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1 - Angels

The Invisible World -Understanding Angels, Demons, And The Spiritual Realities That Surround Us By Anthony Destefano

(Review by Steve Archer)

Everyone is given the gift “to be able to believe.” We have to make the choice ourselves to accept or reject God.

Mr. Destefano cites several Biblical references for the existence of angels and demons. The best known mission of angels is to be our personal guardian. Their mission is to assist us to get to heaven. Angels are pure spirits which communicate with our souls and have free will. There is a hierarchy of angels: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels.

There are hundreds and thousands of angels at Mass.

At the end of the book Mr. Destefano talks about a pair of Divine glasses through which you could see all the wonders of the invisible world. You would see millions and millions of angels, assisting people in their daily lives, encouraging them, warning them, helping them to avoid sins. You'd see the fallen angels as well. The demons of hell. Frightening, hellish creatures. Angry, prideful, resentful of God, hateful toward human beings. You'd see them doing Satan's bidding, trying to get people to turn away from God.

You would see heaven and you would see Him and you stand in awe and say My Lord and My God!

2 - Apologetics

Beginning Apologetics Booklet Series:

How to Defend and Explain the Catholic Faith

How to Answer Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons

How to Explain and Defend the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

How to Answer Atheists & New Agers

How to Answer Tough Moral Questions: Contraception, Euthanasia,

Test-Tube Babies, Cloning & Sexual Ethics

How to Explain and Defend Mary

A Catholic Introduction to Interpreting and Defending Sacred Scripture

The End Times: What Catholics Believe about the Second Coming, the Rapture, Heaven, Hell, Purgatory, and Indulgences

How to Answer Muslims

3 - Basic Catholic Teachings

We Believe by Oscar Lukefahr

(Review by Steve Archer)

Father Lukefahr's book is an excellent guide for Catholics as well as those exploring the Catholic Church. The book is cross-referenced to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and follows the four main divisions of the Catechism: Belief, Worship, Christian Life and Prayer. Helpful ways are given on how to pray and how to live out the Christian life. The reader learns about the Church hierarchy and apostolic succession.

The sacraments, the saints, Mary, heaven, hell, purgatory, marriage and natural family planning are also discussed. The text with its wide range of topics can be used for teaching catechism. Fr. Lukefahr shows us how much Jesus gave His love to us through His Church that continues today.

Invitation to Catholicism Beliefs, Teachings and Practices by Alice Camille

This book is written for committed Catholics, those who have left the Church and anyone who is curious about joining. This book is a clear concise overview of Catholic beliefs and church teachings. The practice of prayer, Mary and Catholic morality, the Saints, the Bible, the Mass, and the sacraments are presented in an easy to read manner which encourages acceptance and understanding.

Why Catholics are Right by Michael Coren

(Review by Steve Archer)

Michael Coren addresses some of the most common attacks on Catholics and Catholicism. The beginning of the book covers the clergy abuse scandal in a very frank dialogue that sets the tone for other topics. The author traces Catholic history to debunk popular and frequent anti-Catholic arguments regarding the Church and the Crusades, the Inquisition, Galileo, and the Holocaust.

The Roman Catholic Church exists to save souls not to make people feel good about themselves. It is vital to defend the truth and defend the Catholic Church that preserves it.

Mr. Coren quotes the great theologian, Archbishop Fulton Sheen, who once said "there are not over a hundred people in the United States who hate the Catholic Church. There are millions however who hate what they wrongly believe to be the Catholic Church, which is, of course, quite a different thing."

This is a good book for Catholics who want to defend their faith.

Mary, the Mother of God, and praying the Rosary help us to intercede against sickness, sin or inner wounds. Meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary draws us closer to the life of Christ. Mary, Jesus' Mother, was the closest person to His divinity and occupies a special place in the life of the Church and its healing power.

New Evangelization-Passing on the Catholic Faith Today by Cardinal Donald Wuerl

(Reviewed by Steve Archer)

The New Evangelization is not one specific action or activity of the Church, but rather a way of seeing a whole range of activities carried on by the Church to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.

There are three aspects of the New Evangelization:

First, our ordinary pastoral ministry must be animated by the fire of the Spirit.

Second, we are called to proclaim the Gospel to those people who do not know Jesus Christ.

Finally, the mission is to find new ways to help renew the faith lives of people who have drifted away from the Church so that they may encounter Jesus Christ anew, rediscover the joy of faith and return to the religious practice in the community of the faithful.

Any Evangelization begins with Jesus Christ.

Important to us is our Liturgy, the Eucharist, and the Sacrament of Penance. Penance is an encounter with Jesus and his Church. Teaching the faith through catechesis is an important tool to reach out to those today who need to hear and be formed in the life-giving Word.

We must be bold when spreading the Good News and have a sense of urgency but also remember to smile, with a feeling of joy. The book makes me feel like we can all do more to spread the Catholic faith to our friends, neighbors, and our own families.

4 - CS Lewis

The Case for Christianity by C. S. Lewis

(Review by Steve Archer)

During World War II the BBC Radio staff chose C.S. Lewis to deliver addresses over the air waves to help a wartime public. Among the first of these broadcasts to be published was the The Case for Christianity. (C. S. Lewis was originally an atheist, then a non-Christian for many years and then a member of the Church of England). The arguments for the Christian faith are concise and compelling. Lewis states Jesus was not just a great moral teacher He was and is the Son of God. The central Christian belief is that Christ's death has put us right with God and given us a fresh start. Christians are the physical organism of Christ. Our new life is spread by mental acts like belief and bodily acts like Baptism and the Eucharist. God uses bread and wine, material things, to put the new life into us.

C. S. Lewis was the author of dozens of books, including The Chronicles of Narnia and Mere Christianity.

The Snakebite Letters by Peter Kreeft

(Review by Steve Archer)

Following in the tradition of C. S. Lewis Peter Kreeft has gathered fifteen letters from Snakebite (Satan) for his trainee (Braintwister).

The Snakebite Letters provide a complete Satanic guide for undermining American society, public and private morality, and the Roman Catholic Church. Satan's first principle of darkness is always "Dim the Lights." Anything is preferable to truth and light. The communication between Snakebite and Braintwister in the letters focuses especially on the critical areas of sex, media, liturgy, theology, abortion and religious education. The letters reveal the inroads evil has made in American culture since the 90s. Snakebite calls God the Enemy and he is trying to win souls for himself and his apprentice. There are two things he fears most- the, Eucharist and the Confessional. He says terrible things happen in that little box. While acknowledging that the Host (Eucharist) is more powerful than an Atom bomb. Peter Kreeft's book is full of satire and humor and loaded with insights into the state of the Roman Catholic Church at this time.

5 - Eucharist

The How-To Book of the Mass by Michael Dubruiel

Everything you need to know about the Mass, but no one ever taught you, you forgot, or never thought to ask.

This book is located in the Sacraments-Eucharist section of the library.

Eucharistic Miracles by Joan Carroll Cruz

(Review by Gary Russell - Director of Religious Education)

I would recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn more about the Catholic faith and, more specifically, the Eucharist.

This book is comprised of a number of inspiring stories and documented accounts surrounding the Host. The stories will broaden the reader's knowledge about the Catholic faith. Many of the stories would serve well as instruments of education, inspiration and meditation.

6 - Fiction

Arms of Love by Carmen Marcoux

(Review by Marsha Lundgren)

Courtship? Chastity? Old fashioned ideas? Check out this book from the parish library. You will be enthralled by this story of holy love, romance, sacrificial love and Christ's sanctifying grace. If you have ever loved someone, or hope to, you will want to read this compelling novel which beautifully portrays John Paul II's Theology of the Body.

The Healing Quilt by Lauraine Snelling

Joining together to change their community, four women mend their lives as they stitch a beautiful quilt.

This novel is shelved in the Christian Fiction section of the parish library.

The Secret Cardinal

This book is a Catholic-themed suspense-filled novel inspired by true events. This adventure starts at the Vatican proceeds to Asia and then China. It involves the Mafia and also the conclave of cardinals. You will enjoy this fast-paced story.

Fatherless by Brian Gail

(Review from the book cover)

This is the first book in a series of three books. (Book 2 – Motherless, Book 3 – Childless)

Called a book of the century, powerful, gripping, deeply moving, hauntingly beautiful, masterfully done, a must read and a freight train page turner! An intensely human tour of the great spiritual battles in the US Catholic church during the late 20th century. Brian Gail takes us out into the trenches and shows what life was like for Catholics good and bad during this critical time. This book is a great opportunity for Catholics to take hold of who they really are. Meticulously researched, brilliantly crafted, Fatherless takes the reader on an unforgettable journey inside Fortune 500 boardrooms and Madison Avenue screening rooms, behind one-way mirrors in America's heartland and two-way screens in church confessionals, to the very peak of Ireland's highest mountain and inside the papal dining room of John Paul II in Rome. It is the searing journey to the center of conscience, however, that marks Fatherless as the signature Catholic novel of its generation. In its pages we meet flesh and blood characters - noble and flawed, driven and seeking; each struggling to achieve the American Dream ... discovering instead a uniquely American nightmare. How each confronts the reality of ethical and moral dilemmas - while struggling to balance faith, family, and career - goes to the very heart of the Catholic experience in America in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This is a tale you will never forget.

Motherless by Brian Gail

(Review from the book cover)

This is the second book in a series of three books. (Book 1 – **Fatherless**, Book 2 - **Childless**).

This fictional account takes the reader on an international journey to boardrooms and laboratories where the designers of the Life Science Revolution are preparing Mankind's Final Solution.

Human embryos are created in laboratories and stored in cryogenic freezers for a global black market. Corporate greed and personal pride have led to the sale of the embryos on a massive scale

even in Catholic hospitals. There is a plot for global domination. *Motherless* explores the slippery slope of Man's technology and its threat to family and the Church.

Childless by Brian J. Gail

(Review by Steve Archer)

This is the third book in a series of three books. (Book 1 – **Fatherless**; Book 2 – **Motherless**)

We find familiar characters from the other books with some additions. The sinister members of the Life Science Revolution are plotting against the United States Government, the Roman Catholic Church, and all other religions. They seek to enslave the masses with forced birth control that will reduce the population rate to zero. They would then substitute their new artificial humans based on genetics, nanotechnology and robotics. Chaos reigns. In **Childless** Gail's work comes to a final, resounding, unforgettable conclusion.

7 - Individual Life Stories

The Heavenly Man by Brother Yun and Paul Hattaway

This book tells the remarkable true story of Chinese Christian Brother Yun.

Brother Yun is one of China's house church leaders who suffered prolonged torture and imprisonment for his faith. The Heavenly Man is a dramatic story of how God took a young boy from a poor village in China and used him to preach the gospel throughout China despite tremendous opposition.

The Heavenly Man is located in the Individual Life Stories section of your parish library.

The Shadow of His Wings- Fr. Gereon Goldmann, OFM

This is a true story of the experiences of a young German seminarian drafted into Hitler's SS. Without betraying his ideals, Gereon Goldmann completed his training, was ordained and secretly ministered to German Catholic soldiers and civilian victims in the war

Big Russ & Me by Tim Russert

Tim Russert former NBC Washington bureau chief and moderator of Meet the Press looks back at his (Catholic) childhood and remembers the extraordinary example of his father. His father taught Tim to appreciate the values of self-discipline, respect and loyalty to friends. A great father/son story.

Miracles Do Happen by Briege McKenna

(Review by Steve Archer)

Matthew 19:26 "for man it is impossible but for God all things are possible." Sr. Briege McKenna desired to have a vocation from an early age. The Lord has used her as His instrument to bring healing ministry and love to His people.

She considers herself merely a signpost leading people to Jesus. Most of her 3 hours of prayer is before the Blessed Sacrament. Our Lord speaks to her during petitions or in dreams, and he guides her along her journey. She has many conversations and visions of God.

Sr. McKenna has many gifts, of the Holy Spirit. She can read hearts, prophecy, and perform miraculous cures. Sister Briege has a ministry to priests and gives retreats for them all over the world.

Sister feels the treatment of priests is a major crisis in the Catholic Church. The sacrament most at risk is Holy Orders. In Luke 8:40-48 a woman is made whole simply by touching Jesus on the tassel of his cloak. In the Eucharist we take and eat his body and blood so we come in direct contact with His restorative power.

Sister Briege is an international figure due to her spirituality, healing ministry and compassion.

Jesus is alive today, just as He was 2000 years ago and has the same power to heal us spiritually, emotionally and physically. Nothing is impossible with God.

8 - Inspirational

Perfectly Yourself - 9 Lessons for Enduring Happiness by Matthew Kelly

Matthew Kelly shows how to find lasting happiness in our changing world. The author explains how to find balance between accepting ourselves for who we are and accepting the challenge to become all we are capable of being.

Rediscover Catholicism by Matthew Kelly

(Review by Steve Archer)

Rediscover Catholicism is like a motivational talk on the beauty of the Catholic Church. Matthew Kelly makes a strong case for the relevance of the Church now and in the future. The author speaks the Truth.

Mr. Kelly discusses The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality: Reconciliation, Daily Prayer, The Mass, The Bible, Fasting, Spiritual Reading and the Rosary which have the power to help Catholics renew the Church.

This is an excellent book for all Catholics. Catholics whose Church feeds, clothes, houses, cares for and educates more people than any other organization in the world.

Rediscover Jesus-An Invitation by Matthew Kelly

(Review by Steve Archer)

In Rediscover Jesus, the author gives the reader a chance to take a look at who Jesus really was. Jesus was a radical, with radical teachings and ideas but He was also the greatest teacher ever. He taught us through the Gospel parables. Jesus had a universal appeal to all people no matter their status in society-rich, poor, sinner or saint. They were all children of the Father to Him. Jesus had a place for all humanity at his table. Matthew Kelly lists four practical daily ways to Rediscover Jesus. At the end of each section there is a Point to Ponder, a Bible Verse, a Question to Consider, and a Prayer.

I have read several of Matthew Kelly's writings and this is one of the best. The main themes of this book are prayer, sacrifice, and reading the Scriptures. This is how we develop a personal relationship with Jesus, how we Rediscover Him and our important mission on earth as we await unity in heaven with God. Reading this makes me want to strengthen my connection with Jesus.

The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic - How engaging 1% of Catholics could change the World by Matthew Kelly

(Review by Steve Archer)

This book is available in the parish library. Matthew Kelly describes Dynamic Catholics as those who are highly engaged in their church and their faith. He identifies four signs of a Dynamic Catholic. They are:

- Prayer
- Study
- Generosity
- Evangelization

The prayer process is described in the book. This process helps start you on a routine of daily prayer. The goal is to develop the ability to have intimate conversations with God during time set

aside for prayer. Of the four signs, the most important is Prayer. Prayerlessness is the curse of our age. For decades, the time we spend in focused prayer has been diminishing as our lives have become busier and busier. Without prayer we forget the qualities that make us uniquely human. Matthew Kelly wants what he calls a game changer for the Catholic Church in America, something to re-engage disengaged Catholics and re-invigorate the Catholic Church. Practicing the four steps will help us become “the-best-version-of-ourselves.” “Dynamic Catholic” is recommended reading for all Catholics.

The Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis - **Becoming More Like the Master**

Thomas Kempis was born in Germany in 1380 and began his Christian education when he was 12 years old. At the age of 20 he decided to dedicate his life to serving God. Thomas entered a monastery in the Netherlands. As a monk he led an uneventful life until 1471 when he died at the age of 91. This modest man had a close connection with Jesus. He left *The Imitation of Christ* as a gift to all Christians. In the past 500 years the text has been translated into more languages than any other book except the Bible.

This work is about how to live and follow Christ in our daily lives. To quote the book: Chapter 19, page 39, “the life of a good religious person ought to be mighty in all virtues (Matt. 5:48), that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seems to man.”

The Contents are divided into four books with various chapters on spiritual matters, exhorting the reader to take a closer walk with Jesus, to conform our lives to His, and the importance of the sacraments.

The Imitation Of Christ is a hand book for Christians to live out their faith.

The book makes me feel that worldly subjects are not important, they are temporal. We should be concerned with our eternal destiny, and the condition of our souls.

No Man is an Island by Thomas Merton

(Reviewed by Steve Archer)

At the age of 26, Thomas Merton entered the most demanding of Catholic orders, the Trappist monks in Kentucky. He felt this was his sanctuary from the world. Merton was a Catholic writer who wrote 70 books about the following: spirituality, social justice, comparative religions and mysticism.

“No Man Is an Island” is a collection of 16 essays on different religious subjects that are designed to make the individual a more Holy and noble person. In the final essay titled Silence, Merton instructed the individual to not desire chiefly to be cherished and consoled by God; desire above all to love him.

We can't all be contemplative Trappist monks but with a little effort we can be closer to God and better to our fellow man.

9 - Marriage

The Marriage God Wants for You-Why the Sacrament Makes All the Difference by Cardinal Donald Wuerl

(Review by Steve Archer)

Marriage in Christ is a vocation one in which the Lord pours out his grace on husband and-wife so they can truly be united with each other. Sacramental marriage is not just a feeling, but a decision to love. It is not just the legal contract, but a covenant instituted by God. Catholic Marriage is not an arrangement that lasts as long as things are working well, but a lifelong union-one that is open to new life. Marriage is a vocation of love and just like any vocation, it requires effort, discipline, and sacrifice. The Catholic Church has a wealth of information to help couples with their marriages. Pope Francis spoke about the vocation of marriage and love experienced in the family, and he reminded us about the importance of charity when we see and hear it in action. He mentioned three important words: "Please, Thank you, and Sorry."

In marriage we must remain close to the Eucharist and Reconciliation.

St. Augustine said that marriage is good because of three basic values: fidelity, permanence, and the potential for offspring. God meant for marriage to be permanent and unbreakable.

All you need to do is look at the misery that divorce has cost in society today. I feel like the book is ideal for engaged couples as well as those that have been married awhile.

Marriage Insurance: 12 Rules to Live By - Rev. Francis J. Hoffman, JCD

Rev. Hoffman bases Marriage Insurance on his many years of experience offering advice and spiritual guidance to married couples.

Marriage Insurance is an excellent book for those seeking a spouse, newly engaged couples as well as couples who have been married for many years.

This book is located in the Marriage Section of the Parish Library

10 - Mary

Our Lady of Guadalupe

This book tells the history of the miraculous image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and its continued relevance to our day. Our Lady of Guadalupe contrasts the pagan Aztec culture of death and homosexuality practices with our modern culture of abortion and immoral practices. This book also describes the modern signs and wonders associated with the traveling missionary image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Medjugorje the Message by Wayne Weible

(Review by Steve Archer)

On June 24, 1981 six children in the mountain village of Medjugorje in central Yugoslavia reported that the Virgin Mary had appeared to them on a hillside. Mary has been returning every day since. Wayne Weible was a journalist when he heard about the apparitions. He thought the apparitions would make a good story for his newspaper. He subsequently received a message from the Blessed Mother. "You are my son, and I am asking you to do my Son's will." Write about the events of Medjugorje; this will become your life's mission if you choose to accept it. You will no longer be in your present work. Wayne started to write weekly columns about the events happening in Medjugorje. He then made the first of many pilgrimages to Medjugorje. Wayne was Protestant but he started to attend Mass and pray the Rosary. He called the rosary the prayer of Jesus' life. The author received messages from our Blessed Mother and a vision of Jesus. Wayne's column reached millions of people. He currently has speaking engagements all over the world. He sends many pilgrims to Medjugorje.

Father Svet, who collaborated with Wayne on this book, said "When David confronted Goliath, God told him to take up five stones and go in his name. Those stones are in your hands today, and Our Lady has told us what is written on each: prayer, fasting, confession, the Bible and the Eucharist.

Pilgrimage Reflections of a Medjugorje Priest by Svetozar Kraljevic, O.F.M.

(Review by Steve Archer)

A pilgrimage is a journey that brings the pilgrim to a physical place and into the presence of God. In the Middle Ages pilgrims went to the Holy Lands. In modern times God is calling us in a new direction. Pilgrims that come to Medjugorje fast from the distractions of the world and sacrifice their personal comfort. In return they have a closer intimacy with the Lord.

Father Svet says the Blessed Mother told the six children, known as visionaries because they witnessed Mary, she had come to call all to return to God. Mary was calling for conversion, for peace, to put the Lord ahead of all else in our lives, and to live to do his will. The Blessed Mother was pointing people to her Son Jesus. Just as at the Wedding Feast of Cana Mary said "Do as he tells you" Father Svet says "a holy environment begins in the heart. A heart open to God becomes a place of devotion that drives the devil out". This is why it is so important to pray from the heart. The Blessed Mother urges us to pray the rosary.

A Child Shall Lead Them by Wayne Weible

This book consists of twenty-six amazing short stories of transformed young lives in Medjugorje. The book describes the wonderful things that happen when hearts are converted.

Your One-Step Guide to Mary by Mitch Finley

This book offers a concise, but thorough, look at the Blessed Virgin Mary through the centuries. This book describes Mary's titles, Marian doctrines, her place in the liturgy and her apparitions. This guide is a "quick read" for those who would like to learn more about Jesus' Mother.

The Many Faces of Mary by Bob and Penny Lord.

(Review by Steve Archer)

Marian apparitions have been going on for a long time in the history of the Catholic Church. Most of the approved ones are described in this book, with the exception of the present day one at Medjugorje. This is not about Mary's visits to earth and her contact with visionaries or her prophecies. This is a book about Mary's love for all of mankind and for her Son, Jesus. The Lord's goal was to introduce readers to Jesus' Mother as they have come to know her. By knowing the Mother, we come to know her Son. Mary had great love for her children even when she was attacked and denied just as Jesus was.

After reading the book I felt a spiritual closeness to Mary and a sadness on how she was rejected.

11 - Mother Teresa

Conversations with Mother Teresa by Rezo Allegri

Conversations is a personal portrait of Mother Teresa.

While serving in Calcutta, India she received a personal command from Jesus to serve the poorest of the poor. She left her convent to work in the streets and ghettos. Her religious order, the Missionaries of Charity, relies completely on Divine Providence for support. The fundamental teaching of her community is Christ's teaching about love. When she visited the United States, Mother Teresa told the President the greatest crime is a woman killing her own child in the womb. Mother Teresa is a universal ecumenical figure who was proclaimed blessed by the Church in 2003.

Mother Teresa in My Own Words compiled by Jose Gonzalez-Balado

In this book, we read the same Spirit-filled words Mother Teresa shared with the poor, the dying and the hurting.

“Where does love begin? In our own homes,
When does it begin? When we pray together.
The family that prays together stays together.”

Mother Teresa's -Reaching Out In Love Compiled and Edited by Edward Le Joly and Jaya Chaliha

(Review by Steve Archer)

This writing is a series of one-page stories about Mother Teresa and her work with the poorest of the poor. The order she founded, the Sisters of Charity, does not have a budget but relies on divine providence for its survival.

On a train trip Mother Teresa had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. He told her to work with the poorest of the poor. She did just that working in the slums with leprosy patients, the dying, the orphaned and abandoned people from all walks of life-those with physical as well as spiritual needs.

Mother arrived in Calcutta India, and began to take on the hopeless cases. She opened one house after another until they spread all over the world and she had followers flocking to her. In 2012 the order had 4500 sisters in 133 countries.

In 1979 Mother Teresa won the Nobel Peace Prize. Instead of a big party she told the committee to give the money to the poor.

Mother Teresa had a unique business card. The card read: The Fruit of Silence is Prayer/The Fruit of Prayer is Faith/The Fruit of Faith is Love/The Fruit of Love is Service/ The Fruit of Service is Peace.

In 2003 Mother Teresa and was Beatified as Blessed Teresa of Calcutta.

Mother Teresa died on September 5, 1997 and is entombed in the mother-house in Calcutta, India close to the slums that she worked in.

12 - Prayer/Meditation

Revelations of Divine Mercy by George Kosicki

This book contains daily readings from the diary of Blessed Faustina Kowalska. Each month emphasizes a particular theme: Love, Trust, Humility, Mercy, etc. This is a good book for those who want to learn more about the Feast of Divine Mercy (the first Sunday after Easter) and its origins.

Strangers and Sojourners No Longer by Fr. Marvin Deutsch, M.M.

(Review by Steve Archer)

Subtitle “The Writings of a Sojourner On The Way To the Eternal City”

This book is a retreat manual that can be used as a volume of prayers and homilies for contemplation. As the title implies, as sojourners we are on a journey. The dictionary states that the word sojourn means to live somewhere temporarily. St Paul uses this term to designate this life of ours on earth. “So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. (Ephesians 2:19)” This text is intended to be an aid to obtaining life’s true goal, salvation. I found it helpful to use the index to pick the writings and prayers of particular interest to my life. Fr Deutsch is a Maryknoll priest, who grew up in south Minneapolis and was a missionary in Africa.

Prayer: The Great Conversation (Straight Answers to Tough Questions about Prayer) by Peter Kreeft

(Review by Steve Archer)

This book is available in the parish library.

The narrative is a question and answer between two characters-Sal and Chris. They discuss various topics such as, finding the time to pray, praying when you don't feel like it, using the prayer book God wrote- the Bible and contemplation as a means of quieting the mind and focusing on God.

Mr. Kreeft communicates that God is a real Person who wants to have a conversation with us and have us listen to Him and follow Him for a source of divine joy here on earth.

Laymen do not have to read complicated books on prayer to become holy and to experience heaven on earth. Jesus gave us the perfect prayer when his disciples asked Him teach them to pray. Jesus gave them/us the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer covers all our needs and gives praise to God. We can make up many prayers, but the Lord's Prayer is the one given to us by God.

In this busy world it is important to find a quiet place to pray consistently, fifteen minutes a day to start. If you can't pray, just listen to the God who created you. God the Father wants a relationship with you. He loves you. He loves all his children.

13 - Reconciliation/Confession

Go in Peace by Fr. Mitch Pacwa and Sean Brown

This book offers an excellent guide to Confession (Reconciliation/Penance). It answers the most commonly asked questions and objections to the sacrament of Confession. Go in Peace also describes how to prepare for the Sacrament with an Examination of Conscience based on the 10 Commandments.

14 - Sacraments

The Healing Power of the Sacraments by Jim McManus.

(Review by Steve Archer)

Father Jim McManus is a Redemptorist priest who has been active in healing ministry for many years. To carry on His ministry in the world, Jesus has given us the gifts of the Holy Spirit and His Name. In the Catholic Church healings have their basis in graces received from Sacrifice of the Mass and the Eucharist. The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick can remove some of our inner wounds. In the liturgy we become more aware of God's love and healing mercy towards us. From personal prayer our response to the Word of God is to accept it and accept ourselves. In *The Healing Power of the Sacraments*, suffering is discussed as a way of uniting us to the cross of Christ.

Swear to God-The Promise and Power of the Sacraments by Scott Hahn

(Reviewed by Steve Archer).

Jesus spoke of the Sacraments as essential to salvation. "I solemnly assure you no one can enter into God's kingdom without being begotten of water and the Spirit." (John 3:5) God made covenants with his people. The covenants were sealed with a physical sign. With Noah, it was a rainbow, with Moses God made his covenant by sprinkling the people with the blood of sacrificial animals "behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you." (Ex 24:8) A covenant is a sacred family bond. God rested on the seventh day of creation and this was a perpetual sign between the Lord and Israel. These were all Old Testament covenants.

Jesus Christ established the New Covenant with his blood and the forgiveness of sin when he died on the cross.

The sacraments are the sacred oaths of the New Covenant. The seven sacraments have been in the Church since the time of the Apostles. The sacraments are the way Christians make and renew their Covenant with God. The Eucharist is the most important sacrament and the Mass is essential to the Roman Catholic Church. This is where we gather around God's table to share the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Swear to God shows historical perspective and reverence for the sacraments and their influence on our Tradition.

15 - Saints

Four Witnesses The Early Church in Her Own Words by Rod Bennett

(Review by Steve Archer)

“The Blood of Martyrs is the Seed of Christians”

A small group of Christians gather in a house in Rome in AD 92 Emperor Domitian Caesar is persecuting the Church. The Christians are accused of conducting immoral acts behind closed doors and treason because they won't accept the Roman Gods. But there is only one true God, Clement our Bishop told us so. He was St. Peter's disciple and Peter was an Apostle of Jesus Christ, there can be no doubt. There is a knock at the door and yelling. It is a group of Roman soldiers “Any Christians inside? The lions are hungry!” “What do I tell them?” “I yell and all of my brothers in unison say” We are Christians!” As the soldiers rush in, we are led to the Coliseum to meet our fate, with our minds on Jesus Christ.

The Four Witnesses describes the role of the founding fathers of the Catholic Church in its earliest years. A line is drawn directly from Jesus Christ to his Apostles and then to St. Peter the first pope. Most of the four Witnesses were martyrs and their Church fought against outward forces like persecution, from Rome and inward, the false morality of Gnosticism and the Doletists. They had to insure the unity of the Universal Catholic Church during times of schism.

The books were selected for a rudimentary Bible before one was ever printed. After 2000 years our Mass and most of the prayers are the same as they were back then, The sacraments were established and practiced in the Christian community by the early Church. New Churches were opened and organized along the same basic model, the Bishop ordained as Pastor, the Elders or Presbytery, and the Deacons.

All four Saints were excellent writers who used the power of the pen to fight the mighty Roman Empire, and the fraudulent religions of the day. The Four Witnesses were good shepherds who kept Jesus' command to “feed my lambs”

Stories of Padre Pio by Katharina Tangari

This book is about Padre Pio a Capuchin priest who received the stigmata. Katharina Tangari describes how Padre Pio dealt with people to heal their bodies, souls and hearts through miracles, coincidences and answers to prayer.

Mothers of the Saints by Wendy Leifeld

Mothers of the Saints presents a realistic view of Ten Mothers of Saints and Three Saints Who Were Mothers. This book tells how mothers, persevered daily in prayer, teaching their children how to offer sacrifices to Jesus and to value spiritual things over appearances.

The Divine Favors Granted to St. Joseph by Pere Binet, S.J.

Who is St. Joseph and Why Does He Deserve So Much Honor?

You will find the answers to this question and learn considerably more about this Holy Patriarch. The book also includes prayers to St. Joseph (Patron of the Universal Church and Patron of a Happy Death).

The Perfect Joy of Saint Francis by Felix Timmermans

(Review by Steve Archer)

This is a biography in the form of a novel about the life of St. Francis of Assisi. This style gives the author some literary latitude in telling the story, but it is a truthful tale. The joy of St. Francis was found in humility. He had given away his noble position and all his riches for a life of poverty. He and the brothers in his order begged for their food and slept on straw while dressed in rags. They lived to pray and praise God and spread the good news of His Gospel.

Francis meets Saint Clare and helps her found the Sisters of Saint Clare. Francis is known for his love of animals and nature. He loved to sing about them. Sometimes the larks would sing with him. His favorite song was Canticle of the Sun which he composed.

St. Francis desired to experience the sufferings of Jesus' passion. He did receive the stigmata, the wounds of Christ on his body. Although St. Francis suffered greatly before his death he never lost his faith and he continued to honor his God.

"Saint Edith Stein" "Blessed by the Cross" by Mary Lea Hill, FSP

(Review by Steve Archer)

This is suitable for young readers. Edith Stein grew up in Germany around the time of World War II. She studied philosophy and obtained her doctorate, she had always been a brilliant student. The one thing that was missing in her life was the source of truth, God. She had been raised in a Jewish family that was quite traditional, but she had no religious beliefs or affiliations. Through the example of others, faith and hope, and listening to evangelical speakers she found herself drawn towards Christianity. On a weekend retreat she spent in the house of a friend she was left with nothing to do but read books. Edith read the life of "Saint Teresa of Jesus" written by herself and she was drawn to the life of this great Spanish mystic. She spent the whole night reading the book and she concluded "this is certainly the truth." By what she read she had a personal encounter with Christ. Edith decided she had to become a Catholic, and a Carmelite. She went into town and bought a catechism and a missal. Soon after this she attended Mass for the first time, and presented herself to the priest for Baptism. With all the joy that this gave her it caused her family and particularly her mother much sorrow. After her conversion to Catholicism Edith felt certain she was called to be a nun. Edith was accepted into the Carmelite order. After this she moved into the monastery. She took the name of Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. With an acceptance of God's plan for her life. She knew that she would, soon share the Lord's Passion. In 1942 sister Benedicta and her sister Rosa were arrested by the Nazis, because they were Jews, and nuns. They rode to Auschwitz concentration camp by train. They were taken immediately from the train to the gas chamber, and killed by poisonous gas and their bodies were burned to ashes.

Edith was a martyr and miracles have been attributed to her intercession. On October 11, 1998 Pope John Paul II canonized Saint Edith Stein.

Reading this book makes me realize it is important to follow God's plan for my life. I am humbled by Saint Edith Stein's charity, and humility, while bearing her cross. We can all be Saints, if we love God with all our heart's.

"Saint Rose of Lima" "Patroness of the Americas" by Sister Mary Alphonsus, O. SS. R.

(Review by Steve Archer)

She was born Isabel Flores de Oliva in the city of Lima Peru in 1586. Her later Nickname "Rose" comes from an incident in her babyhood; a servant claimed to have seen her face transform into a rose. In 1597 she was confirmed by the Archbishop of Lima, Toribio de Mogrovejo who was also to be declared a Saint. She formally took the name of (Rose) at that time.

Throughout her life her favorite Saint was St. Catherine of Siena. Archbishop Toribio was her mentor and spiritual advisor and he encouraged her to join the religious life. She slept on a bed of broken pottery and she whipped herself with a knotted cord, as a penance for sin. She began to fast three times a week. She devoted herself to constant prayer and contemplating the Blessed Sacrament. She helped the sick and hungry around her community bringing them to her room and taking care of them. She sold lace, embroidery, and herbs to care for the poor. She wore a heavy crown made of silver with small spikes on the inside, in emulation of the Crown of Thorns worn by Christ. She wanted to become a nun but her father forbade it. So instead she entered the Third Order of St. Dominic and took a vow of perpetual virginity. Because of her beauty Rose, had plenty of suitors but she never wished to marry. She was married to Jesus Christ.

Saint Rose of Lima was canonized on April 12, 1671, by Pope Clement X, the first Catholic in the Americas to be declared a Saint. Her shrine, is located inside the convent of St. Dominic in Lima. Many miracles followed her death; she had cured a leper and roses fell from the sky.

Reading Saint Rose of Lima makes me feel humbled by her acts of charity, holiness and corporal acts of mercy. She gave her whole life to be the Bride of Jesus Christ.

Nothing Short of a Miracle (The Healing Power of the Saints) by Patricia Treece

(Review by Steve Archer)

We can pray to the Saints in heaven requesting their intercession. They act as advocates for us to God the Father, Mary, Joseph, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

The reader is introduced to many Saints including: St. John Bosco, Fr. Solanus Casey, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Frances Cabrini, and Padre Pio.

I learned there can be healings without cures.

16 - The Popes

Miracles of John Paul II Santo Subito by Pawel Zuchniewicz

(Review by Steve Archer)

This is a book describes miracles attributed to John Paul II that have no scientific explanation. As the Pope states, he simply prays. He humbly gives all credit to God.

Miracles of John Paul II describes the miraculous healing of cancer, malignant brain tumors, multiple sclerosis, kidney disease and other hopeless cases. The Pope helped people the doctors had given up on.

John Paul II had a great devotion to Mary, Our Blessed Mother. The book relates a pilgrimage he made to Lourdes where he cured the sick that had come to visit the shrine.

John Paul II was the first non-Italian Pope elected in four hundred years, a miracle in its own right. He witnessed the end of Communist rule in his native Poland by the non-violent Solidarity movement. The Pope later saw the fall of the Berlin Wall as “a huge wave of the Holy Spirit was poured out to all of Europe.”

The Pope's life was saved on May 13, 1981 in a sequence of events that were without a doubt miraculous. The Pope stated that Our Lady of Fatima helped keep him alive that day.

Pope John Paul II said Mass to the largest group of people, over four million, ever gathered in one place at World Youth Day in Manila. With his gentle smile, John Paul seemed to command the weather.

In Toronto, Canada at World Youth Day 2002 it was pouring rain all night and the wind was blowing. The Pope blessed the clouds and said “don't worry.” When the Mass started the rain stopped and the wind quit blowing. The sun came out and shined on the water-soaked crowd.

In July 2005 John Paul's intercession was invoked to spare the Yucatan Peninsula and the city of Merida from Hurricane Emily, and that is what happened.

After John Paul II's death the five-year waiting period for Beatification and Canonization was waived so that the cause could begin immediately. Pope John Paul II was proclaimed venerable by his successor Pope Benedict XVI and was Beatified on May 1st 2011.

At John Paul's funeral there were cries of “Santo Subito” “Saint now” from the people. John Paul II the Vicar of Christ was very much like Jesus in his great love and holiness.

Pope Francis-Why He Leads the Way He Leads

(Review by Steve Archer)

The Pope's belief system is based on his training as a Jesuit priest. This consists of receiving the gospel of Christ whose herald you become, believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach. Pope Francis told fellow Cardinals, “our life is a journey and when we stop moving things go wrong.” His personal credo begins, “I look forward to the surprise of each day.” He says further, “dedicate yourself to what you are doing, and do it well.” To Jesuits, careerism is considered like leprosy, you do not seek higher office.

Pope Francis' priority is to follow Jesus Christ who came to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.

The Pope's Jesuit formation helps him follow Jesus more closely. Pope Francis uses the spiritual exercises developed by Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits. He also uses The Examen, a form

of prayer, where he withdraws from the world while still being a part of it. These have been the most fundamental influences on the Pope's spirituality.