

Recommended Catholic Reading List

1. A Shepherd Speaks, Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz. Presents a series of reflections on the meaning of the Catholic faith in today's world and how to live it.
2. A Summa of the Summa: The Essential Philosophical Passages of St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* Edited and Explained for Beginners, edited and annotated by Peter Kreeft.
3. Catechism of the Catholic Church. **Every Catholic home should have one.**
4. Catholic Dictionary - An Abridged and Updated Edition of Modern Catholic Dictionary, John A. Hardon, S.J. Comprehensive work of reference defining the key terms of Catholicism. **Every Catholic home should have one.**
5. Christ Alive in Me: Living as a Member of the Mystical Body, Fr. David Vincent Meconi, S.J. **A wonderful exposition on Gal 2:20. Fr. Meconi doesn't want a relationship with Jesus: He wants *union*!**
6. Christian Fatherhood: The Eight Commitments of St. Joseph's Covenant Keepers, Stephen Wood with James Burnham. For fathers who want to have an influence in the lives of their children.
7. City of God, St. Augustine. Written at the urging of a Roman official who asked St. Augustine to refute Rome's charge that the demise of the Roman Empire was Christianity's fault.
8. Confessions, St. Augustine. Autobiography.
9. Evangelical Catholicism – Deep Reform in the 21st-Century Church, George Weigel. An urgent call to arms, Evangelical Catholicism reminds Catholics of the evangelical vocation into which they were baptized and of the joy and courage that comes from living on this side of the Resurrection.
10. Forming Intentional Disciples – The Path to Knowing and Following Jesus, Sherry A. Weddell. Catholics in the pew must make a conscious choice to know and follow Jesus before they can draw others to Him.
11. Handbook on Catholic Apologetics: Reasoned Answers to Questions of Faith, Peter J. Kreeft and Ronald K. Tacelli. Categorizes and summarizes all the major arguments in support of the main Christian beliefs, including key Catholic doctrines.
12. History of the Catholic Church: From the Apostolic Age to the Third Millennium, James Hitchcock. Self-explanatory. **Superb book.**
13. How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization, Thomas E. Woods, Jr., Ph.D. Shows why modern science was born in the Catholic Church, how Catholic priests developed the idea of free-market economics 500 years before Adam Smith, how the Catholic Church invented the university, why

what you know about the Galileo affair is wrong, how Western law grew out of Church canon law, and how the Church humanized the West by insisting on the sacredness of human life.

14. Jesuit at Large: Essays and Reviews, Fr. Paul V. Mankowski, S.J. From inside the front cover: “Jesuit at large invites its readers to meet a man of great gifts who suffered for his convictions but never lost hope in the renewal of Catholicism, a man whose confidence in the truth of what the Church proposed to the world was never shaken by the failures of the people of the Church.” **Excellent book.**
15. Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist – Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper, Brant Pitre. Shines fresh light on the Last Supper by looking at it through Jewish eyes. **A must-read.**
16. Light of the World: The Pope, the Church, and the Signs of the Times, a conversation between Pope Benedict XVI and Peter Seewald. Challenges you to reconsider what you think you know about Pope Benedict XVI and the future of the Catholic Church.
17. Opus Dei – An Objective Look behind the Myths and Reality of the Most Controversial Force in the Catholic Church, John L. Allen, Jr. Granted unlimited access to the then-prelate of the organization and to Opus Dei centers throughout the world, Allen draws on a wealth of interviews with current members, as well as with highly critical ex-members, to create an unprecedented portrait of its activities, practices, and intentions. **Find out how far ahead of times St. Josemaría Escrivá and Opus Dei were.**
18. Parish Priest: Father Michael McGivney and American Catholicism, Douglas Brinkley and Julie M. Fenster. Re-creates the all-too-brief life of perhaps the most beloved parish priest in US history and founder of the Knights of Columbus.
19. Patriotism and Fraternalism in the Knights of Columbus: A History of the Fourth Degree, Christopher J. Kaufmann. How the Knights of Columbus’ Fourth Degree countered the anti-Catholicism of the early 20th Century.
20. Rediscover Catholicism: A Spiritual Guide to Living with Passion & Purpose, Matthew Kelly. Reveals the essence of authentic Catholic spirituality while addressing some of the more important questions we face today as individuals and as a Church. **Absolutely outstanding book. Every Catholic home should have one.**
21. Render Unto Caesar: Serving the Nation by Living Our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. A call to American Catholics to serve the highest ideals of their nation by first living their Catholic faith. **Outstanding book.**

22. Rescued: The Unexpected and Extraordinary News of the Gospel, Fr. John Riccardo. Asks and answers the three most important questions in life: Why am I here? Where am I going? How do I get there? **Must-read...and must put in practice.**
23. Surprised by Truth: 11 Converts Give the Biblical and Historical Reasons for Becoming Catholic, edited by Patrick Madrid. Self-explanatory.
24. Surprised by Truth 2: 15 men and women give the biblical and historical reasons for becoming Catholic, edited by Patrick Madrid. Self-explanatory.
25. The 33 Doctors of the Church, Fr. Christopher Rengers, O.F.M., Cap. Self-explanatory. *NB: There are now 37 Doctors of the Church. Pope Benedict XVI added St. John of Ávila and St. Hildegard of Bingen in 2012 and Pope Francis added St. Gregory of Narek in 2015 and St. Irenaeus of Lyons in 2022.*
26. The Bible, Revised Standard Version-Second Catholic Edition. **Every Catholic should have one.**
27. The Catholic Source Book, Rev. Peter Klein. Comprehensive collection of information to help people of faith learn, renew, teach, and live the risen life of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church. **Every Catholic should have one.**
28. The Facts about Luther, Msgr. Patrick F. O'Hare, LL.D. Examines the life, thought, and work of Martin Luther.
29. The Faithful Departed: The Collapse of Boston's Catholic Culture, Philip F. Lawler. Recounts how the Catholic Church became the dominant cultural power in Boston, then lost its influence in a generation. **Eye-opening book.**
30. The Fathers of the Church: An Introduction to the First Christian Teachers, Mike Aquilina. The Fathers of the Church has become the standard introduction to the great teachers of early Christianity.
31. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, US Conference of Catholic Bishops. Seeks to promote more conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful in the Mystery of the Eucharist and provides specific detail about each element of the Order of the Mass as well as other information related to the Mass. **A must-read and a diaconate formation required book.**
32. The Imitation of Christ, Thomas a Kempis. **World's second best selling book behind the Bible. 'nuff said.**
33. The One Minute Apologist: Essential Catholic Replies to over Sixty Common Protestant Claims, Dave Armstrong. 1,000+ Scripture verses, along with the words of scores of saints and scholars—including many respected Protestant sources.
34. The Spirit of the Liturgy, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger. Foundational work on the Liturgy by later Pope Benedict XVI. **A must-read and a diaconate formation required book.**

35. Theology of the Body for Beginners – A Basic Introduction to Blessed John Paul II's *Sexual Revolution*, Christopher West. Provides a short and popular summary of the Pope's revolutionary teaching. **A must-read.**
36. Triumph: The Power and the Glory of the Catholic Church – a 2,000-year History, H. W. Crocker III. Tells the story of the Church, from the early days of St. Peter to the twilight years of Pope St. John Paul II.
37. Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Austin Flannery, O.P. Self-explanatory. **Know what VC2 really said and not what people think the Council said. A must-read and a diaconate formation required book.**
38. Walking with God: A Journey through the Bible, Tim Gray and Jeff Cavins. Tells the central story woven throughout Scripture and presents it in an easy-to-read, concise manner. **Outstanding introduction to the Bible/Salvation history. Every Catholic should have one.**
39. Why Catholicism Matters: How Catholic Virtues Can Reshape Society in the 21st Century, Bill Donohue. Explores the four cardinal virtues and shows how the Church's best attributes can be applied to solve many of the biggest problems society must confront today and in the future.
40. Why Catholics Are Right, Michael Coren. Examines four main aspects of Catholicism as they are encountered, understood, and misunderstood. *NB: On May 2, 2015, Mr. Coren announced he was leaving the Catholic Church for the Anglican communion as a result of the Church's teaching on homosexuality. Mr. Coren's decision to leave the Church does not, repeat not, have any impact on his then-existing writings.*
41. Young Catholic America – Emerging Adults in, out of, and Gone from the Church, Christian Smith. Explores a crucial stage in the life of Catholics. Includes case studies of individuals spanning a full decade, as well as insight into the 20th Century events that helped to shape the Church and its members in America. **“Rich collection of statistical data” for sure...and depressing, but facts are facts. Brandon Vogt cites this work in Return: How to Draw Your Child back to the Church.**