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Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- An American Venus and virgin: the sacramental dynamic of the Midwestern land -- Protestantism, literalism, and the sacramental body of the Midwest -- Winesburg under the sway of "New Englanders' gods": Puritanism, industrialism, materialism, and the Midwestern fall -- "The fields fell into the forms of women": sexual and gendered associations of the land in Horses and men -- Laughing at "fake talk": the guttural silence of the Midwestern land in Dark laughter -- "Fleshly but beyond just flesh": the salvific sacramental meaning of the land in Poor white and Beyond desire -- "I'm a good Catholic, but I could get along with caring for trees": nature and sacramental community in Willa Cather's O Pioneers! and My Antonia -- "A story of the West, after all": the sacramental and Midwestern pastoral subtext of F. Scott Fitzgerald's The great Gatsby -- The return to "hard, natural things": from pastoral delusion to rock-bottom reality in Ruth Suckow's The folks -- Sacramentalism in a postmodern farm novel: Ginny Smith's spiritual journey in Jane Smiley's A thousand acres -- Epilogue.