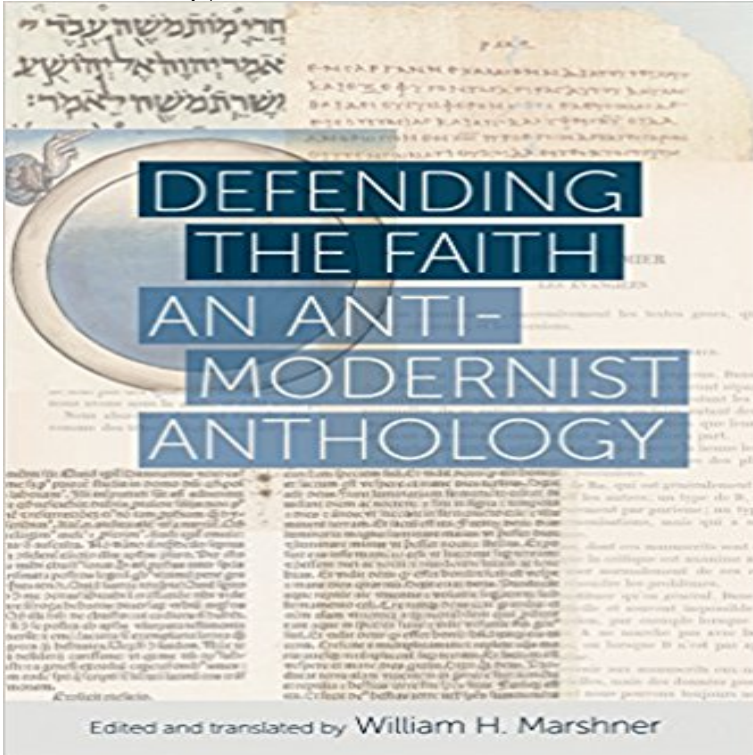


Defending the Faith: An Anti-Modernist Anthology



At the dawn of the 20th Century, several writers who were to become famous under the title of Modernists were advancing a deep agenda for reform in the faith and praxis of the Roman Catholic Church. But their agenda met with serious and scholarly opposition from another group of writers, whose essays are here made available in English. They include the historian and university rector Pierre Battifol, the biblical exegete M.J. Lagrange, OP, the Jesuit historical theologians Eugène Portalié and Léonce de Grandmaison, and the philosophers Eugène Franon and Joannès Wehrli. All welcomed the historico-critical methods of research, and far from thinking them fatal to orthodoxy (as the Modernists did), they thought the Church's faith would survive and be strengthened by rigorous scholarship. These thinkers, then, are the true predecessors of Pius XII (*Divino afflante Spiritu*) and Vatican II (*Dei Verbum*). At the same time, these men thought outside the boxes drawn by 19th Century Positivism (Loisy), anti-intellectualist pragmatism (LeRoy), and romantic mysticism (Tyrrell). Their concerns hold new significance in the light of John Paul II's 1990 encyclical *Fides et Ratio*. Reading these too-long forgotten writers, then, deepens in a new way one's understanding of the Church's decision to decline and even condemn the Modernists' agenda, whether one ultimately applauds that decision or deplors it.

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