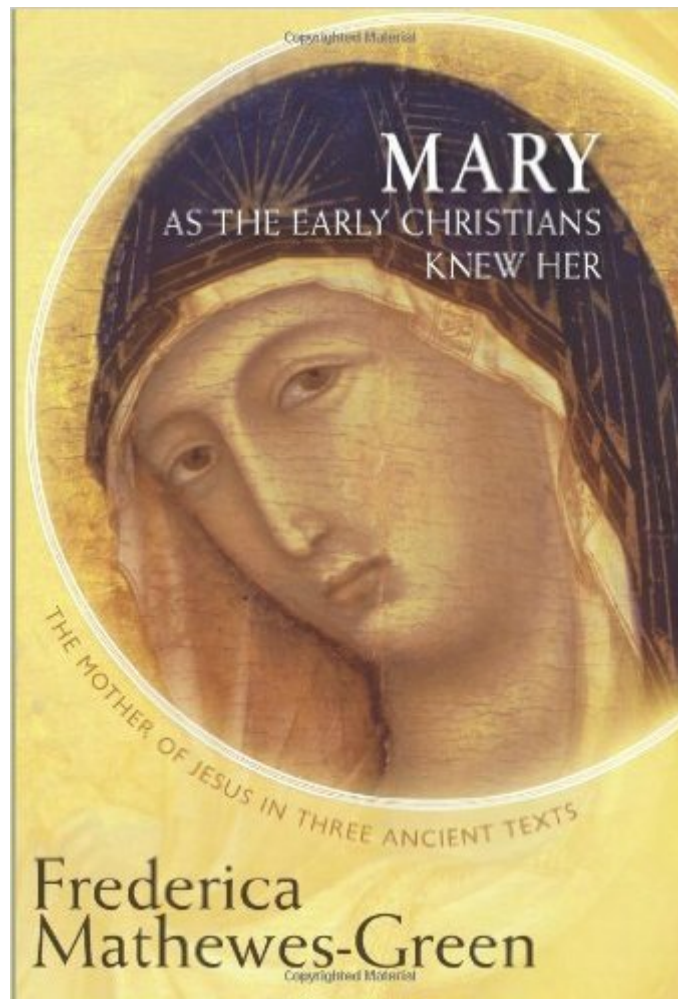


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Mary As The Early Christians Knew Her: The Mother Of Jesus In Three Ancient Texts



Synopsis

Mathewes-Green opens up *The Gospel of Mary* to see her early life, offering a window into her centrality to the Christian Faith in new and sometimes startling ways. Christians have alternatively raised the status of the mother of Jesus to that of her Son or ignored her entirely. Behind all of the images is a girl who grew up to be the mother of Christ. How did the first Christians view her? What were the commonly understood facts about the Blessed Mother's early life, before the Annunciation? How did Mary, the mother of Jesus, become the Theotokos? This book gives some surprising insights.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book was formerly published under the title "The Lost Gospel of Mary." I much prefer the new title--it more accurately reflects the content of the book and does not call to mind the sensationalist (and often heretical) "gnostic gospel" type books that have been all the rage in the last 20 years. This book is not heretical at all, it is simply a straightforward and readable guide to three ancient texts that, while never canonical, were important to ancient Christians. The author comes to these texts from the perspective of an Eastern Orthodox Christian, I come to them as a Lutheran. I differ from her in the expected theological places (mostly) but still find this book to be extremely helpful in my understanding of the role of Mary in our faith. I especially appreciate how she spells out for us again and again how rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures the early Christians were, and how much the language, imagery, and traditions of that Jewish faith informed their understanding of Mary. This is

something much of the church has now lost touch with--especially in the West--and that is much to our detriment. In the West, as well, we have two camps who have gone in wildly different directions regarding their feelings about Mary. Even after the reforms of the last 40 years, the folk Catholic understanding of Mary can be almost dangerously overblown. And Protestants have all too often, shamefully, swept the Blessed Virgin under the rug almost entirely save for an appearance at the stable and once more perhaps at Cana. The perspective offered in this book provides a much-needed corrective to both sides.

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