



A Reading List of Books Related to the Catholic Faith

Recommended by Members of the Order of Malta for each other's consideration

Order of Malta:

H.J.A. Sire: [The Knights of Malta](#) More of a textbook for someone who is interested in an in-depth study

Desmond Seward: [The Monks of War](#) A general history of the chivalric orders

Ernle Bradford: [The Knights of the Order](#) Provides an easy reading history of the Hospitallers of St John

[Membership in the Order of Malta, Regulations and Commentary](#)

[Journals of Spirituality](#) Available on the Order's website and the Federal Association website

Our Catholic Faith:

Jim Burnham and Frank Chacon: [Beginning Apologetics](#)

William Jurgens: [The Faith of the Early Fathers](#) (3 volume set)

Karl Keating: [What Catholics Really Believe](#) A short Q-and-A by a masterful apologist

Ronald Knox: [The Belief of Catholics](#)

H. W. Crocker III: [Triumph – The Triumph and the Glory of the Catholic Church](#) Provides an elegant explanation of the Catholic faith

Karl Keating: [Catholicism and Fundamentalism](#) provides a clear and powerful defense of Catholicism in light of fundamentalism and misconceptions of the Catholic belief.

Peter Kreeft: [Catholic Christianity – A Complete Collection of Catholic Belief Based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church](#)

Scott Hahn: [Rome Sweet Home: Our Journey to Catholicism](#) The truth of the faith explained through a story of conversion

Dana Paul Robinson: [A Parent's Catechism: Passing on the Catholic Faith](#) thoughtful, hopeful eloquent examination of the basics of the Catholic faith

G. K. Chesterton: [Orthodoxy](#) Chesterton's classic defense of the Christian faith

G. K. Chesterton: [The Everlasting Man](#) Chesterton's reading of history through the lens of Catholicism

Lawrence S Cunningham: [The Catholic Faith, An Introduction](#)

Monika Hellwig: [Understanding Catholicism](#)

Kevin Orlin Johnson: [Why Do Catholics Do That?](#)

Romano Guardini: [The Lord](#) (1954, reissued 2000 with an introduction by Cardinal Ratzinger)

James Martin: [Jesus: A Pilgrimage](#)

Avery Cardinal Dulles: Models of the Church (1974, 1986, 2000) Profound examination of ways of looking at the Church

C.S. Lewis: Mere Christianity This takes the reader through Christian claims from the ground up, with great clarity and imagination. The second half of the book lays out applied Christianity. Lewis was an Anglican (as was Chesterton at the time he wrote the books recommended here), but he set out to explain the basics of Christianity – And there is nothing in the book that is inconsistent with Catholic teaching. He is the best expositor of them all.

Jean Lafitte: The Choice of the Family: A Call to Wholeness, Abundant Life and Enduring Happiness Lafitte, the prelate of the Order, wrote this when he was secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Family

Pope Pius XI: Casti Connubi Discusses the sanctity of marriage, opposition to eugenics, prohibition of artificial birth control and the purpose of sexuality, and a reaffirmation on the prohibition of abortion.

Spirituality:

Robert Barron: The Strangest Way Bishop Barron ties in literature and spirituality in a compelling book about discipleship

Gerald Vann: The Divine Pity A wonderful book on the Beatitudes as applied to everyday family life is currently out of print but used copies are available under this title or The Seven Sweet Blessings of Christ

Michael Quoist: Prayers Compelling contemporary prayers composed by a French priest

Ronald Rolheiser: The Holy Longing A sensitive treatment of modern challenges to religious faith, an explanation of the essentials of spiritual life – a book for anyone struggling with spiritual life

Louis Boyer: Introduction to the Spiritual Life Fresh translation of the classic from Ave Maria Press

Jean-Pierre de Cassaude: Abandonment to Divine Providence A more complete edition by Catholic Way

Francis de Sales: Introduction to the Devout Life

(Alan Bancroft recent translation) Columba Marmion: Christ the Life of the Soul A book to be meditated on, , not read, as it presents clear and accurate Catholic doctrine.

Wulstan Mork: A Synthesis of the Spiritual Life A comprehensive study, boiling down to the essence of Christian life, in union with the triune God, written in a very readable way.

John Chapman: The Spiritual Letters Letters to lay and religious written nearly a century ago that demonstrate a deep knowledge of the human soul and wide experience of the soul's problems

Brother Lawrence: The Practice of the Presence of God: The Best Rule of Holy Life Brother Lawrence, a monk in the 1600s, spent many years practicing the presence of God at all times

Thomas Merton: Praying the Psalms

Thomas Merton: Thoughts in Solitude

Thomas Merton: The Seven-Storey Mountain Merton's autobiography before he became a Trappist monk, and a classical account of conversion and the events that led him to the Trappist way.

Donald Wuerl: Seek First the Kingdom, Challenging the Culture by Living our Faith A detailed history of Catholic Church involvement in social services from before the founding of this country to now

Demetrius Dumm: Flowers in the Desert, Spirituality of the Bible

Matthew Kelly: Rediscover Jesus, An Invitation

Peter van Breeman: The God Who Wouldn't Let Go

Cardinal John Henry Newman: Parochial and Plain Sermons. Sermons given in the 19th century, but still relevant today.

Sacraments and Liturgy:

Donald Wuerl: The Mass Explains in most readable form every detail of the Mass

Wulstan Mork: Transformed by Grace, Scripture, Sacraments and the Sonship of Christ A discussion of the sacraments as a "grace drenched" encounter with God, who meets us in these moments to draw us into union with him.

Spiritual Reading:

Michael Casey: Sacred Reading: The Art of Lectio Divina The practice of *lectio* is an exercise in spiritual reading that leads to a deeper sense of the presence of God

Clarence Enzler: Let us be what we are A conversation with God, with fresh insights into Christian life, and how to live and die as a Christian

Columba Stewart: Prayer and Community: The Benedictine Tradition Demonstration that Benedictine spirituality is for all Christians while being the foundation for the Order of Malta's spiritual life

Basil Hume: The Intentional Life Cardinal Hume, a monk and abbot before becoming the Archbishop of Westminster, is a prolific writer with a talent in speaking about many aspects of the spiritual life. See also The Mystery of Love or Cardinal Basil Hume: In My Own Words

Henri Nouwen: The Selfless Way of Christ Most are familiar with Nouwen's works. A prolific writer who has much to say in a simple profound way gives us much to think about. See also In Memoriam A letter written at the death of his mother; A Spirituality of Caregiving Written for those who are care-givers; The Return of the Prodigal Son A sustained reflection on the meaning of Rembrandt's famous painting; Inner Voice of Love, The Genesee Diary: Report from a Trappist Monastery; Essential Writings (Modern Spiritual Masters Series).

Anne Field: Blessed by our Brokenness Written with compassion to help us face the inevitable losses we experience through aging, illness and other causes of suffering

Maria Boulding: Gateway to Resurrection Written by a Benedictine nun during her last few months of life while enduring cancer, revealing her return to fundamental Christian beliefs.

Walter Ciszek: With God in Russia Treats the patience, endurance and fortitude of Father Ciszek who lived 23 years in the Soviet Union ministering to the needs of Catholics while endangering his life many times.

Catherine Doherty: Poustinia: Encountering God in Silence, Solitude and Prayer Catherine Doherty brings her Russian cultural and experiential understanding of the mystical aspects of prayer to our daily life.

Cardinal Edward Egan: Practice for Heaven

Patrick Altern: Maurice and Therese The Story of Love An inspiring correspondence between St. Therese of Lisieux and a struggling priest

Archimandrite Sophrony: Monk of Mt Athos A presentation of the life and teachings of the Russian Orthodox St Silouan, a mystic offering precious teachings on interior prayer, starting with the "Jesus Prayer"

Walter Kasper: Mercy The Essence of the Gospel and Key to Christian Life A theology of compassion

C.S. Lewis: [Surprised by Joy](#) Lewis's account of his own conversion to Christianity

Victor Lee Austin: [Losing Susan](#) A powerful narrative, some say more so than C.S. Lewis's on the same subject, where in losing his young wife, this Anglican priest slowly discovers that we are called to God in the face of suffering

Sheila Cassidy: [Sharing the Darkness](#) A British hospice doctor reflects on the spirituality of caring for the sick and dying

Frank Sheed: [The Map of Life](#) The English publisher and writer from the mid-20th century describes what it means to follow Christ.

Caryll Houselander: [The Reed of God](#) Written during World War II in London, this book shows how Our Lady matters in our daily life. Especially recommended for *Advent*.

Science

John F Haught: [God After Darwin](#)

Robert J Spitzer: [Evidence for God from Physics and Philosophy: Extending the Legacy of Monsignor Georges Lemaitre and St Thomas Aquinas](#) Father Spitzer, a Jesuit, addresses theories on the origin of the universe, and expressly refutes Charles Dawkins

Scripture

Raymond E Brown: [An Introduction to the New Testament](#)

Daniel J Harrington: [How Do Catholics Read the Bible?](#)

Lawrence Boadt: [Reading the Old Testament](#)

Raymond E. Brown: [An Adult at Christmas](#)

Brown, Fitzmeyer & Murphy, eds: [New Jerome Biblical Commentary](#)

Donald Senior, ed.: [The Catholic Study Bible](#) (New American Bible)

Church History

Thomas Bokenkotter: [A Concise History of the Catholic Church](#) (2005)

Vivian Green: [A New History of Christianity](#)

Owen Chadwick: [A History of Christianity](#)

John O'Malley: [What Happened at Vatican II?](#)

Church Fathers

St. Augustine: [Confessions](#) Highly recommend for the prose in the translation by Maria Boulding, OSB

Boniface Ramsey: [Beginning to Read the Church Fathers](#)

Catholic Social Teaching

Daniel J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon, editors Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage Contains papal teaching from Leo XIII through Benedict XVI, and it adds three letters from the US Catholic bishops on racism, war and peace and economic justice.

Dorothy Day: The Long Loneliness Autobiography of the founder of the Catholic Worker Movement

Dorothy Day: Selected Writings This substantial selection of the thinking of Dorothy Day over nearly 50 years provides innumerable passages for reflection

John F Kavanaugh: Following Christ in a Consumer Society An application of Catholic Social Thought to life in modern America.

Richard John Neuhaus: The Preferential Option for the Poor Another take on Catholic teaching about social justice

Mother Teresa and Brian Kolodiejchuk: Come Be My Light

Jean Vanier: Becoming Human Vanier proposes that by opening ourselves to outsiders, and to those we perceive as weak, different, or inferior, we can achieve true personal and societal freedom.

Jean Vanier: Befriending the Stranger

Jean Vanier: Jesus the Gift of Love

Jean Vanier: From Brokenness to Community A brief introduction to the thought of the founder of the *L'Arche* communities consisting of the two talks given at Harvard. provides a sense of Vanier's spirituality based on the vulnerability of all of us and the dignity of every life.

Jean Vanier: The Gospel of John, The Gospel of Relationship A chapter-by-chapter exploration of the Gospel of John, that explains how Jesus taught this lesson at every step of his ministry, includes stories from his work with L'Arche.

Andrew V. Abela and Joseph E Capizzi: A Catechism for Business: Tough Ethical Questions and Insights from Catholic Social Teaching.

Pope Francis: The Joy of the Gospel

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the USCCB: Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

USCCB: Economic Justice for All

Pope Francis, Cardinal Wuerl Matthew Kelly and others: Beautiful Mercy, Experiencing God's Unconditional Love So We Can Share It With Others

Environment

Pope Francis: Laudato Si

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2415-2418

Conscience

John Henry Newman: A Letter addressed to His Grace, the Duke of Norfolk See Chapter 5 for Newman's classical defense of the priority of conscience

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1776-1802

St John Paul II: Veritas Splendor The Splendor of Truth

Religious Liberty

USCCB: Our First and Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement of Religious Liberty

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2104-2109

St John Paul II: Ut Unum Sint, On Commitment to Ecumenism

Ecumenism

Presentation of Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
November 21, 2004 The Vatican website

Bioethics

National Catholic Bioethics Center, 2011: A Catholic Guide to End of Life Decisions an explanation of Catholic teaching on advance medical directives, euthanasia and physician assisted suicide

Joan Glick: Ethics and Medics Extraordinary Means and Intensive Care (NCB Quarterly January, 2016 Vol 41 No. 1)

Catholic Bishops of Maryland: Comfort and Consolation: Care of the Sick and Dying (mdcathcon.org)

Catholic Bishops of Maryland: Comfort and Consolation: Q-and-A Questions to Consider now and at the Hour of Our Death (Supplement to the Pastoral Letter 12 pp)

Catholic Bishops of Maryland: Health Care Directives: A Catholic Perspective A supplement to the pastoral letter above

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2258-2301

St John Paul II: Evangelium Vitae: The Gospel of Life

Order of Malta Federal Association Publications (presented through Paulist Press)

Shepherdson Abell: Malta Meditations Reflections on the role of prayer and the meaning of the Beatitudes for the spirituality of the Order of Malta

Spirituality Committee: Many Ways to Pray A resource book for the Order of Malta

Spirituality Committee: Lessons from the L'Arche Communities for the Order of Malta