

# Covenant

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- Use “I” statements—speak from our own experience.
- Ask permission before sharing other participants’ stories outside the group.
- “Lean in, Lean back”: Be conscious of the level of participation that you bring to the conversation. Allow everyone a chance to speak before you speak again.
- You always have permission to “pass.”



# Building Your Own Theology

## Tuesdays, 9:30am – 11:00am

1. *“Liberal Turn in Theology”*

2. September 20

“**Autobiography** as Theology”

3. September 27

“Varieties of Religious **Experience**”

“**Human Nature**”

4. October 4

“**God/gods/Spirit of Life/Ultimate Reality/Sacred/Divine/reality**”

5. October 11

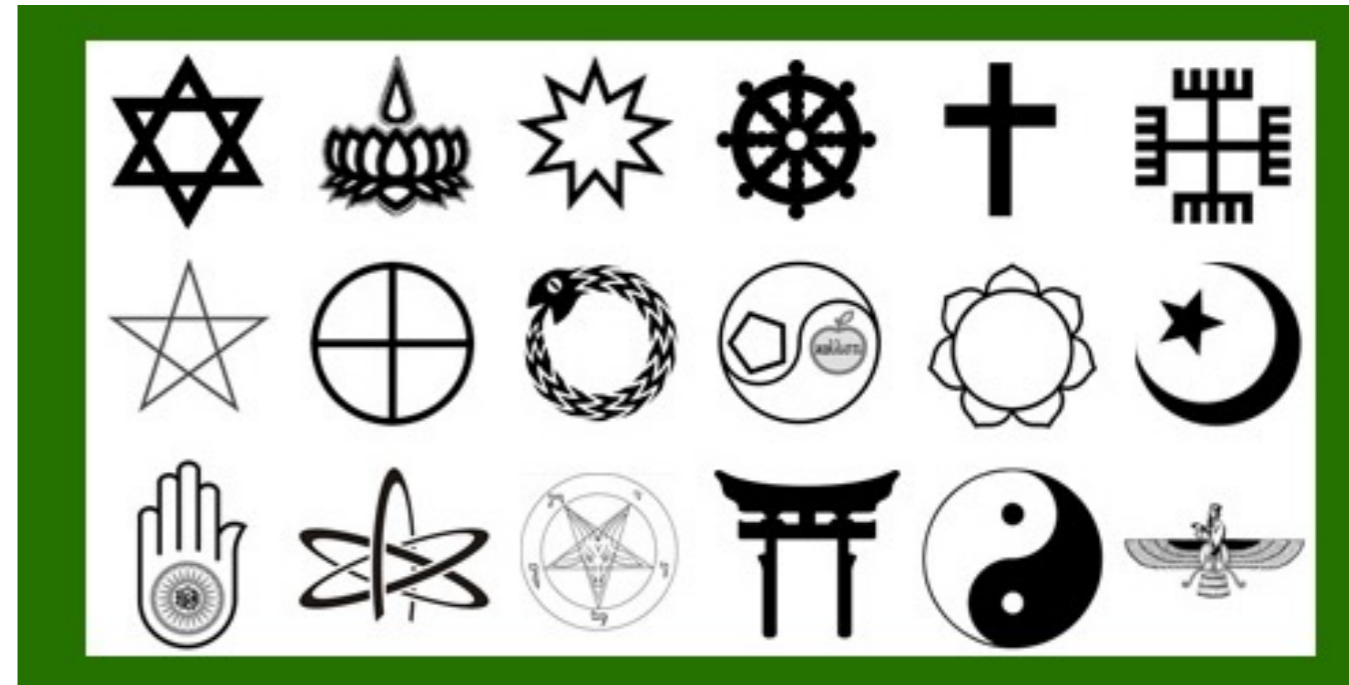
“**Ethics**”

“**Future**”

6. October 18:

“**So What?**”

“**Credo: I Believe**”



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# The Liberal Turn in Theology

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- Latin, *liber* (“free”)
- *from* Tradition/Hierarchy/Community
- *to* Reason/Experience”

# Spiritual Autobiographies

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- 90 minutes / 20 = 5 minutes each (~500 words)

# Spiritual Autobiographies

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- What have you learned from telling your stories?
- How did it feel to articulate and reflect on the expanse of your experiences?

Also see Caputo's "Hoping Against Hope: Confessions of a Postmodern Pilgrim"

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- The *Insistence of God* presents the provocative idea that God does not exist, God *insists*, while God's existence is a human responsibility, which may or may not happen.
- God's existence is haunted by "perhaps," which does not signify indecisiveness but an openness to risk, to the unforeseeable.
- Perhaps constitutes a theology of what is to come and what we cannot see coming.

# THE INSISTENCE OF GOD

## A THEOLOGY OF PERHAPS

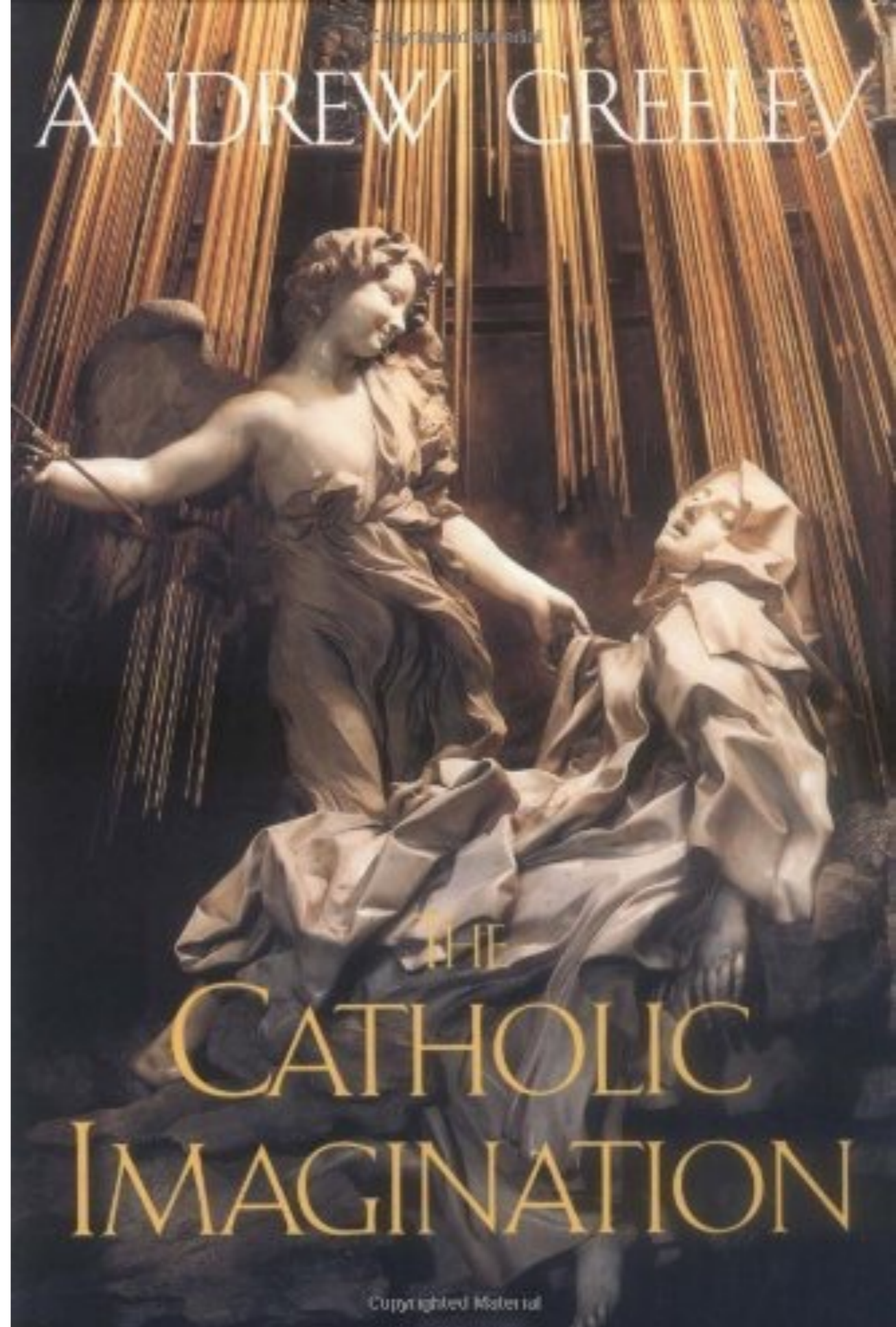


JOHN D. CAPUTO

# Also see many other books by Greeley

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- Catholics live in an enchanted world: a world of statues and holy water, stained glass and votive candles, saints and religious medals, rosary beads and holy pictures.
- But these Catholic paraphernalia are merely hints of a deeper and more pervasive religious sensibility that inclines Catholics to see the Holy lurking in creation.
- The world of the Catholic is haunted by a sense that the objects, events, and persons of daily life are revelations of Grace.
- In this fascinating discussion of what is unique about the Catholic worldview and culture and what distinguishes it from Protestantism, Andrew Greeley examines the religious imagination that shapes Catholics' lives.



- When a lifelong atheist turned to the recovery community to face a personal struggle, she found that imagining a higher power gave her a new freedom. Intellectually, this was quite surprising.
- Meanwhile her husband, famed astrophysicist Joel Primack, was helping create a new theory of the universe based on dark matter and dark energy.
- Abrams finds something worthy of the name “God” in the new science of emergence: just as a complex ant hill emerges from the collective behavior of individually clueless ants, and just as the global economy emerges from the interactions of billions of individuals’ choices. God, she argues, is an “emergent phenomenon” that arises from the staggering complexity of humanity’s collective aspirations and is in dialogue with every individual.
- This God did not create the universe—it created the meaning of the universe. It’s not universal—it’s planetary. It can’t change the world, but it helps us change the world. A God that could be real, Abrams shows us, is what humanity needs to inspire us to collectively cooperate to protect our warming planet and create a long-term civilization.
- See: <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/carlgregg/2015/03/a-god-that-could-be-real/>

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# A GOD THAT COULD BE REAL

SPIRITUALITY, SCIENCE, AND  
THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET

NANCY ELLEN ABRAMS

Forewords by  
ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU  
and PAUL DAVIES

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- Whitley Strieber (*Communion*) and Jeffrey J. Kripal (professor of religion at Rice University) team up on this unprecedented and intellectually vibrant new framing of inexplicable events and experiences.
- All kinds of "impossible" things, from extra-dimensional beings to bilocation to bumps in the night, are not impossible at all: rather, they are a part of our natural world. But this natural world is immeasurably more weird, more wonderful, and probably more populated than we have so far imagined with our current categories and cultures, which are what really make these things seem "impossible."
- The Super Natural considers that the natural world is actually a "super natural world"--and all we have to do to see this is to change the lenses through which we are looking at it and the languages through which we are presently limiting it. In short: The extraordinary exists if we know how to look at and think about it.

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# *The* SUPER NATURAL

A NEW VISION OF  
THE UNEXPLAINED



Whitley Strieber  
*and* Jeffrey J. Kripal

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