Introduction

Linguistic, spiritual and historical strands intertwine in this book. Our aim has been to revive the Apostle Thomas and his teachings on Jesus. The introduction situates the Thomas tradition in its complex historical and intertextual setting. In our translations of The Gospel of Thomas we strive to use flowing language in order to open up the ideas of this scripture. The multilingual facing-page format gives readers an opportunity to enrich their knowledge of English, Haitian Creole or French by means of immediate feedback.

Our project began in the year 2003. The base version of The Gospel of Thomas in Haitian Creole and French is the English translation by Dr. Hans-Gebhard Bethge. We chose to use Dr. Bethge’s translation because it is reliable and readable; it allows everyone to grasp the teachings in The Gospel of Thomas. Alongside Dr. Bethge’s English version, we used Koester and Lambdin’s English version (in Robinson 1978) and Stollman’s Dutch version (2003). Our hope is that this multilingual tool will spur further work on the Nag Hammadi codices.

In early 2004, Dr. Hans-Gebhard Bethge, Professor in the Theology Faculty at Humboldt-University in Berlin, Germany, kindly granted us permission to use his English version which appeared first in a book entitled The Fifth Gospel (Patterson et al. 1998). Dr. Bethge has also made various changes and corrections to the text appearing here.

Also in 2004, Dr. Michel Weber, Researcher at the Institut supérieur de Philosophie of the Université catholique in Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, agreed to prepare a new French version also based upon Dr. Bethge’s text.

We are very happy to offer the public this precious scripture in a format that is sure to refresh the understanding of Christianity and advance the knowledge of English, Haitian Creole and French.