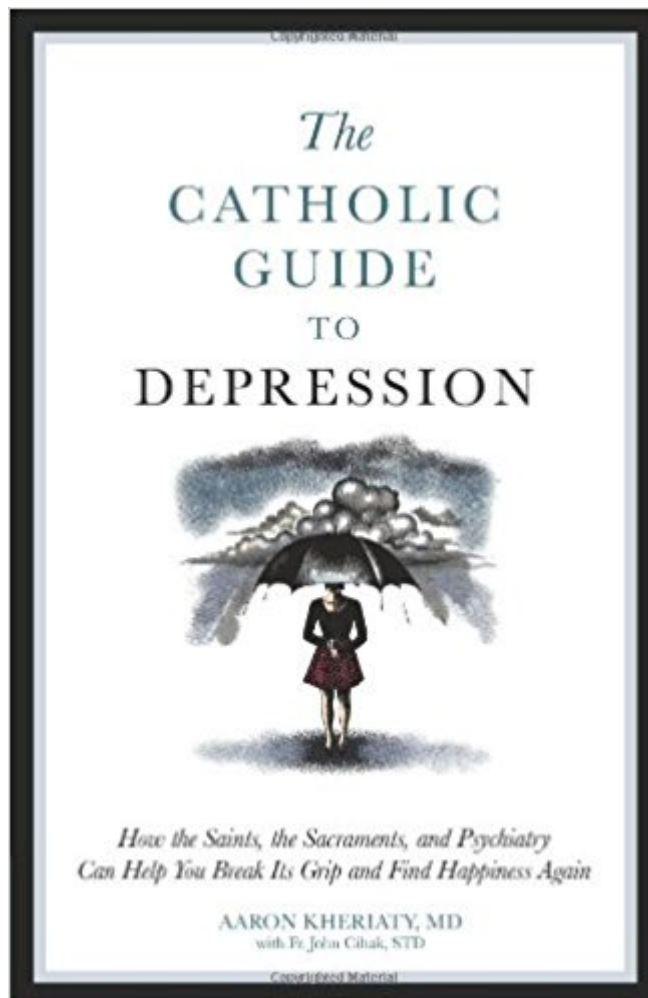


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Catholic Guide To Depression



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.

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Customer Reviews

Kathryn Jean Lopez, National Review Online "The Catholic Guide to Depression is a practical, heartbreaking, liberating book, one that will both wretch and soothe the soul. If you're depressed, if you know someone who is depressed, get help. It's not a sin, it's an illness. Jeff Mirus, CatholicCulture.org "Dr. Kheriaty will give you sound physical, psychological and spiritual reasons for hope--important reasons which will make it easier to stay the difficult course." Catholic Business Journal "Catholic psychiatrist Aaron Kheriaty provides readers with a fresh and extremely useful guide to understanding depression, in the context of faith and science, and he highlights proven avenues to discover genuine hope and healing in the journey." Catholic Medical Quarterly "This is a very well written book and it is recommended to those who have depression and to the interested non-medical reader." Fr. C. John McCloskey "This book should be in every Catholic home."
--Personal Endorsements

How the saints, the sacraments, and psychiatry can help you break depression's grip and find happiness again. 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.

Just started reading this book and have found it very helpful. I recommend it to all to better understand depression and to realize there is great help for you if you struggle with depression and to know many very good strong faith filled people have also struggled with this. I worry that often people think they just are not strong or holy enough and if they can just buck up they can get better on their own. But this book takes that myth away and shows how very strong holy people have suffered with depression and it is not a sign of weakness but it is truly a disease of the brain and there are spiritual and medical ways to get help and live with this difficult disease. I suggest this book highly! Sharon

This is a book that every priest should read. The chapter on suicide, in particular, provides a great deal of information and spiritual insight. I greatly appreciate how solidly -Catholic- this book is throughout. The importance of prayer, the sacraments, and the practice of the virtues is never overlooked; the philosophy is never some form of physicalist reductionism. At the same time, the book is an excellent caution against dismissing depression with the words "Just get over it," as if depression were simply voluntary. It's also very helpful that they describe the difference between depression and acedia, which has many external similarities to it. I have the audio edition of this book also and it is well recorded. That may also be a more discreet option for people who need this book. People I have recommended or lent this book to have found it very helpful. In fact, I try to keep extra copies on hand to give away. I definitely look forward to any other books from this author.

This is a beautiful book and very helpful for a devout Catholic who still can't break the chains of depression. There are parts which appear more geared to the professional counselor than the sufferer, but overall it helped me to realize that I am not alone, that God is with me and understands the darkness, and that there are options for, if not healing, then coping and improving the quality of my life. It is written in language that I understand - Catholic spirituality - and therefore touches me in ways that secular discussions on depression do not. I highly recommend this book.

This book offers incredible insight for believers and non-believers alike. I've suffered from depression in the past and have loved ones who have suffered, or continued to suffer, from this devastating illness. Dr. Kheriarty is brilliant at giving insight as a practicing Catholic and as a highly-qualified psychiatrist. Despite what the world preaches, Dr. Kheriarty gives us the perspective that suffering in this life is inevitable. However, he also gives us wonderful insight and advice on

how to carry our suffering with ultimate victory. I would recommend this book to anyone who experiences the "dark night of the soul" that depression brings or to anyone who suffers from any form of mental health struggle, including anxiety, fear, and distress. What a blessing to have someone write a book that brings such hope.

I love the fact that at least one psychiatrist has written a book from a Christian Sacramental prospective. Along with advice I'm sure from Fr John Cihak this book delivers real insight into what makes us react from the terrible wounds of everyday life both past and present. It offers two types of advice: the normal routine advice from a doctor MD or therapist but more importantly it informs us that most of our ongoing depression stems from a loss in our personal closeness to Jesus Christ. "Unconfessed sin" dooms many so called Christians to a life of constant internal misery and struggle. There may be differing hypothesis but dealing with the ravages of original sin and a fallen world requires more than what that same finite man can offer. This is one of the greatest books that I have had the privilege of reading. I would HIGHLY recommend it to Priests, Pastors, Counselors, Therapists, and Doctors. Furthermore I am suggesting that anyone who is struggling with bouts of depression and just how to be a better representative of Jesus Christ should read and reread this book. In other words: "everyone should read this book"!!

I have read and tried to live the teaching of many Mental Illness and Depression books. This book is the BEST. Written from the Church's perspective and filled with quotes from Scripture, the Catechism, and the Saints, it yields the ENTIRE story on man and his relation to God and suffering. It views the illnesses and processes for recovery from them in a way that is truly Catholic, incorporating the whole person, both body and the often left out soul. Please read this book and learn how much God wants to help you heal!

This book has really helped me in my journey with depression. I could identify with many of the descriptions used, making me feel like the author really understood depression. I really appreciated the look at the differences and ties between depression, spiritual sloth, and dark night of the soul. It helped me accept the idea of taking medication, and has done a lot to help me in helping my spirituality grow through my depression

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