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Religion thatís not afraid of science -- Part 1

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Dairmuid O'Murchu

Ancestral Grace: Meeting God in Our Human Story (Orbis) (32 min.)
The author of the popular book Quantum Theology, Sacred Heart Fr. Diarmuid O?Murchu, in his new book, blends anthropology, psychology and theology, saying that God has been with us during our entire six to seven million year presence on Earth and that, for most of that time, we humans lived harmoniously within the natural world.

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Religion that?s not afraid of science

Three recent books take seriously the story science tells us about where we are and how we got here on Earth. NCR columnist Rich Heffern talks with the authors to discuss the implications for religion of modern science's account of an unimaginably vast universe of 500 billion galaxies and the evolution of humans that took place over millions of years.

Read Rich Heffern's review of these books:

Robert Heinlein?s science fiction classic Orphans of the Sky is the story of an enormous ?multigeneration? starship, five miles long and thousands of feet wide, outfitted for a long voyage to Far Centaurus, a distant place in our galaxy.

Three or four generations into the voyage, the inhabitants, after a long-ago mutiny, have forgotten that they live on a ship and that it?s supposed to go somewhere. For them, the ship?s windowless interior is their entire universe, and even the idea that something might exist ?outside? the ship is so foreign a concept that most can?t imagine it. Their lives revolve around the necessities of eating, mating and feeding the matter converter, controlled by a high priesthood of ?scientists,? themselves ignorant of where they actually are.

When the story?s protagonist, Hugh Hoyland, a young man with ambitions of becoming a scientist, is forcibly thrown into the company of mutants who occupy the upper decks, he has his eyes opened to what the ship truly is when the two-headed leader takes him to the bridge to look out the window at the stars. Hugh starts a battle to educate all the inhabitants and put the ship back on track, but first he is jailed and accused of heresy.

And it?s an apt parable for religious views in America today.

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