

What We Are Reading

As part of the Voice of Renewal/Lay Education Working Group effort to provide resources for adult education and renewal, we distribute an Annotated Bibliography describing books useful as introductions to reading about Church history, Church structure, theology, prayer and spirituality, the sex abuse scandal, priesthood and ministry, Jesus and Christology, and so on.

This list is different. It's a compilation of the books our Working Group members have read in the past few years and recommend to you for your own education and renewal. Some of them eventually will make their way onto the Annotated Bibliography publication. But for now, these are simply works we think you will enjoy. We have added a few review-type comments on some.

The listing is arranged alphabetically by author.

John L. Allen, Jr., *Opus Dei*, (Doubleday, 2005)

Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth* (Doubleday, 2007)

Comment: "... not just another book about Jesus, [but] a revolutionary book about Jesus...in that it recaptures why people have had their lives changed by their belief in Jesus for over 2,000 years." – Amazon reviewer

Jason Berry, *Lead Us Not into Temptation* (University of Illinois Press, 1992)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison* (abridged; SCM Press, 2001)

Raymond E. Brown, *101 Questions and Answers on the Bible* (Paulist Press, 2003)

Keith Clark, Capuchin, *An Experience of Celibacy* (Ave Maria Press, 1981)

William A. Clark, S.J., *A Voice of Their Own: the Authority of the Local Church* (Liturgical Press, 2005)

Comment: Reflects that the local parish community gives the Church its real and concrete authority. Presents a theology of parish that empowers the laity to renew the whole Church through the renewal of the local community.

William Sloane Coffin, *A Passion for the Possible* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2007)

William Sloane Coffin, *The Heart Is a Little to the Left: Essays on Public Morality* (Dartmouth College Press, 1999)

James A. Coriden, *The Rights of Catholics in the Church* (Paulist Press, 2007)

John Dominic Crossan and Jonathan L. Reed, *In Search of Paul* (Harper San Francisco, 2004)

Donald Cozzens, *Freeing Celibacy* (Liturgical Press, 2006)

Donald Cozzens, *Sacred Silence* (Liturgical Press, 2002)

Charles E. Curran, *Loyal Dissent: Memoir of a Catholic Theologian* (Georgetown University Press, 2006)

William D'Antonio, et al, *American Catholics Today: New Realities of their Faith and their Church* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2007)

Thomas P. Doyle, A.W.R. Sipe, Patrick J. Wall, *Sex, Priests and Secret Codes: The Catholic Church's 2000-year Trail of Sexual Abuse* (VOLT Press, 2006)

Bart D. Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why*, (HarperSanFrancisco, 2005)

Shusako Endo, *Silence* (Peter Owen Ltd., 2003)

Endo's most famous work, generally regarded as his masterpiece; it is a historical novel, telling the story of a Portugese missionary in early 17th century Japan who becomes an apostate, but only in formality. – Publisher's note

Jim Forest, *Love Is the Measure: A Biography of Dorothy Day* (Orbis Books, 1994)

Richard R. Gaillardetz, *By What Authority: A Primer on Scripture, the Magisterium and the Sense of the Faithful* (Liturgical Press, 2003)

David Gibson, *The Rule of Benedict* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2006)

Thomas Grady and Paula Huston, editors, *Signatures of Grace: Catholic Writers on the Sacraments* (Plume reissue, 2001)

Immacule'e Ilibagiza, *Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Hay House, 2007)

Comment: Immacule'e shares her miraculous story of how she survived during the Rwanda genocide in 1994 when she and seven other women huddled silently together in the cramped bathroom of a local pastor's house for 91 days.

Robert Blair Kaiser, *A Church in Search of Itself* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2006)

Ursula King, *Spirit of Fire: The Life and Vision of Teilhard De Chardin* (Orbis Books, 1998)

Comment: "Teilhard De Chardin, a Jesuit priest and paleontologist, taught us that negativism is a sin, that the whole world, including pain and imperfection, is sacred. He is a lifeline for Christians struggling to understand divine imperatives amidst ecological and technological challenges."

Paul Lakeland, *Catholicism at the Crossroads: How the Laity Can Save the Church* (Continuum, 2007)

Comment: "A blueprint for VOTF"

Paul Lakeland, *The Liberation of the Laity: In Search of an Accountable Church* (Continuum, 2003)

C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (HarperOne, 2001)

Comment: "Lewis presents a rational case for Christianity. Several million copies have been sold."

John T. Noonan, *A Church that Can and Cannot Change* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2005)

Kathleen Norris, *The Cloister Walk* (Riverhead Trade, 1997)

Comment: "...This is a strange and beautiful book. Part memoir, part meditation, book becomes *lectio divina* or holy reading..." *Boston Globe*

Michael Northcutt, *A Moral Climate, The Ethics of Global Warming* (Orbis Books, 2007)
Comment: “This hard hitting, comprehensive and groundbreaking book examines theological attitudes to climate change, from the complacent to the apocalyptic, and the ethical implications for all Christians” –by publisher Orbis

Gerald O’Collins, S.J., *Living Vatican II: the 21st Council for the 21st Century* (Paulist Press, 2006)

Padraic O’Hare, *Spiritual Companions* (Twenty Third Publications, 2006)

Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., *What is the Point of Being a Christian?* (Burns and Oates, 2005)

Comment: “A Christian is pointed toward God, who is the point of everything. But if we are pointed towards God, this should make a difference in how we live. Shot through with humor and wisdom, the book outlines a manner of living which is at once faithful to the teachings of Jesus and rooted in the tradition of the Church and a the same time responsive to the turbulence of the modern world.”

A.W. Richard Sipe, *Celibacy in Crisis*, (Brunner-Routledge, 2003)

Leonard Swidler, *Making the Church our Own: How We Can Reform the Catholic Church from the Ground Up* (Sheed and Ward, 2007)

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, *Failing America’s Faithful* (Warner Books, 2007)

Robert Waldron, *Walking with Thomas Merton: Discovering His Poetry, Essays, and Journals* (Paulist Press, 2002)

Comment: “Waldron’s friendly voice leads us comfortably into the key themese and issues of Merton’s life and work.” – Peggy Rosenthal, Ph.D.

George Weigel, *The Courage to Be Catholic: Crisis, Reform, and the Future of the Church* (Basic Books, 2004)

Christopher West, *Theology of the Body for Beginners* (Ascension Press, 2004)

Comment: “With clarity and precision, West unpacks John Paul II’s Theology of the Body. Book explores the profound interconnections between sex and the deepest question of human existence.”

Robert J. Willis, *The Democracy of God: An American Catholicism* (iUniverse, Inc, 2006)

Garry Wills, *What Jesus Meant* (Viking, 2006)

What is Reading? "Reading" is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us. Reading can be silent (in our head) or aloud (so that other people can hear). Reading is a receptive skill - through it we receive information. But the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves). Reading is the third of the four language skills, which are Extract of sample "We are what we read". English We are what we read According to Stockdale, Coyne, Nelson & Padilla-Walker, being presented to fierce and forceful material in the media can result to increased physical hostility. Many readers who read books that are hostile in nature are prone to react in a hostile manner when faced with a similar case in real life. Reading too much of a specific content prepares the mind to similar happenings in normal life. The benefits of reading are more beneficial and solid making it more reasonable to encourage a healthy reading habit for all individuals. References: Stockdale, L., Coyne, S., Nelson, D., & Padilla-Walker, L. (2013). Read anything mean lately? The benefits of reading are strongly linked to these 10 reasons why reading books will save your life. Here we highlight and discuss the most powerful ones. Readers are active participants in the world around them and that engagement is critical to individual and social well-being. 4. It Improves Your Imagination. You are only limited by what you can imagine, and the worlds described in books, as well as other peoples views and opinions, will help you expand your understanding of what is possible. By reading a written description of an event or a place, your mind is responsible for creating that image in your head, instead of having the image placed in front of you when you watch television. 5. Reading Makes You Smarter. However, what we mean is that if you start reading books you enjoy, it will contribute to improving your overall sleep quality, sleeping patterns, and how you deal with restfulness. Since it relieves stress and helps you relax, it can pull you into a deep and peaceful sleep. Moreover, you can spend time reading just before bed to calm your mind and take it off stressful things to fall asleep quickly and peacefully. What's more, reading is a hobby that doesn't require a lot from you. No matter how tired you are, as long as you don't fall asleep while sitting, you can enjoy a good book in peace. Words can bring you tranquility and comfort whenever you need them. A friend told me years ago that it was important to "cut a channel" from what we read to the people we influence. This series of videos is one such channel. Thank you, Doug Jacoby (www.douglasjacoby.com), for such sage advice. Let me know what you're reading too. I hope you enjoy what you see and hear. D.N.N. Malcolm Cox.