

O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation

On Sunday October 22, 2017 at 5pm St John's Cathedral will host for the Bishop's Institute a Diocesan Hymn Festival led by the distinguished hymnologist Dr Carl Daw. The hymn festival will bring together choirs and people from our churches in the Diocese of Florida to sing some great hymns. Dr Daw will help us focus our attention on the rich treasury of church music of the Lutheran, Anglican and Calvinist traditions born of the Protestant Reformation and Martin Luther's seminal act of nailing (or gluing) his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg, Germany 700 years ago on October 31, 1517. A special thanks to the organists Tim Tuller (Cathedral) and James Holyer (St Mark's, Jacksonville) for all the work they have done to bring this hymn festival to fruition.

Sensitive to the fact that the 16th century saw reformation in churches across Europe whether newly called 'Protestant' or those ever in allegiance to the Pope, Dr Daw has sub-titled our hymn festival a celebration of '500 years of continuing reformation' in order to emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit in all Christian church communities and including the contemporary ecumenical and prayerful desire of Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Christians to be united as one body in the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I wrote about the hymn festival a few months back I included a list of some of the best books written in 2016 and in 2017 by both Roman Catholic and Protestant scholars that might help us to mark the significance of the Reformation for our Christian life today. Since then, I have found a whole crop of other books also worthy of our attention. I will not labor you with another list but I would like to point out a series of brief and accessible slim books written by the finest church historians. The paperback series, called 'Very Short Introductions' is published by Oxford University Press—all in paperback and pocketsize and inexpensive. The titles, all available online from Amazon, that relate to the Reformation are:

Catholicism: A Very Short Introduction (soon to be released 2017) by Gerald O'Collins

The Reformation: A Very Short Introduction (2009) by Peter Marshall

Martin Luther: A Very Short Introduction (2010) by Scott H. Hendrix

Protestantism: A Very Short Introduction (2011) by Mark A. Noll and

Calvinism: A Very Short Introduction (2017) by Jon Balsarak

I am currently reading Lyndal Roper's biography of Luther, *Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet* (2017). When I finish I have found something else that has caught my eye. It just arrived in the mail yesterday straight from the jaws of Amazon: *Here I Walk: A Thousand Miles on Foot to Rome with Martin Luther* (2016) by Andrew L. Wilson with an afterword by his wife Sarah

Wilson. In 2010 the Wilsons walked a thousand miles from Erfurt in Germany to Rome in the footsteps of Martin Luther who made the trek in 1511. It looks like a delightful mixture of pilgrimage, spirituality, theology, travelogue and food guide across Europe.

Douglas Dupree
October 3, 2017

Now Thank We All Our God: A Hymn Festival Celebrating 500 Years of Continuing Reformation with hymnologist The Rev. Carl Daw, Sunday 5pm October 22m 2017 at St John's Cathedral. Everyone is welcome (no charge) and there will be a reception following in Taliaferro Hall in the Cathedral. [Click here to view the event poster.](#)