

**THE HAND OF GOD:  
A THEOLOGY FOR  
THE PEOPLE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649087051

The hand of God: a theology for the people by Martin J. Scott

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Cover @ 2017

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# THE HAND OF GOD

## A THEOLOGY FOR THE PEOPLE

BY  
MARTIN J. SCOTT, S.J.  
AUTHOR OF "GOD AND MYSELF"



*Thirtieth Thousand*

NEW YORK  
P. J. KENEDY & SONS

1919

H-BP  
217  
542

BK  
1754  
5435  
1918

COLL. CHRISTI. REGIS  
BIB. MAJ.  
TORONTO

**Imprimi Potest :**

ANTONIUS MAAS, S.J.  
*Præpositus Proo. Marylandia Neo-Eboracensis*

**nihil Obstat :**

ARTHURUS T. SCANLAN, S.T.D.  
*Censor Librorum*

**Imprimatur :**

JOSEPHUS MOONEY  
*Administrator*

NEO-EBORACI  
*die 2, Octobris, 1918*

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*A tender child of summers three,  
Seeking her little bed at night,  
Paused on the dark stairs timidly.  
"O Mother! take my hand," said she,  
"And then the dark will all be light."*

*We older children grope our way  
From dark behind to dark before;  
And only when our hands we lay,  
Dear Lord, in Thine, the night is day,  
And there is darkness nevermore.*

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER





## PREFACE

**T**HE Constitution of the United States is a very plain document. Yet thousands of volumes have been written to explain its meaning. Even now it is only the Constitution lawyer who may be expected to speak with assurance on it. That does not mean that the people at large are ignorant of it. They know in a general way all that is necessary about it. But if called on to explain it to those of other nations they might feel rather embarrassed to do so. They know enough about it to admire and love it, and they would know in a general way if anything was done contrary to its spirit. And that is sufficient for the average citizen.

But there are some who desire to be thoroughly conversant with whatever subject concerns them. They want to be well informed for their own satisfaction and for the enlightenment of others. These make a study of the constitution by reading what leading jurists have written in regard to it, and by talking about it when opportunity offers.

It is so with religion. The majority of mankind know the essential teaching of the Christian Religion. They understand all that is necessary

in order to live as God directs. They are not concerned about a critical knowledge of Faith. Theirs is a practical knowledge, and it is enough for the generality of mankind. But there are some who desire to know their religion intimately. They wish to be its champion if need be. At least they desire to give to an enquirer a reason for their faith and practise.

Theologians study religion as lawyers study the constitution. But we can not all be theologians as we can not all be lawyers. However as one may obtain a good notion of the constitution without being as conversant with it as a lawyer, so one may be well versed in religion without the long and laborious study of the theologian.

The present volume is intended to present the Catholic religion to the ordinary reader in a way which will be simple but sufficient. I should say rather that it aims at presenting some subjects of the Catholic religion, for I have selected only a few topics. But they are such that if rightly understood will throw light on the entire matter. Moreover they are subjects which are not any too well understood by a great many people. Also they are the very things which those outside the Church persist in misunderstanding and misrepresenting.

A Catholic should therefore have a good talking