

“Talking Philosophy”: Reading List & Further Information

The books listed below should **all** be available, either new and/or second-hand, from various booksellers, via Amazon UK.

If you are **new** to Philosophy, the following are recommended:-

1. “Sophie’s World” (20th Anniversary Edition) by Jostein Gaarder
(An easy read, from cover to cover, it “punches above its weight”, providing a surprisingly comprehensive and insightful “history of ideas”, with detailed index section at the back, for quick reference. This is an international best-seller, with over 40 million copies sold, and translated into 60 languages!)
2. “The Dead Philosophers’ Café” by Vittorio Hösle
(A great introductory, and exploratory, exercise in the art of philosophical dialogue)
3. “History of Western Philosophy” by Bertrand Russell
(Slightly “dated”, in parts, but remains a best-selling, accessible, and, sometimes, witty and amusing, reference work)

For the **actual** “Talking Philosophy: a Carmelite Perspective – Reading and Discussion Zoom Group”, we shall be starting with the following **two** books, together, “in parallel”, which complement and support one another:-

1. “A New History of Western Philosophy” by Anthony Kenny, in Four Parts, pub 16th August 20212
(Particularly good for group reading and discussion, by a leading philosopher, providing “four volumes in one”, in combining four of his previous books in one volume, at a very competitive price! Takes us further into 20th/21st Century Philosophy than Bertrand Russell’s book – see “Recommended Reading”, item 3, above)
2. “Western Philosophy: An Anthology” by John Cottingham, 3rd Edition, pub 13th May 2021, by Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies
(This is the **best** anthology on the market, covering the widest range of selected readings, in one volume, of any other anthology currently available, by a leading Catholic philosopher, at a reasonable comparative price)

As we finish using selected portions of the books, above, similarly, we shall then go on with the **next two** books, together, “in parallel”, which likewise complement and support one another:-

1. “Edith Stein: A Philosophical Prologue” by Alasdair MacIntyre
(By a leading Catholic philosopher, who was actually “converted” through trying to explain the philosophical theology of Thomas Aquinas to sceptical students!)
2. “A Short History of German Philosophy” by Vittorio Hösle
(From the mediaeval “mystical philosophy” of Meister Eckhart and Nicholas of Cusa to the post WWII “schools” of German Philosophy, including, along the way, Edith Stein and her contemporaries, some of whom were particularly influenced by Meister Eckhart and the “Rhineland mystics”)

Again, as we finish using these, we shall go on, still further, with **another two** books, and so forth, etc, etc.

[NB Any E-book editions of the books we use should best be avoided, as these are proven, from experience, to be quite impractical for Group work and research purposes!]

It is estimated that the **four** items of reading and discussion materials, above, taken together, would last our “Talking Philosophy” Group anything from 18 to 24 months, before going on to **new** material. So this would be “good value”, and “cheaper” than comparable “online” courses, but with **no** essays or course deadlines, to meet! Also, members would “take ownership” of their reading and learning, in dialogue together, and build up a “home library” of Philosophy, to refer to again and again, in future. In the spirit of John Paul II’s encyclical, “Faith and Reason”, a similar structure for a “Talking **Theology**: a Carmelite Perspective - Reading and Discussion Zoom Group – Open to All” could also, subsequently, be rolled out. The “Talking Philosophy” Group will meet **monthly**, and there will of course, be “breaks” for Christmas, Easter, and August, etc, with an optional annual week-end residential Conference, including one or two Guest Speakers, etc. This would afford an opportunity for members to gather together, “in the flesh”, to enjoy one another’s company, and to celebrate our shared interest! For “Talking Philosophy”, apart from the cost of books, for each member, there would be a modest subscription towards other costs, such as that for setting up a suitable “unlimited” Zoom facility, unless we could “borrow” a pre-existing system from somewhere : suggestions, here, would be welcome! “Talking Philosophy” will be **starting**, hopefully, in **February 2022**. “Talking Theology” would be starting, hopefully, the **following** year, in **February 2023**, with **both** these **two Groups** meeting, **monthly, in mutual support**, from then on. Our Zoom sessions will each be **monthly, for two hours**, so, if you would like to join us, we should also like to hear from you the preferred **day(s)** and **time(s)**, each month, when you would like to meet. Please correspond with us, using our email addresses, given on the **other**, attached, “Introductory” document.

