

S t o n e C r e e k
P u b l i c a t i o n s

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TALKING TO GOD:
PORTRAIT OF A WORLD AT PRAYER

Foreword by Huston Smith

Introduction by Phyllis Tickle

Text by Karen Armstrong, The Dalai Lama, Mohandas K. Gandhi,
Thich Nhat Hanh, Jack Kornfield, Harold Kushner, C. S. Lewis,
Thomas Merton, Thomas Moore, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Kathleen Norris,
Pope John Paul II, David Steindl-Rast, Desmond Tutu, Elie Wiesel,
Michael Wolfe, and Carol Zaleski
Edited by John Gattuso

“A sumptuous feast of beauty and wisdom.”

—Philip Zaleski, editor of *The Best American Spiritual Writing*

“Rich with powerful images and thoughtful reflections.”

—Sharon Salzberg, author of *Lovingkindness: The Revolutionary Art of Happiness*

People of every religion engage in prayer. They do it in different ways, and speak to different gods, but the intention is the same—to communicate with the sacred.

At a time when faith is more polarizing than ever—sometimes violently so—TALKING TO GOD offers a vision of world religions united by a common practice. Essays by celebrated writers of faith such as Karen Armstrong, C. S. Lewis, Desmond Tutu, and The Dalai Lama explore the meaning of prayer and meditation, their challenges, and rewards. Accompanying the text are 100 color photographs by 45 distinguished photographers who chronicle the diversity of the devotional experience in all of its intimacy, beauty, and mystery.

Fifteen essays range over a wide array of topics from the perspective of many faiths:

- **Karen Armstrong** explores the role—and difficulties—of prayer in the world’s

religions. She explains that prayer is more than a recitation of words; it's a discipline that cultivates an attitude of gratefulness, reverence, faith, and compassion.

- **Mohandas K. Gandhi, Thomas Moore, and Carol Zaleski** discuss the human “instinct” for prayer and the need of people of every creed and culture to reach out to the divine.
- **Harold Kushner and C. S. Lewis** pose fundamental questions about the purpose of prayer: Does God hear our prayers? Why are some prayers answered and others not? How does prayer change us?
- **Desmond Tutu, Thomas Merton, Thich Nhat Hanh, and Jack Kornfield** reflect on methods of contemplative prayer and meditation, and the human need for silence and stillness.
- **The Dalai Lama, Kathleen Norris, and Michael Wolfe** address the role of prayer within the larger community, suggesting that prayer and meditation are incomplete unless they deepen our compassion and enrich our relationships with others.

Woven between the essays and pictures are prayers and insights composed by such beloved spiritual guides as Elie Wiesel, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Pope John Paul II, Mother Teresa, Henri Nouwen, and Abraham Joshua Heschel. Combining insightful text and compelling images with beautiful design, this life-affirming book is a journey into the mystery of prayer and the desire of people of all faiths to communicate with a reality greater than their own.

Talking to God: Portrait of a World at Prayer

October 2005

Hardcover, 176 pages, \$39.95, 100 color/b+w photos

ISBN-10: 0-9656338-3-7, ISBN-13: 978-0-9656338-3-3,

Distributed to the book trade by Independent Publishers Group (800-888-4741)

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