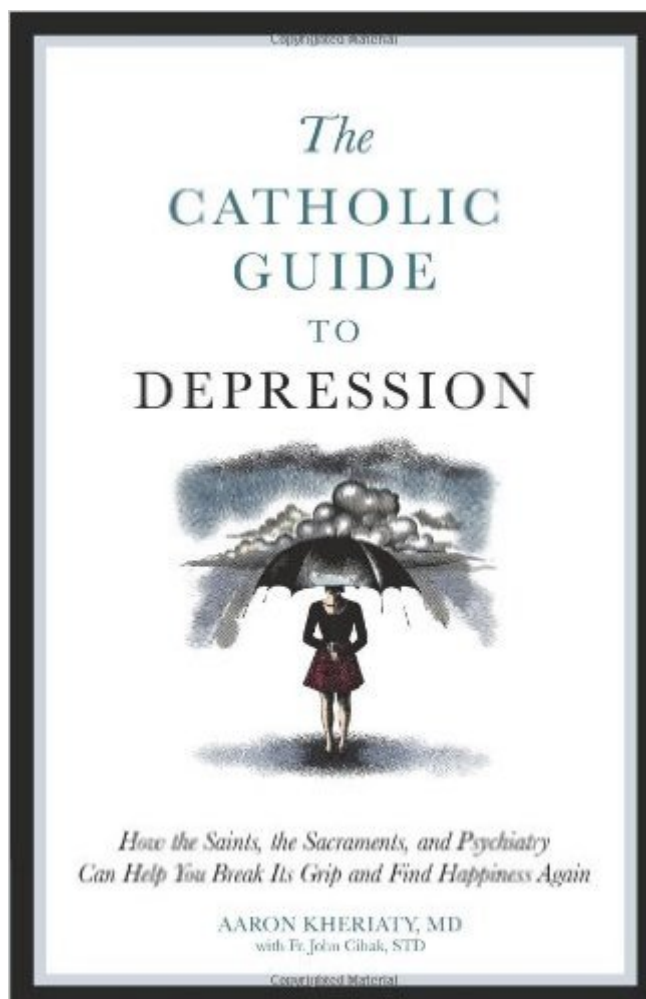


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Catholic Guide To Depression



Synopsis

Countless Christians -- including scores of saints -- have suffered profound, pervasive sorrow that modern psychiatrists call "depression." Then, as now, great faith and even fervent spiritual practices have generally failed to ease this wearying desolation of soul. In these pages, Catholic psychiatrist Aaron Kheriaty reviews the effective ways that have recently been devised to deal with this grave and sometimes deadly affliction -- ways that are not only consistent with the teachings of the Church, but even rooted in many of those teachings. Extensive clinical experience treating patients with depression has shown Dr. Kheriaty that the confessional can't cure neuroses, nor can the couch forgive sin. Healing comes only when we integrate the legitimate discoveries of modern psychology and pharmacology with spiritual direction and the Sacraments, giving particular attention to the wisdom of the Church Fathers and the saints. Here, with the expert help of Dr. Kheriaty, you'll learn how to distinguish depression from similar-looking but fundamentally different mental states such as guilt, sloth, the darkness of sin, and the sublime desolation called "dark night of the soul" that is, in fact, a privileged spiritual trial sent to good souls as a special gift from God. You'll come to know how to identify the various types of depression and come to understand the interplay of their often manifold causes, biological, psychological, behavioral, cultural, and, yes, moral. Then you'll learn about exciting breakthroughs in pharmacological and other medical treatments, the benefits and limitations of psychotherapy, the critical place that spiritual direction must have in your healing, and the vital role that hope -- Christian hope -- can play in driving out depression.

Book Information

Paperback: 247 pages

Publisher: SOPHIA INSTITUTE PRESS; 9/15/12 edition (October 15, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1933184760

ISBN-13: 978-1933184760

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.8 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (116 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #32,567 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 in Â Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Catholicism > Self Help #49 in Â Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Depression #246 in Â Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Self Help

Customer Reviews

Sophia Institute Press sent me the book *The Catholic Guide to Depression* to review. The author, Dr. Aaron Kheriaty is a Catholic psychiatrist and the Founding Director of the Psychiatry and Spirituality Forum. In this book, Dr. Kheriaty takes on the problem of depression from both a psychological and a religious standpoint. The intended audience for this book, I would say, is those suffering from depression. However, family and friends of those suffering from depression could gain a better understanding from this book. I believe it would also be beneficial for spiritual directors of people suffering from depression. This book is not light reading though, so unless you fall in one of the three categories I listed, or just have a general interest in psychology, this book is not for you as it reads like a textbook. The first half of the book is designed to help one better understand exactly what depression is and is not. Symptoms, both physical and emotional, are listed and explained in detail in the first chapter. Also addressed in the first chapter are the different types of depression and some causes of depression. Chapter Two addresses "Depression and the Spiritual Life" and includes a very interesting take on how Jesus redeemed depression on the Cross. Dr. Kheriaty also makes it a point to convey that depression does not always have a spiritual cause or root. This is important, because Christians (I assume other religions do it too) have a "tendency to spiritualize a psychological or medical problem prematurely." Skipping ahead to Part II, and the next four chapters, Dr. Kheriaty addresses methods on "Overcoming Depression."

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