

# Order of Malta – Federal Association, USA

## Readings

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## Defense of the Faith

*Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum*: the defense of the Faith and care for the poor and the sick, are the two charisms of the Order of Malta. There is a relationship between the two. In her speech at the National Prayer Breakfast in 1994, Saint Mother Teresa observed that we in the materially prosperous West suffer from “spiritual poverty,” which she described as “the worst poverty and the most difficult to overcome.” People who do not know the Faith are less likely to practice it, to pass it on to their children, to evangelize to others, and to defend it against external and internal threats. If one is not persuaded be a Catholic in the first place, one is not likely to want to engage in the charitable works of the Order. It is therefore necessary to know the Faith. Many of the readings below are designed to educate us in the many rich dimensions of the Catholic Faith and equip us to combat spiritual poverty in our own souls, within the Church itself, and in our society at large. Others are geared specifically toward the defense against

external threats. And others are designed to apply the social teachings of the Church to addressing major issues in social, political, and economic life.

## **A. Our Catholic Faith**

*The readings in this section present the fundamentals of the Faith: its philosophical and historical underpinnings; the teachings of Christ; the sacraments He created to enable us to live the Faith and keep true to it; the doctrines of the Church as they originated, as they developed through the Church's discernment over time, and as new social, political, economic, and scientific phenomena emerged that required the Church's teachings.*

*Catechism of the Catholic Church.* The Catechism, published under the pontificate of St. Pope John Paul II, is the authentic reference text of Catholic doctrine. It is arranged in four principal parts:

- The Profession of Faith: a detailed explanation of each element of the Apostles' Creed.
- The Celebration of the Christian Mystery: this section explains the Sacred Liturgy and each of the seven Sacraments.
- Life in Christ: this section is a thorough review of how to lead a Christian life. It includes the Beatitudes and how they fulfill the desire for happiness, morality, the virtues, sin, life in community, grace and justification, and the Ten Commandments.
- Christian Prayer (including how to pray, the modes of prayer, and the Lord's Prayer).

The text contains exhaustive references to the various sources of Church doctrine, including the Bible, the writings of the Church Fathers, authoritative papal statements, and the Ecumenical Councils. It is explicitly designed to serve as the foundation for special catechisms tailored to different countries and age groups.

Peter Kreeft, *Catholic Christianity – A Complete Collection of Catholic Belief Based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church.* This is a detailed compendium of the teachings derived from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It is written in easier-to-read English narrative than the text of the original *Catechism*, and because of this accessibility, may well be the most valuable single volume review of the entirety of the Catholic Faith. Prof. Kreeft, a convert to the Faith, supplies not only the beliefs of Catholicism, but the compelling reasons for those beliefs. His 425-page book has been given the Church's *nihil obstat* and *imprimatur*, ensuring the reader that it is free of doctrinal error.

Karl Keating, *What Catholics Really Believe: 52 Answers to Common Misconceptions About the Catholic Church.* A short Q-and-A by a masterful apologist. Keating addresses misconceptions about such matters as: the infallibility of the pope, alleged contradictions in the Bible, the historical veracity of the Bible, the Mass, divorce and annulment, the Immaculate Conception, salvation, evangelization, Church disciplines, and miracles.

Ronald Knox, *The Belief of Catholics.* Knox was one of the foremost Anglican converts to the Catholic Faith in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His masterful 250-page book provides compelling arguments

for Catholicism addressed to the serious believing Protestant. However, then, he wrestles with the much more difficult question: how to persuade the nominal or lukewarm Christian, whether Protestant or Catholic, the atheist, and the agnostic. His motivation: to counter the decline of religion during his lifetime.

Kevin Orlin Johnson, *Why Do Catholics Do That?* This is an excellent brief guide to the practices and customs of the Church. It explains such matters as: different styles of worship, different versions of the Mass, the symbology of the sacraments, the stations of the cross, the rosary, the structure of the Church's hierarchy, the role of religious, the role of the laity, apparitions, priestly vestments, relics, sacramentals, holy water, incense, candles, miraculous medals, and Church music.

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.

Brant Pitre, *The Case for Jesus*. This is one of the most compelling reviews of the biblical and historical evidence for Christ that takes into account the best scholarship in the field. It reviews some of the most astonishing prophecies from the Old Testament.

Bishop Robert Barron, *Vibrant Paradoxes*. A collection of short essays that explain some of the great apparent contradictions and mysteries of the Faith. Bishop Barron points to how seemingly paradoxical phenomena in our Faith are actually united: grace and nature, faith and reason, Scripture and tradition, body and soul, God's strength perfected in weakness, a single God who has three Persons, how divine life is manifested in a single human life, etc.

Dana Paul Robinson, *A Parent's Catechism: Passing on the Catholic Faith*. A thoughtful, hopeful, and eloquent examination of the basics of the Catholic faith.

Lawrence S. Cunningham, *The Catholic Faith, An Introduction*

Monika Hellwig, *Understanding Catholicism*

## **B. Conversions: Lessons in the Fundamentals of the Faith**

*Stories of conversions are among the most compelling, engrossing, and persuasive ways to learn the fundamentals of the Faith. Many converts – especially those who have written about their conversions – have made extraordinary studies of Church history and of comparisons with other religious traditions, and have used particular examples to show how they were persuaded to consider Catholicism. These stories are among the best literature that one can give to Protestant*

*friends who might be open to hearing the Church's truth as well as to cradle Catholics who were never well catechized and who may have even left the Church for other ecclesial communities. They are fascinating ways of reinforcing one's Faith.*

David Currie, *Born Fundamentalist, Born Again Catholic*. This book presents the author's step-by-step acceptance of Catholic doctrines. It is full of excellent and astonishing facts. Because it is so charitably written, it is one of the best books one can give a Protestant.

Scott Hahn and Kimberly Hahn, *Rome Sweet Home: Our Journey to Catholicism*. The truth of the faith explained through a story of conversion. Scott Hahn was a Presbyterian minister, a Biblical scholar, and militantly anti-Catholic. He and his wife relate the story of their discovery of the truths of the Catholic Faith through their study of scripture. Among the many powerful points they make is that the doctrine of the Reformers, *sola scriptura*, (i.e., scripture must be the only source of authority), has no basis whatsoever in scripture itself. Altogether, this book is a powerful tonic to reinforce the faith of lukewarm Catholics.

Patrick Madrid, *Surprised by Truth* (3 Volumes). These are collective volumes each of whose chapters is an autobiographical story of the author's conversion. Conversions from many religious faiths are described. Volume 1 is arguably the best. These are good books to give to people of other faiths to show the journeys that some of their co-religionists have taken to become Catholics.

St. Augustine: *Confessions*, Highly recommend for the prose in the translation by Maria Boulding, OSB. This is St. Augustine's classic autobiographical story of his conversion to Christianity. He reviews his early life of sinful behavior, his exploration of different philosophical and religious alternatives, and his ultimate journey to the Catholic faith. Filled with philosophical, theological, and spiritual insights, Augustine's book serves as a guide to conversion.

C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*. Lewis's account of his own conversion to Christianity.

### **C. The Faith Defended: Catholic Apologetics**

*There are many ways to defend the Faith. But one cannot defend a Faith that one neither knows nor understands sufficiently. St. Peter enjoins us to "Be ready always with an answer to everyone who asks a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). Again, this is impossible if one cannot marshal good reasons. To make matters more complicated, so many of the ways the Catholic Faith has been attacked include arguments by Protestant denominations that almost always are based on misunderstanding of Catholic doctrines and disciplines and often on false information. It is necessary, therefore, to be aware of those arguments and their misinformed basis.*

*Defenders of the Faith should also have some rudimentary familiarity with philosophy, which is one of the greatest instruments we can possess. This includes an elementary understanding of metaphysics – the philosophy of how anything can come to exist (see the section on readings on*

*Science below). Basic philosophical knowledge also includes understanding the general idea of the Natural Law and the created order. Natural Law is what C.S. Lewis called “the Law of Decent Behavior” – it is the Moral Law that is written by God on the human heart and that exists independently of any man-made laws. It relates to the created order insofar as everything that God has created has its natural purpose, the violation of which is a violation of the Natural Law. Natural Law is thus the foundation of such Catholic teachings as the sanctity of life and the proper purposes of the sexual faculty, and the purposes of marriage.*

*Defenders of the Faith should be able to refute intellectual relativism (the rejection of absolute truth), and moral relativism (the rejection of objective moral standards) – especially given Pope Benedict XVI’s observation that we live today in a “dictatorship of relativism.” The intellectual relativist argues: “This may be true for you, but it isn’t true for me” – which is like saying that there is no absolute truth. The statement that “it is absolutely true that there is no absolute truth” is self-refuting. It is a violation of one of the basic principles of logic – the “law of non-contradiction” (where two statements that are opposite cannot both be true at the same time).*

*In this regard, atheists and agnostics make their own arguments, including some that invoke science, which faithful Catholics must also be equipped to address. For example, when an atheist argues that nothing can be known unless it is proven to be true by scientific validation, one must be able to point out that this proposition is self-refuting, as it claims to be a true statement, yet it cannot be proven scientifically.*

*The subsequent section on Church History includes readings that defend against specific attacks on the Church’s conduct through history.*

Karl Keating, *Catholicism and Fundamentalism: The Attack on “Romanism” by Bible Christians*. This extraordinary book provides a clear and powerful defense of Catholicism in the face of the Protestant/Fundamentalist/Evangelical critique. Reviewing the “classic” Fundamentalist treatise attacking the Catholic faith, Keating shows how so much of Protestant arguments are based on misinformation about Catholicism. He then addresses each major doctrine of the Faith contested by Protestants and shows why they are true. This volume is one of the most useful defenses of each controversial Catholic doctrine. It is the foundational book of modern apologetics. It is also a fascinating way – insofar as it addresses the issues in the context of controversy – for Catholics to learn basic doctrines of the Faith.

Peter Kreeft and Ronald K. Tacelli, *Handbook of Catholic Apologetics*. A complete summary of all the basic elements of the Christian faith and specific Catholic doctrines. It includes Protestant-friendly arguments in favor of Catholic doctrine on major differences between the Catholic faith and Protestantism.

Peter Kreeft, *Christianity for Modern Pagans: Pascal’s Pensees, Edited, Outlined and Explained*. This is a remarkable distillation of most of Pascal’s “bullet points” -- the main arguments of the book he never finished – explained by one of the greatest living expositors of the Faith. Kreeft says that no writer in history is a more effective Christian apologist than Pascal – especially for today’s “confused, secularized pagans (inside and outside the Church).” This

book is one of the most powerful weapons against sloth (“*acedia*”) -- understood as the failure to lead an examined life.

G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*. This is Chesterton brilliant interpretation of history through the lens of Catholicism. The vehicle he uses is a rebuttal of H.G. Wells’ and contemporary social Darwinists’ interpretation of man as simply a more evolved animal and Jesus as just another charismatic leader. Chesterton argues that the distinction between man and the apes is that, in the evolutionary process, man acquired an immortal soul. Then he argues that if Jesus was just another charismatic leader who established another in a litany of human-created religions, He was a bizarrely unusual leader whose religion is truly extraordinary. C.S. Lewis described this book as “the best popular defence of the Christian position I know.”

G. K. Chesterton: *Orthodoxy*. Chesterton’s classic defense of the Christian faith. Here, Chesterton shows how the Faith is not just a revealed truth, but a solution to the fulfillment of real human needs. Chesterton argues against the skepticism of secular humanists, agnostics, and those who invoke science as the foundation of all truth.

Trent Horn, *Answering Atheism*. Of the many books in this genre, this is one of the most persuasive and accessible. It is also charitably written in a way that is designed not to offend atheists or agnostics. It is also written for audiences that include atheists. It is skillful in this regard insofar as it does not invoke scripture as an authoritative source as other books in this genre do – a practice that is not persuasive to those for whom scripture has no authority.

Catholic Answers Staff, *The Essential Catholic Survival Guide*. This is one of the most useful and accessible reference works in Catholic apologetics in print. It contains 69 chapters covering various subjects, including: Catholic doctrines and how they are grossly misrepresented; the doctrines of various non-Catholic groups (including the Eastern Orthodox, Christian fundamentalists, the Mormons, Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, etc.); various controversial issues, such as contraception, homosexuality, the Church and Galileo, the Inquisition, creation and evolution, etc.

Trent Horn, *The Case for Catholicism: Answers to Classic and Contemporary Protestant Objections*. This is the most thorough and up-to-date compendium of arguments in support of the truths of the Catholic Faith. It was written with an eye to providing rebuttals not only to the classic Protestant arguments but also to updating Karl Keating’s classic, *Catholicism and Fundamentalism*, in light of more sophisticated modern Protestant objections. It is written with clarity and charity by a master apologist, a convert from Judaism.

Peter Kreeft, *A Refutation of Moral Relativism*. This is one of the most accessible (and brief) books addressing one of the most elementary yet important issues in philosophy. Kreeft sets forth an imagined interview of an advocate of objective moral standards by a journalist who is a modern skeptic. It would be hard for a moral relativist to finish this book without questioning his entire philosophical outlook.

Charles Rice, *50 Questions on The Natural Law: What It Is and Why We Need It*.

This is an explanation of Natural Law from the perspective of the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas. It addresses the relationship between faith and reason, and how the Natural Law is a reflection of the Divine Law. Rice explains how the Natural Law is rooted in the nature of each human being for whom that law is designed to achieve the ultimate purpose for which he was created: the realization of eternal happiness.

C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*. This is a classic argument explaining the clash between moral subjectivism and natural law: the distinction between how one *feels* about moral character of a given act versus understanding the rightness or wrongness of that act according to objective moral standards. Lewis shows how moral subjectivists deny objective moral standards and then warns about the social, political, and spiritual consequences of that denial. He demonstrates how natural law is a universal and cross-cultural phenomenon. While he believes that the natural law has a divine origin, he argues, as does Aristotle, that one need not depend on a theistic worldview to recognize that the natural law can be discerned through right reason.

J. Budziszewski, *What We Can't Not Know*. This is an excellent analysis of how conscience reveals the existence of the natural law, how modern society has worked to deny the existence of the moral truths of natural law, and how ordinary people are correct in knowing that this denial is itself gravely wrong. As Prof. Budziszewski says: it is his purpose to "bolster the confidence of plain people in the rational foundations of their common moral sense." A useful summary of his ideas appears in the following interview: <https://acton.org/pub/religion-liberty/volume-13-number-3/natural-law-what-we-naturally-know>

Hadley Arkes, *First Things: An Inquiry into the First Principles of Morals and Justice*. This is one of the excellent contemporary analyses of moral philosophy. Prof. Arkes challenges the school of skeptical philosophy that denies the possibility of knowing objective moral truths. He shows how early American jurisprudence both concluded and then assumed this possibility, incorporating into its prudential judgements such revolutionary notions as "common sense." In so doing, he proffers one of the best defenses of Natural Law and one of the best attacks on moral and cultural relativism. He then explores its applicability in the analysis of various contemporary issues, such as military intervention, conscientious objection, welfare and redistribution, privacy, and abortion.

Pope Saint John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* (On Faith and Reason). Saint John Paul argues in this encyclical that there is a necessary relationship between faith and reason for the two to be valid. Faith without reason can lead to superstition (indeed, blind faith without good reasons for that faith is contrary to Catholic teaching). Simultaneously, reason without the truth of revelation can lead to agnosticism, relativism, and nihilism. Bereft of transcendent truth, reason becomes mired in pragmatism (focusing on technological solutions to deeper human problems) and subjectivism (where knowledge of objective truth is denied, where one focuses on exclusively on how one *feels* about something, and where truth is rejected in favor of opinion).

Jim Burnham and Frank Chacon. *Beginning Apologetics*

Catholic Answers ([www.catholic.com](http://www.catholic.com)). Catholic Answers is an apostolate specifically dedicated to the defense of the Faith and evangelization. The site has tracts on a myriad of questions which the authoritative apologists of the apostolate answer with clarity and accessibility. It contains the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, podcasts of its daily radio interview program, *Catholic Answers Live*, books, DVDs, and more. Among its literature are guides on practical apologetics.

#### **D. Church History**

*The Catholic Faith is the one major world religion that invites everyone to judge its validity by examining history – the history of the Old Testament prophecies, the appearance on earth of the putative God-man, Jesus (and His fulfillment of so many of those prophecies), and the history of the Church. Everything depends on the accuracy of this history. As St. Paul said, “if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:13). But hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of people were willing to die for something that they knew to be true. So how plausible is it that such a diversity of people would indeed die for what they knew to be false?*

*The examination of Christ’s life in particular forces the student to answer the question of who He is: is He a legend, a liar, a lunatic, or indeed Lord? As C.S. Lewis observes, He does not give us the option of calling Him “a great teacher.” He said too many things that too many faithful Jews of His day considered to be outrageous and blasphemous: He told us authoritatively who God the Father is; and He told us that He was “I am” – God Himself.*

*Knowledge of Church history should include awareness of the early Church historian, Eusebius, as well as the ancient Jewish historian of Christ’s epoch, Josephus.*

*Catholics should also be familiar with the facts about specific episodes that are used to criticize the Church. This includes the Crusades, the Inquisition, the behavior of selected popes, etc.*

Fr. John Laux, *Church History: A Complete History of the Catholic Church to the Present Day*. This volume covers Church history until 1940. Originally written for high school students, it remains a valuable book because of its thoroughness and its accessibility.

Philip Hughes, *A History of the Catholic Church* (3 Volumes). This is the most thorough history of the Church in print. It is arguably the most authoritative history in print.

H. W. Crocker III, *Triumph – The Triumph and the Glory of the Catholic Church* Provides an elegant explanation of the Catholic faith through history. It is one of the most readable of the histories.

Rodney Stark, *Bearing False Witness: Debunking Centuries of Anti-Catholic History*. This is an extraordinary defense of the Catholic Church’s historical record, written by a Protestant historian at Baylor University who is motivated by honest history.



Thomas Madden, “The Truth About the Spanish Inquisition” in *Catholicity*, October 1, 2003, <https://www.catholicity.com/commentary/madden/03481.html>. This is a brief essay debunking many of the myths about the Spanish Inquisition.

Stephen Weidenkopf, *The Glory of the Crusades*. This book debunks centuries of disinformation about the Crusades, explaining their purposes and their complexity without whitewashing failures and crimes committed under their banner.

Thomas E. Woods, *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization*. This is a remarkable history that corrects innumerable distortions and misconceptions about European history, Western civilization in general, and the Catholic contribution to shaping that history and civilization. Woods shows: how Catholic monasteries helped build the European economy; how the Church invented the university; how the Church supported and financed scientific research; how international law finds its origins in the work of a Spanish priest in the 1600s; how Western law and concepts of human rights derive from Catholic canon law; how modern economics finds its origin in the work of 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish scholastics; how the Church played a key role in the development of the greatest art and architecture in the West; and how the Church was principally responsible for the development of charitable institutions.

Mike Aquilina, *Yours is the Church: How Catholicism Shapes Our World*. This is a brief (130 pages) review of the remarkable number of the Catholic Church’s contributions to our civilization that are taken for granted by most people in our society, including most Catholics. These include: respect for the dignity of women, opposition to child labor, creating an intellectual climate that nurtures science, the creation of great music and art, the invention of charities, concern for international peace, and more.

George Weigel, *The Final Revolution*. This is a rare and brilliant analysis that explains how a revolution of conscience enabled and formed the political revolutions of 1989-91 that brought about the collapse of the Soviet communist empire. A large part of this revolution of conscience -- a “moral revolution” -- can be attributed to the work of the Saint Pope John Paul II and the Catholic Church. Weigel describes the epic struggle between the “culture of the lie” that lay at the heart of the communist system and the pursuit of truth that, properly understood, was the Truth Himself.

Vivian Green, *A New History of Christianity*

Owen Chadwick, *A History of Christianity*

Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes, 1830-1914*

John O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II?*

## **E. Church Fathers: Testimonies of the Earliest Defenders of the Faith**

*The study of the Church Fathers otherwise known as “patristics,” is one of the most effective instruments to demonstrate the truth of the Faith, and to demonstrate that, in contrast to all other Christian ecclesial communities, the Catholic Church is uniquely the one Church that was founded by Jesus Christ. Who are the Church Fathers? Among them are some of the early popes as well as the earliest defenders of the Faith who fought multiple heresies that arose in the early centuries of Church history. They include figures like St. Polycarp, who learned his Christianity from none other than John the Evangelist, and who variously taught the practice of the Faith and corresponded with such other Church fathers as St. Irenaeus and St. Ignatius of Antioch. Many of these Fathers wrote epistles that testified that the earliest Christians celebrated the Mass much as we do today, and that they strongly held such doctrines as the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.*

John R. Willis, SJ, *The Teachings of the Church Fathers*. This is an exhaustive anthology of excerpts of the writings of the Church Fathers according to various doctrinal topics.

William Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, (3 volume set). This is a complete collection of the original texts of the Church Fathers. The first volume starts with the *Didache*, St. Ignatius of Antioch, and St. Polycarp and includes patristic writings through A.D 382. The second volume includes such figures as St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. John Chrysostom and concludes around A.D. 454. Volume III begins with a collection of works by St. Augustine, includes writings by St. Gregory the Great, and concludes with works by St. John Damascene, who died in 749. The entire collection is made particularly useful by its use of reference numbers corresponding to particular topics, so that a search, for example, of a multiplicity of references to the early Church’s understanding of the Eucharist can be easily accomplished.

Mike Aquilina, *The Fathers of the Church* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). A brief, accessible introduction to the Fathers of the Church and the major heresies they fought.

Jimmy Akin, *The Fathers Know Best: Your Essential Guide to the Teachings of the Early Church*. This is a very practical handbook by a master apologist that includes biographies of the Church Fathers, a review of 30 early heresies, and the Fathers’ teachings on 50 major issues.

Boniface Ramsey, *Beginning to Read the Fathers*. Revised in 2012, this book is an excellent introduction and guide for exploring the thought of the ancient theologians of the Church who contributed immensely to the formation of the fundamentals of the faith. The book is organized thematically, with chapters on prayer, scripture, the human condition, etc. The book also includes a reading program and a very thorough bibliography.

## **F. Science: Its Compatibility with the Faith**

One of the greatest libels against the Catholic Church is that it is opposed to science. Baked into so much of popular culture are the tales about the Church’s treatment of Galileo, allegations that the Bible’s account of the age of the earth conflicts with the conclusions of modern geology,

charges that the Biblical account of the creation of Adam and Eve conflict with scientific conclusions about evolution, etc. To the contrary, the Church has been historically the greatest promoter of scientific discovery, recognizing it to be the exploration of God's creation. And faithful Catholics – whether it be Mendel in genetics, Copernicus in astronomy, or Fr. Georges LeMaitre and his big bang theory – have been at the forefront of countless scientific discoveries. It is incumbent on defenders of the Faith to know these facts. It is also essential that they be aware of new scientific developments that point to the existence of God such as those reported by Fr. Robert Spitzer in his books listed below.

Robert J. Spitzer, *New Proofs for the Existence of God: Contributions of Contemporary Physics and Philosophy* (2010). Father Spitzer, a Jesuit, presents the latest discoveries of modern physics that are not “theories” but *proofs* of the existence of God and how they mesh with advances in modern philosophy.

Robert J. Spitzer: *Evidence for God from Physics and Philosophy: Extending the Legacy of Monsignor Georges Lemaitre and St Thomas Aquinas* (2015). Father Spitzer addresses theories on the origin of the universe, and expressly refutes Charles Dawkins. This is an extended essay that reviews key elements of his earlier book.

Robert J. Spitzer's websites. Father/Dr. Spitzer has two websites that address the relationship between science and religion: 1) <https://magiscenter.com/science-reason-faith/>; and 2) <https://www.crediblecatholic.com/>. The second is extremely accessible, as it is geared toward teen-agers who might otherwise be on the threshold of questioning the Faith of their upbringing.

Stephen Barr, *Modern Physics and Ancient Faith*. Barr argues that what is at war with religion is not science but “scientific materialism,” a phenomenon that is the result of the conflation of science with philosophical materialism. He observes that argues that the great discoveries of modern physics are more compatible with the Judeo-Christian teachings about God, the cosmos, and the human soul than with atheistic scientific materialism. While he does not set out to prove the existence of God, he does show how a theistic worldview is more compelling than scientific materialism.

Christopher T. Baglow, *Faith, Science, and Reason*. This book explains how there is no contradiction between science and religion. It stresses in particular the complete compatibility between science and the Catholic Faith. Originally designed to serve as a textbook for high school students, the book is very up-to-date on scientific developments, including cosmology, genetics, evolution, quantum theory, and anthropology. It exposes and debunks the ideology of “scientism,” which posits that nothing can be verified to be true unless it is scientifically verified. And it addresses such philosophical issues as metaphysics, the philosophy of how anything comes to be. Reviewing this book, Prof. Stephen Barr observes: “The most important goal of education is to give a student a framework for understanding reality. For a Catholic, of course, the overarching framework is the Catholic faith and the revealed truths that it teaches about God, man, and the world. There is another order of truths, however, that we know, not by divine revelation, but by reason and experience. Of this kind are the truths discovered by science. How do these fit into the framework?” Baglow's book addresses precisely the relationship among these various truths, and in the process, inoculates the under-educated Catholic against falling

victim to suspicions that his Faith has no answers to skeptical questions about such things as miracles, creation, the soul, Galileo, etc.

Stacy Trasancos, *Science Was Born of Christianity: The Teaching of Fr. Stanley Jaki*, This is a very accessible history of science and how it uniquely flourished in Christian civilization.

Stacy Trasancos, *Particles of Faith: A Catholic Guide to Navigating Science*. This book is designed to serve as a guide on the relationship between science and religion for high school students studying either theology or science. It addresses issues in both the physical and biological sciences and includes such questions as the Big Bang theory, the origin of life, evolution, and more.

John F. Haught, *God After Darwin*.

### **Marriage, Sexuality, and the Family**

The Church's teachings on sexuality have proven to be one of the principal targets of attack against the Faith. Those attacks consistently misrepresent those teachings – and few Catholics are sufficiently catechized to be able to explain or defend them. Knowledge of natural law is an essential part of such defense, as is recognition that it is God who invented the sexual faculty, gave it its natural purpose, and bestowed upon it such pleasure as would encourage that natural purpose. The very fact that sexual mores are a universal phenomenon is evidence of the very existence of the natural law. But the rejection of those mores – as prescribed by God and as revealed in the law of nature – has been one of the salients of the forces of evil since the dawn of humanity. Indeed, in luring Adam and Eve to reject God's rules of life, the serpent told them: "You will be like God" – and therefore you can write your own rules of life: it need not be "thy will be done" – you can now say, "my will be done." Here is the first battlefield of the perennial culture war: will we accept God's objective moral standards, or will we be moral relativists and choose our moral code according to our own personal preferences?

St. Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*. This is Pope Saint Paul IV's extraordinary encyclical letter which: a) reasserts the competence of the magisterium of the Catholic Church to clarify the moral teachings of Christ; b) elucidates the relationship between love and the creation of new life; c) demonstrates how that process is the result of the cooperation between married spouses and God; d) shows how artificial contraception violates both divine will and the dignity of the human person; and e) shows the consequences for humanity of the violation of God's will. Pope Saint Paul's predictions of these consequences are astonishing.

Priests for Life: *Study Guide to Humanae Vitae*. This is a most useful guide to thinking about the seminal and controversial papal encyclical whose teachings have been rejected by large numbers of Catholics – most of whom have neither read the document nor contemplated its larger lessons. As the Guide reminds us: *Humanae Vitae* does not identify the key problem of our day in the realm of sex or birth or "the pill," but rather in the myth that we can be God. Pope Paul writes at the beginning of the document, "But the most remarkable development of all is to be seen in man's stupendous progress in the domination and rational organization of the forces of

nature to the point that he is endeavoring to extend this control over every aspect of his own life - over his body, over his mind and emotions, over his social life, and even over the laws that regulate the transmission of life” (n.2). The Guide can be found here:

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/life-and-family/humanae-vitae/a-study-guide-to-humanae-vitae>

Pope Saint John Paul II, *The Theology of the Body*. Saint John Paul II explains the bodily dimension of human personhood, sexuality, and marriage in the light of biblical revelation. He explains why the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, why procreation is the natural purpose of the sexual faculty as well as God’s will, how unselfish love is intrinsically linked to the creation of new life, and why life itself is sacred. JPII addresses the dignity of the human person, chastity and modesty, celibacy in the priesthood, the human body in art, and other related issues.

Karol Wojtyla (Pope Saint John Paul II), *Love and Responsibility*. This is Wojtyla’s magnificent treatise on family life, sexuality, and the purpose of marriage.

Edward Sri, *Men, Women, and the Mystery of Love: Practical Insights from John Paul II’s Love and Responsibility*. This book makes Pope Saint John Paul II’s *Love and Responsibility* exceedingly accessible to the ordinary reader. It explains the Church's teachings on love, relationships, and sexuality with charity and acute understanding of the circumstances of life in the modern world.

Sherif Girgis, Ryan Anderson, and Robert George, *What is Marriage?: Man and Woman: A Defense*. The authors show that marriage has historically had a discrete definition – the permanent union of a man and a woman that is ordered to procreation and family life – and that it involves the rights of children and not just the preferences of adults. They demolish the idea that equality requires redefining marriage and argue that such redefinition is contrary to the common good.

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 Benedict: *On Conscience* (referenced also below, in section on Conscience).

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.

Fulton Sheen, *Three to Get Married*. An outstanding presentation of the right and wrong notions about sexuality and marriage. This is a perfect book for marriage preparation.

The Chastity Project (<https://chastity.com/>). This is a website run by Jason and Crystalina Evert, along with Catholic writers, Chris Stefanick and Matt Fradd. It offers a set of valuable resources for raising children and living one’s life according to the Church’s teachings on sexuality: books,

CDs, DVDs, etc. It addresses: dating, pre-marital sex, birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, homosexuality, pornography, as well as the Church's message of life-giving love.

## **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 )

## **Religious Liberty**

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

*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2104-2109

## **Ecumenism**

Saint John Paul II: *Ut Unum Sint, (On Commitment to Ecumenism)*

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

## **Christology**

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

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth*

Fulton Sheen, *Life of Christ*. This is an extraordinary – and thorough – biography of Jesus written by the great Fulton Sheen. It is a history that covers every aspect of Christ's life. It is a work of biblical analysis. It is an inspiration for the Faith. Bishop Sheen has produced a most compelling, clearly articulated, and persuasive masterpiece. Of special interest is his opening chapter, "The Only Person Ever Pre-Announced."

## **Mariology**

Tim Staples, *Behold Your Mother: A Biblical and Historical Defense of the Marian Doctrines*. This is a complete analysis of the Church's teachings on the Blessed Virgin and why she should be an important part of our Faith lives. Staples presents a defense of the major Marian doctrines: the Mother of God, how she is full of Grace, how she is ever-Virgin, the Assumption, and her role as Mediatrix and Co-Redemptrix.

## **Catholic Social Teaching** (including Economy and Environment)

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. This is a complete, but concise, collection of the Church's social teachings on every imaginable subject. It includes the Church's understanding on: the human person created in the image of God, the transcendence of the human person, free will, human rights, the principle of subsidiarity, the principle of solidarity, social life, the family, marriage, human work, the right to work, the rights of workers, economic life, business initiative, the free market, globalization, the international financial system, political community, political authority, the right to resist political authority, democracy, civil society, religious communities, the international community, economic development, foreign debt, the environment, peace, legitimate defense, pastoral action, the role of the lay faithful, and the civilization of love.

Daniel J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon, (eds.), *Catholic Social Thought: Encyclicals and Documents from Pope Leo XIII to Pope Francis 3rd Edition*. This most useful volume contains original papal and Church teachings from Leo XIII through Pope Francis. The book includes such documents as Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of Labor), Vatican II's *Guadium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, Pope Saint John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), Popes Saint John Paul II's *Centesimus Annus* (on the Hundredth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*), and *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work), Benedict XVI's *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth), and Francis' *Laudato Si* (On Care for Our Common Home – the Environment). Here are details on two encyclicals addressing the economy:

- Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*. This is the seminal papal encyclical on economics and the classic defense of private property as a natural human right. It enjoins employers to treat their employees with dignity and fairness, and it encourages employees to respect the risks, investments, and hard work their employers have had to undertake to make their businesses succeed.
- Pope Saint John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*. This is Saint John Paul's encyclical celebrating the hundredth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, reflecting on its timeless lessons that apply to today's economic conditions. He (and Leo XIII) argue that Christianity prescribes neither socialism nor a materialist understanding of capitalism, as both reduce the individual to a cog in the wheel of a machine, depriving him of his dignity. He covers a wide array of classic Catholic social teachings in a remarkably compact essay including the rights of the worker, the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity, and society's obligation to care for the poor (not just those who suffer material poverty but cultural and spiritual poverty as well), and how these principles have applied in the historical context of recent decades.

J. Brian Benestad, *Church, State and Society*. An excellent work on Catholic Social Teaching which does not shy away from critiquing mistakes of the American bishops, and places the importance of Church teachings into the difficulty of our political culture.

Alberto Piedra, *Natural Law: The Foundation of an Orderly Economic System*. This is an outstanding review of the application of Natural Law to economic life. Prof. Piedra shows how, at least in Western, Judeo-Christian civilization, it was not until the 18<sup>th</sup> century that man ever seriously questioned the existence of a Natural Law – a transcendent, objective, universal moral order. However, the new secular ideologies of the “Enlightenment” rejected the transcendent. In dismissing the existence of God, man would now become his own god, dictating for himself his own standards of right and wrong. Simultaneously, with man no longer possessing a transcendent dignity, he could now be seen as a mere instrument in a system, whose value was no longer intrinsic to his humanity, but rather to his productivity. With this new “scientific” view of the world, economic systems would now be viewed as materialist, mechanistic, utilitarian, and hedonistic. Piedra analyzes various schools of economic thought, including the classical, the Marxist/socialist, the Keynesian, and the libertarian, while critiquing the welfare state as corrosive of the family, as well as globalization. In each case, he concludes, none will produce a productive yet humane community so long as they are bereft of a Natural Law foundation..

Helen Alford and Michael Naughton, *Managing as if Faith Matters*. This is a very helpful guide to the application of Catholic Social Teaching to the concrete challenges of managing a business. The authors address ethical issues as they apply to: management of material and human resources, just wages, corporate ownership structures, marketing communication, and product development. They emphasize the importance of integrity, solidarity, and personal responsibility.



Jacques Maritain, *Person and the Common Good*. The great Thomist philosopher exposes the errors of excessive “individualism” of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the collectivist totalitarianism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first emphasizes the sovereignty and autonomy of the individual whom society exclusively must serve, while the second insists on the necessity of the individual exclusively serving – and ultimately being subservient to – society. Maritain argues that each extreme is erroneous. Instead, he distinguishes between the “individual” and the “person.” Rejecting various theories of personalism, he argues that Thomas Aquinas’ theory is that which recognizes the dignity of the human person and the ordination of personhood to God and ultimately to the common good.

*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2415-2418 (passage on the environment).

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. This book 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, et al., *Beautiful Mercy, Experiencing God's Unconditional Love So We Can Share It With Others*

## **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, *Veritatis Splendor (The Splendor of Truth)*

Pope Benedict, *On Conscience* (also writings on the moral failings of the West)

## **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.

Scott Hahn, *The Lamb's Supper: the Mass as Heaven on Earth*. This is an excellent introduction to Eucharistic theology that illustrates its origins in ancient Jewish sacrificial worship. Hahn unearths a long-lost secret of the Church: how early Christians understood the supernatural drama that occurs in every Mass – namely, by reflecting on the Book of Revelation with its mystical portrayals of heaven.

Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (2018 Commemorative Edition, Ignatius Press). This is one of the most important works written by Joseph Ratzinger before he assumed the papacy. This edition includes the earlier classic work with the same title by Romano Guardini, which inspired Ratzinger to "rediscover the liturgy in all its beauty... [and] to see it as the animating center of the Church, the very center of Christian life" and to apply Guardini's ideas to the modern historical context. He discusses fundamental misunderstandings of the Second Vatican Council's intentions for liturgical renewal, especially about the priest's orientation of prayer to the Father, the placement of the tabernacle in churches, and the posture of kneeling. He also addresses: the essence of

worship, the Jewish roots of Christian prayer, the relationship of the liturgy to time and space, sacred art and music, and the active participation of the faithful in the Mass.

## **Scripture**

*Ignatius Catholic Study Bible*, Second Catholic Edition (Revised Standard Version)

Donald Senior, ed: *The Catholic Study Bible* (New American Bible)

Tim Gray and Jeff Cavins, *Walking with God: A Journey Through the Bible*. This is a remarkable narrative that summarizes the entire Bible simplifying and clarifying the story of God's plan for salvation. It makes the complexities and mysteries of the Bible comprehensible.

Peter Kreeft, *You Can Understand the Bible: A Practical Guide to Each Book in the Bible*. This is a short, simple, accessible, and brilliant exposition of, and guide to, the Bible. Prof. Kreeft says that it is not a shortcut to reading the bible itself, but rather a lab manual. He reminds us that reading the Bible should be a form of prayer. It is that part of one's conversation with God where one listens to what He has to say. The Bible is "God's love letter to you," and reading it "is aligning your mind and will with God's." Kreeft describes the various categories of the Biblical narrative, shows how it addresses the past, the present, and the future, and shows how it explains the meaning of our lives. He supplies practical tips for reading the Bible most profitably.

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*

Fr. Oscar Lukefahr, *A Catholic Guide to the Bible*

## **Spirituality**

### **Spiritual Life**

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*.

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)

Dom Eugene Boylan, *This Tremendous Lover*. This book has been described as a modern version of Francis DeSales' *Introduction to the Devout Life*.

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.

James Martin, *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*

### **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 his *The Mystery of Love* and *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 Genessee Diary: Report from a Trappist Monastery*; and *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 Cizek, *With God in Russia*. Treats the patience, endurance and fortitude of Father Cizek 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.

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.