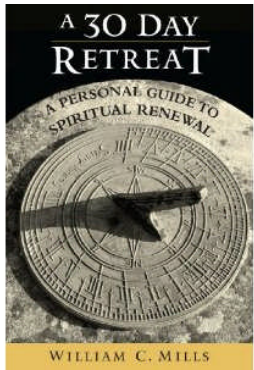
William C. Mills never saw himself as a writer. Graduate work changed his perception. After countless hours writing essays and research papers, he went on to publish his dissertation, in addition to twelve books. “One project led to another and here we are,” William says. “Honestly, I never saw myself writing books or articles. The books really flowed from one another.”

William’s most recent books include *Our Father: A Prayer for Christian Living* (Orthodox Research Institute Publications, 2008), *A 30 Day Retreat: A Personal Guide to Spiritual Renewal* (Paulist Press, May 2010) and a forthcoming book on the pastoral theology of the late Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann (Liturgical Training Publications/Hillenbrand Press, 2010). His book reviews have appeared in *America Magazine*, *Congregation Magazine*, *Cistercian Studies Quarterly*, *Pro Ecclesai*, *Logos Journal* and *Theological Studies*.

In addition to his work as a writer, William serves as the rector of Nativity of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. He also leads clergy and lay retreats. William holds a Ph.D. in pastoral theology from the Union Institute and University in Cincinnati, Ohio, and is an adjunct instructor in the department of religion and philosophy at Queens University in Charlotte. He has also taught courses at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and at Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut.

In addition to his pastoral and teaching responsibilities, William enjoys cooking, gardening, hiking and bird watching. He lives in Mooresville, North Carolina, with his wife and two children.

Q&A



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AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM MILLS, AUTHOR of *A 30 DAY RETREAT*

Why did you decide to write *A 30 Day Retreat*?

I wanted to create a resource for people to better understand the gospel in a form that is both accessible and practical. There are plenty of resources available to study the Bible on a purely academic level, however most people cannot devote the time or the energy to read heavy academic literature. I realized that many people are eager to learn about God, discipleship, forgiveness, love and commitment. *A 30 Day Retreat* was written knowing that the reader may or may not attend worship every Sunday or read the Bible on a regular basis, but they want to engage scriptural texts to find out what they mean for their life. Each chapter concludes with a “Food for Thought” section which has questions designed for deeper reflection or as a starting point for small group conversation. These questions can also be used for journaling.

You have led and participated in many spiritual retreats. How is this book similar to those?

I am both a pastor as well as a university teacher, and both settings require me to convey information that is clear, concise, informative, inspiring and hopefully life-giving. I like to draw on stories, metaphors, images, movies, books, biographies and history, not just as illustrations but to show how God acts in the world. In many ways I envision my vocation as a type of translator, bringing words on a page to life with the hope that people will then continue to learn about God on their own. That is why I also started my website, which includes various bibliographies and resources for spiritual growth available for download. In *A 30 Day Retreat* I offer my readers a way to participate in a self-directed retreat as a way of deepening their spiritual life.

What sort of biblical knowledge is necessary to engage with *A 30 Day Retreat*?

None! I wrote the book with the average Joe or Jane Doe in mind, the person who tries to live a life of faith but struggles like the rest of us, who has doubts about God’s love, wants to understand the importance of forgiveness, or who finds it difficult to make time for prayer. I meet many people who know little to nothing about the Bible but who sincerely want to learn more. They just don’t know where to look. This book is for them.

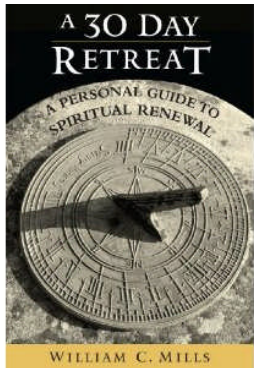
You mentioned that you are hosting an online spiritual retreat based on your book. What is an online retreat and how will it work?

The retreat will take place on my blog, Walking with God, at williamcmills.blogspot.com. It will begin on June 1, 2010 and end on June 30, 2010. Participants will need a copy of *A 30 Day Retreat*, a Bible and access to the internet. Every morning I will post a few words about the particular chapter with questions for reflection. People are then free to post their comments and to share their thoughts. I hope to respond to questions and comments each day. My goal is to create a virtual community of faith that will bring together Christians from diverse backgrounds who want to read, pray and learn together for 30 days. If this retreat works well then there is a possibility that I will lead another during Advent 2010 as a way for people to prepare for Christmas.

What is your hope for *A 30 Day Retreat*?

My first and foremost hope is that people want to learn even more about the Bible and about being a disciple of Jesus. My second hope is that they will read some of the resources listed in the bibliography section of the book and continue their study of the Word of God, perhaps attend a spiritual retreat or participate in a Bible study. Finally, I hope my readers will share their enthusiasm with friends and family. Learning is often contagious! The more you learn the more you want to learn.

ENDORSEMENTS



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Endorsements for *A 30 Day Retreat*

For those who want a day-by-day guide to prayer, this new book offers readings, reflections and opportunities for prayer. Give it a try!

--**Sara Miles**, author of *Jesus Freak: Feeding, Healing, Raising the Dead* (Jossey-Bass)

Mills stays with the truths that are near at hand-- the ups and downs of the house you constantly need to clean, your kids, your neighbors, your job, oh yes and even what passes for religion on Sundays in church. This month's worth of reflections is a treasure chest of experience, imagination and local miracles. Readers will want more.

--**Michael Plekon** author of *Hidden Holiness* and *Living Icons: Persons of Faith in the Eastern Church* (The University of Notre Dame Press)

This new book is a marvelous invitation into the riches of both Scripture and prayer, and offers everyday believers easy, accessible and enjoyable ways of encountering God. . . . Let Mills introduce you in a fresh new way to the Bible, to prayer and, more importantly, to God's gracious activity in your daily life.

--**James Martin, SJ**, author of *The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything* (HarperOne), and Culture Editor at *America Magazine*

Mills has written a fine book that is wise, insightful, and engaging. Whether writing about Dusty Bible Syndrome or the strange relatives we all have, he writes in a tone that is warm but never condescending. This book is well worth reading and an excellent guide for the reader's spiritual retreat.

--**Dr. Norris Frederick**, J. A. Jones, Chair of Philosophy and Religion, Queens University of Charlotte

On our daily walk of faith, Bill Mills offers us a practical guide to listening to God. With biblical stories and personal insights, he provides food for thought as nourishment to the soul. His observations about life and faith help the reader focus attention on what is really important amid the distractions of modern living. In *A 30-Day Retreat* one can find a sense of God's presence like the companionship of a trusted friend.

--**Dr. Robert W. Winstead**, Director of Lifelong Learning and Assistant Professor in the Practice of Church Leadership at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA.

For more information visit

williamcmills.com

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ENDORSEMENTS CONTINUED

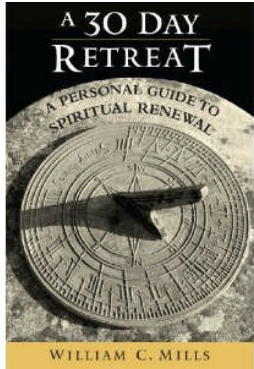
Mills combines his experience as pastor and teacher with the fruit of his reflection on the Scriptures to present the monastic practice of lectio divina in a manner accessible to busy people. His meditations on the select Bible passages are a remedy for “Dusty Bible Syndrome”, and guide for making the Word of God living and active amidst the cares and concerns of everyday life.

--**Abbot Placid Solari**, Abbot of Belmont Abbey Monastery Belmont, NC

Mills assumes his readers are hungry pilgrims eager to travel in the steps of Jesus, hungry to glean from the experience of biblical forebears. This retreat guide is a way in to the world of Scripture, and a reflection rich in its consequences and connections for everyday life.

--**The Rev Dr. Jo Bailey Wells**, Associate Professor of the Practice of Ministry and Bible Director of the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies, Duke Divinity School

EXCERPT



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“We overlook the hundreds of small miracles in our lives...”

Not too far from where we live a small private jet plane fell out of the sky. Thankfully no one was hurt, not even the pilot, who was found intact sitting in the cockpit which was perched atop a tree. Experts reported that the pilot’s survival was due to wind shear, which allowed the plane to fall in a certain way, gracefully falling into a large oak tree, safe and sound. Yet the newspapers say that his survival was “miraculous.”

Perhaps these events or situations are a gift to us from God, giving us a glimpse of the Kingdom of heaven. After all, this is what miracles are anyway, little glimpses into God’s power and authority, even over nature. If he created the world in six days and pushed back the waters of the Nile to allow Israel to cross over, he can surely allow pilots to escape unharmed and women to survive difficult births. Yet just like the people in the gospels, we miss the true meaning of the miracle.

Not much has changed since biblical times. As the author of the Book of Ecclesiastes says, “There is nothing new under the sun.” Then, as now, people want to be entertained. They want to be razzle-dazzled with the “ooh” and the “ahhh” of Jesus. During Jesus’ time there were magicians, fortune tellers and astrologers. Yet Jesus was not a magician nor was he trying to entertain people. At one point when Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes they wanted to seize him in order to make him a king! They saw his power in human terms, missing the point that Jesus was directing them to the kingdom. Jesus’ miracles are a sign of his kingship, but his kingship is not of this world. His power is over disease, nature and even death. God is the God over all things in creation. These miracles, like Jesus driving out demons, are an invitation of faith.

The gospels include many miracles of Jesus: the woman who was healed from her flow of blood, the healing of the Roman centurion’s servant and the cleansing of the lepers. These people approached Jesus in faith, and they were healed of their disease and discomfort

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As a pastor of a small congregation in a metropolitan city and a professor of Scripture at a local university I have encountered many people who are seeking a meaningful spiritual life.

Furthermore people are asking hard questions pertaining to the meaning of life: How can I remain faithful to the many commitments in life including family, work, school, and Church? What does the Lord expect of me in the here and now? And the big one: will I ever make it to heaven?

A 30 Day Retreat will not solve all of your spiritual questions or provide you easy answers of faith. No spiritual guidebook will do that. However, I hope that *A 30 Day Retreat* would put you in touch with the scriptures as a means of spiritual growth and edification not only for today, but also for the rest of your life.

—Adapted from the introduction

because of their faith; because they came to Jesus for help. Compared to the big miracles that we often think about—the parting of the Red Sea for instance— these miracles in the gospels are quite small. Jesus really didn't do much. He says a few words, and people are restored to health and well being.

Yet all too often we overlook the hundreds of small miracles in our lives, the small glimpses into the kingdom of God, because we are too busy seeking the big miracles, the walking-on-water type or the resurrection. We overlook the many miracles of family members being reconciled to their family after being pushed out or living in self-induced exile, the miracle of a restored friendship and the miracle of life itself. I think we do this because deep down we would rather be entertained and excited, and we don't want Jesus interfering in our life. After all, it is a fearful thing when we encounter the Lord. The great crowds in the gospel lesson were afraid because of what Jesus did to the possessed man. They were so afraid that they demanded that Jesus leave them immediately. Often we push Jesus out of our life too because we can't deal with the kingdom. We want to focus on the here and now.

Food For Thought:

1. The sacrament of confession and reconciliation is a great way to drive out our hidden demons that we carry around with us. Have you participated in confession recently? You may find that confessing all of your sins to a priest will make you feel better and clear your conscience.
2. Very often events in our life appear to be larger than life and overwhelming. Where does evil manifest itself in your family, with your friends, at your work, or in your parish? How can you fight this evil and change it into good?
3. For further reading: Matthew 8:28-34, Ephesians 6:10-18, Peter 2:1-12,

—Adapted from Day 25: Looking for God in All the Wrong Places