

***James, First, Second,
and Third John***

By Kelly Anderson and Daniel Keating, Baker, 2017, 304 pp., ISBN 978-0-8010-4922-4, \$22.99 (paper).

This recent addition to the Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture series continues the work of previous volumes in providing accessible yet substantive scholarship that is illumined by faith. Written in clear and readable language, this commentary presents the best of contemporary biblical scholarship and the depths of the Church's tradition in a way that



Theology/Spirituality

all readers can understand and appreciate.

Sections for each book begin with a concise introduction that explores topics such as authorship, literary features, theological themes, and timeliness for today. Each passage is thoughtfully explained, and most conclude with a highly practical "Reference and Application" section. Passages also include references to relevant scripture passages, Catechism sections, and uses in the Roman lectionary. Additional features include "Biblical Background" and "Living Tradition" sidebars, pictures, maps, and suggested resources. The sidebars are especially insightful, shedding light on larger biblical themes and exploring interpretations from sources such as Church Fathers, papal encyclicals, and conciliar documents. Locating specific passages is wonderfully easy thanks to the clear noting of verses in the margins and bold lettering for words that come directly from the text.

Throughout the volume, the authors face challenging passages head on, providing alternative explanations. Examples of this include faith versus works in James (compared to Paul), and not sinning yet confessing sin in 1 John. References to the Greek are gently explained in a way that non-scholars can easily grasp. There are many footnotes to additional sources, including other commentaries and many voices from the Church's tradition, particularly emphasizing those from Vatican II to the present.

This commentary is ideal for preachers, teachers, and all other students of scripture. It deserves the widest possible audience, and is highly recommended for all Catholic libraries.

Brian T. Sullivan