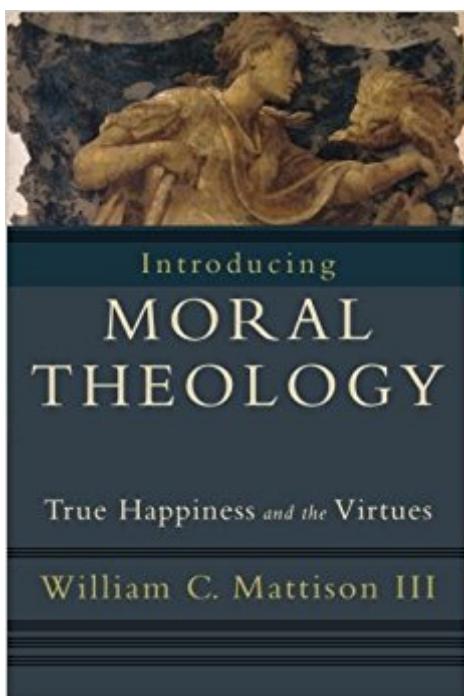


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# Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness And The Virtues



## **Synopsis**

Whether in the cafeteria, classroom, or dorm lounge, questions abound on college campuses. Not only do students grapple with existential issues but they also struggle with ethical ones such as "Why be moral?" In *Introducing Moral Theology*, William Mattison addresses this question as well as grapples with the impact that religious belief has on day to day living. Structured in two parts, this unique text on Catholic moral theology covers cardinal virtues (temperance, prudence, fortitude, and justice) as well as theological virtues (faith, hope, and love). It is equipped with study questions, terms and their definitions, and illustrative case studies. Rooted in the Catholic tradition, this overview will also appeal to non Catholics interested in virtue ethics.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

As college students develop their identities and construct their worldviews, they commonly wrestle with fundamental questions such as "Why be moral?" Taking into account feedback he has received from students and colleagues, William Mattison has crafted *Introducing Moral Theology*, a masterful basic text on Catholic moral theology. This work provides a solid overview of classical virtue ethics (i.e., temperance, prudence, fortitude, and justice) as well as the theological virtues (i.e., faith, hope, and love). The book includes study questions, terms and definitions, bibliographies, and case studies on timely, thorny issues such as premarital sex and euthanasia. Readers will also note that *Introducing Moral Theology* draws deeply on Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*. While written primarily to and from a Roman Catholic perspective, this text will appeal to a wide swathe of Christian academics and believers interested in theology and ethics. "Those of us who regularly

teach introductory courses in theological ethics know how difficult it can be to present the relevant theories and issues in an effective way. So it is very high praise indeed when I say that Mattison has written a first-rate textbook for beginners in this challenging field. Appropriating Aquinas's organizing principle of the virtues, he draws together the main strands of the Catholic moral tradition in such a way as to reveal its inner logic, and to present this in a clear, accessible, and attractive way. He wears his considerable learning lightly, and while he clearly aims to present traditional Catholic moral teachings, he does so in a way that invites thoughtful engagement and dialogue. This would be suitable in a number of undergraduate and seminary contexts, and scholars in the field will find much of value here as well."--Jean Porter, Rev. John A. O'Brien Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame"The new wave in theology is virtue ethics, and Mattison rides it to new systematic heights. He lays out the role of virtue in the good life, shows how virtue relates morality to the rest of theology, then applies virtue ethics to concrete quandaries of Christian living today. Designed as an engaging classroom text, this book will also interest scholars of ethical theory."--Lisa Sowle Cahill, Monan Professor of Theology, Boston College

William C. Mattison III (Ph.D., University of Notre Dame) is assistant professor of theology at The Catholic University of America. He has edited and contributed to *New Wine, New Wineskins: A Next Generation Reflects on Key Issues in Catholic Moral Theology*.

Bought this for school, but it is a very interesting read that offers great perspectives. I was shocked at how much I enjoyed this book, especially since I am not a Christian!

Mattison takes solid Catholic moral theology and presents it in terms and images that are not intimidating, but invite the student to examine the foundations of morality as a happy life, rather than a life of obligation. He shows how the virtues enable and embody that happy life, and importantly, how one develops virtues. He presents one virtue at a time, and his style is to tell the reader what he's going to say, then to say it, and to remind us what he's just said. The student integrates content by completing study questions and further through reflection questions that invite integrative expression. Needless to say, this makes the instructor's job easier both in terms of creating assignments and initiating classroom discussion. My undergraduate students are reading this book in conjunction with the *Splendor of Truth* and comment on how accessible the encyclical becomes because they've met the terms and concepts as presented by Mattison in connection with their own life situations.

Just as described, the way it should be.

Fantastic! A must read book on Christian virtue. An even better book on Christian virtue with a chapter by Mattison is called *Being Good; Christian Virtues for Everyday Life*.

Clearly written, easy to understand, and packed with wisdom. I appreciate the gentle but solid approach Mattison takes describing the moral life. His practical examples of applying the virtues are what makes his work particularly helpful. Even though Mattison admits to coming from a Christian perspective, this work can assist Christian and non-Christian alike in developing a greater understanding of morality and the virtues. I would recommend this for those who have no background at all on the subject as well as those who seek to deepen their knowledge of the virtuous life.

This is a very easy to understand yet precise text. It is exactly as it says - an introduction to moral theology. I almost sometimes wish it would challenge me more! But great read - and great resource around the house.

helps with a lot of definitions for actions we sometimes incur when we don't have the words to say out loud. Wonderful book. Explains in great detail how behavior has changed over the years in reference to spirituality and includes opposing views of those who are not spiritual people.

Excellent overview of the discipline with an emphasis on a virtue ethics approach.

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