

Resources for Self-Study

BIBLE STUDY

The Ignatius Bible: Revised Standard Version - Second Catholic Edition. Best combination of accuracy and readability.

Ignatius Catholic Study Bible New Testament, Curtis Mitch (Compiler), Scott Hahn, (Editor). Excellent footnotes, introductions, and background material.

<http://www.salvationhistory.com/studies/courses/online> Best online, free Bible study courses, including “Covenant Love,” “Genesis to Jesus,” and “He Must Reign: The Kingdom of God in Scripture.”

Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration, Pope Benedict XVI. Engages modern biblical Scholarship to restore Jesus’ true identity as discovered in the Gospels.

Coming Soon: Unlocking the Book of Revelation, Michael Barber. Makes sense of a mysterious biblical book. Michael is an up-and-coming Biblical Scholar who teaches at John Paul the Great Catholic University and attends Mass at OLMC.

CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY OVERVIEWS

Catechism of the Catholic Church. A summary of all Catholic teaching. Available online at <http://www.usccb.org/catechism/text/>.

The Luke E. Hart Series. <http://www.kofc.org/un/en/cis/hart/index.html>. Published by the Knights of Columbus and written by my favorite living Catholic author, Peter Kreeft. The website allows download of PDF chapters as well as audio files.

Catholicism for Dummies, Rev. John Trigilio and Rev. Kenneth Brighenti. Includes many aspects of Catholic practice and culture which are not covered in more doctrinally oriented introductions.

DynamicCatholic.com is a website featuring Matthew Kelly that offers inexpensive books and CDs. Kelly is a master storyteller and clear and entertaining communicator. You can find free online videos for the Decision Point program at this site. Though designed for high school Confirmation, these videos are enlightening and inspiring for adults Catholics as well.

The Truth of Catholicism, George Weigel. From Publishers Weekly: “Weigel illuminates the church's teachings about Jesus, morality, sexuality, suffering and women's ordination, as well as Catholicism's relationship to democracy, other Christian denominations and other religions.”

Wordonfire.org is a leading Catholic website which features the teaching of Fr. Robert Barron. His *Catholicism* series of ten videos is one of the best introductions to the faith. Also, you can find short talks by Fr. Barron on Youtube, covering everything from the existence of God to the spiritual aspects of the latest movie.

EVIDENCE FOR BELIEF (ANSWERS TO ATHEIST AND PROTESTANT OBJECTIONS)

God’s Undertaker: Has Science Buried God? John C. Lennox. A well-reasoned and scholarly answer to the claim that science disproves religion.

Handbook of Christian Apologetics, Peter Kreeft and Ronald K. Tacelli. Concise and compelling arguments for every aspect of Christian belief, including faith and reason, God's nature, creation and evolution, providence and free will, miracles, the problem of evil, the Bible's historical reality, Christianity and other religions, and objective truths.

The Case for Christ, Lee Strobel. Consists of interviews with prominent scholars on issues such as the reliability of the Gospels and the evidence for Jesus’ claim to be the Son of God.

What’s So Great About Christianity, Dinesh D’Souza. Responds to the anti-God arguments of prominent atheists and defeats them on their own terms.

www.catholic.com . The website of Catholic Answers, the foremost Catholic apologetics organization in the U.S. Contains a wealth of information responding to Protestant critiques of Catholicism, including issues such as the papacy, sacraments, justification, and devotion to Mary and the saints.

Nuts and Bolts, Tim Staples. This former Assemblies of God youth pastor use to delight in showing Catholics how “unbiblical” their beliefs were . . . until he became a Catholic himself. This book is a practical guide to dealing with issues such as calling priests “Father,” confession, and being “born again.” Tim is Director of Apologetics and Evangelization for Catholic Answers.

GENERAL THEOLOGY

Theology for Beginners, Frank Sheed. This modern classic offers great explanations of such core Christian doctrines and the Trinity and the Incarnation. Must reading for every Catholic Christian.

Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis. A rational and simple explanation of core Christian beliefs such as the divinity of Christ, his atonement, and his bodily resurrection.

Orthodoxy: The Romance of Faith, G.K. Chesterton. Chesterton portrays Christianity as a “practical romance” which will make one happy and will cure the insanity which has taken hold of Western civilization.

A Summa of the Summa, Peter Kreeft. Selections from St. Thomas Aquinas. Kreeft’s detailed footnotes explain difficult passages and call attention to points of particular significance. This book is the most intelligent, clear, and useful access to Saint Thomas in print.

Come, Creator Spirit, Raniero Cantalamessa. A thorough analysis of the identity and work of the Holy Spirit organized according the traditional Catholic hymn, *Veni Creator Spiritus*.

THE MASS

The How-To Book of the Mass, Michael Dubriel. Explains each part of the Mass and offers suggestions for “getting more” out of the Mass.

Lamb’s Supper, Scott Hahn. Describes the Mass through the lens of the Book of Revelation, helping the believer to see how Mass is really heaven-on-earth.

Spirit of the Liturgy, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. Divided into four parts (The Essence of the Liturgy, Time and Space in the Liturgy, Art and Liturgy, Liturgical Form), this book explores the Scriptural and Traditional roots of the Mass and describes the proper attitude we should have towards the Eucharistic sacrifice.

MORALITY

Veritatis Splendor, Pope John Paul II. In the “Splendor of Truth,” Pope John Paul II discusses whether morality is knowable, how the choice between good and evil affects our relationship with God and our happiness, and how obeying the moral law actually increases our freedom. Available on the Vatican website.

Centesimus Annus, Pope John Paul II. Summarizes Catholic social teaching and applies principles of this teaching to the economic and social situation of the world at the end of the 20th century. Available on the Vatican website.

Good News About Sex and Marriage, Christopher West. The best explanation of Catholic sexual ethics, drawing from Pope John Paul II's teaching on the "Theology of the Body."

Princeton Pro-Life Website, <http://www.princeton.edu/~prolife/academic.html>. Includes many excellent essays on the life issues. Especially recommended are the links to "The Wrong of Abortion" by Patrick Lee and Robert George and "Human Personhood Begins at Conception" by Peter Kreeft.

What is Marriage? By Girgis, George, and Anderson. This short book argues that marriage is the union of a man and a woman who make a permanent and exclusive commitment to each other of the type that is naturally fulfilled by bearing and rearing children together, and renewed by acts that constitute the behavioral part of the process of reproduction.

MARY AND THE SAINTS

Hail Holy Queen, Scott Hahn. Explores the Scriptural and Traditional foundations of Catholic Marian devotion. Argues that Jesus entrusted us to the maternal care of Mary, and that a Christian life which does not acknowledge this is missing something very important.

Reed of God, Caryll Houselander. Profound meditations on the humanity and spirituality of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The 13th Day. Well-made movie about Mary's appearances in Fatima, Portugal in 1917. Depicts the most widely-witnessed miracle in modern times.

<http://www.ewtn.com/saintsHoly/> A thorough collection of short biographies on well-known and obscure saints.

Man for All Seasons. Movie about the life and martyrdom of St. Thomas More. Won six Oscars in 1967, including Best Picture. My favorite movie of all time.

Padre Pio, Miracle Man. Italian movie which captures beautifully the life and person of this holy, compassionate, human, and miracle working saint.

PRAYER LIFE AND SPIRITUAL READING

Prayer Primer, Thomas Dubay. A simple and practical introduction on the why and how of prayer.

The Way, Josemaria Escriva. A collection of points for meditation written by the saintly founder of Opus Dei.

This Tremendous Lover, M. Eugene Boylan. A modern spiritual classic for laity on how to live the divine plan.

Life of Christ, Fulton Sheen. Timeless reflection on the life and teachings of Jesus the Christ, with an emphasis on the theme of the cross.

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT AND LIFE AFTER DEATH

The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist. Skeptical journalist Matt Baglio follows an American priest who is learning how to perform exorcisms. Both are profoundly changed by their exposure to the Rite of Exorcism.

Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis. A story in the form of imaginary letters from a senior demon, Screwtape, to his nephew. Insightful presentation of the nature of temptation.

Great Divorce, C.S. Lewis. Describes a bus trip from hell to heaven, with each soul being given a choice between their own will and God's.

Spe Salvi, Pope Benedict XVI. An encyclical letter on the virtue of hope, which is the primary virtue related to the last things of death, judgment, heaven, hell, and purgatory. Available on the Vatican website.

FAMILY AND WORK

Ordinary Work, Extraordinary Grace, Scott Hahn. Contains a very good description on the Theology of Work.

Compass: A Handbook on Parent Leadership, James Stenson. Practical wisdom for parents on instilling character in their children.

History

History of the Catholic Church, James Hitchcock. A readable, thorough, and fair one-volume survey of the history of the Catholic Church.

How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization, Thomas E. Woods. Counters the common perception that the Catholic Church has been mostly a force for evil by describing the numerous contributions the Church has made to civilization.