

Epic: A Journey through Church History Suggested Reading List

This list is not exhaustive but is provided for those who desire additional reading on historical topics. The works selected are a mixture of scholarly and popular reading and are written by historians with either a Catholic worldview or sympathetic to that worldview.

General Church History:

Belloc, Hilaire. *Europe and the Faith*. Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1992. – *an excellent essay of how the Church saved and built Western Civilization and the importance of the Church to Europe.*

_____. *The Great Heresies*. Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1991. – *Belloc's analysis of the major heresies in the history of Christendom: Arianism, Islam, Albigensianism, Protestantism, Modernism: a fascinating and important work.*

Clark, Kenneth. *Civilisation*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1969. – *a history of Western Civilization utilizing art – very perceptive review of historical events and the shaping of culture. This book is a companion to the BBC television series that is available on DVD.*

Daniel-Rops, Henri. *Heroes of God – Eleven Courageous Men and Women who risked everything to spread the Catholic Faith*. Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 2002. *Biographical sketches of selected men and women who contributed to the growth of the Gospel throughout the world.*

Hughes, Philip. *A History of the Church*. London: Sheed & Ward, 1979 edition. – *A three-volume work by a master historian – an excellent resource.*

_____. *The Church in Crisis: A History of the General Councils, 325 – 1870*. Garden City, NY: Hanover House, 1961. *A wonderful book providing the historical background and theological issues that shaped the ecumenical councils before the Second Vatican Council.*

Madrid, Patrick. *Pope Fiction*. San Diego: Basilica Press, 1999. – *An excellent little book that refutes numerous myths about the papacy, including common misunderstandings of the Great Western Schism and the scandal caused by bad popes.*

The Mustard Seed:

Carroll, Warren H. *The Founding of Christendom*. Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 1985. – *Volume 1 of a planned 6-volume work. This is a scholarly read with great detail and an excellent and well-documented work.*

Sienkiewicz, Henryk. *Quo Vadis*. Translated by W.S. Kuniczak. New York, NY: Hippocrene Books, 1993. – *a work of fiction that provides a vivid description of early Christians in the Roman Empire through a compelling and riveting narrative.*

Whitehead, Kenneth D. *One, Holy Catholic, and Apostolic – The Early Church was the Catholic Church*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2000. – *an excellent apologetic work on proving the early Christian Church was one, holy, catholic and apostolic – which are the marks of the Catholic Church.*

Persecution:

Newman, John Cardinal. *Callista*. Cosimo Classics, 2007. – *A work of historical fiction that focuses on the Roman persecutions in Northern Africa and seamlessly weaves fictional characters with true historical persons.*

Ricciotti, Giuseppe. *The Age of Martyrs*. Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1999. – *An easy to read and thoroughly well documented history of the great persecution under Diocletian. It gives the broad historical and political background as well as specific details on the stories of individual martyrs.*

Conversion & Councils:

Carroll, Warren H. *The Building of Christendom*. Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 1987. – *Volume 2 of a planned 6 volume work. This is a scholarly read with great detail. It is an excellent and well-documented work.*

Eusebius. *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine*. Translated by G.A. Williamson. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1989. – *Eusebius of Caesarea is the father of Church History and lived during some of the most interesting times in history. He chronicles the history of the Church from Apostolic times to the reign of Constantine. Unfortunately, he was sympathetic to Arius and his teachings but he was a top-notch scholar and his History is a classic.*

Fortescue, Adrian. *The Early Papacy to the Synod of Chalcedon in 451*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008. *Excellent short work on the papacy in the early Church; answers questions raised by some that the roles and responsibilities of the Pope were later developments and not present in the early Church.*

St. Augustine, *The City of God* and *The Confessions*. – *There are many translations of these two books available (some are even online), and they stand as two of the greatest works by one of the Church's most revered theologians.*

Jurgens, William. *The Faith of the Early Fathers, vol. 1-3*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1970 and 1979. – *A three-volume set that is absolutely indispensable for anyone who wants to learn more about the teachings of the Church Fathers, from Pope St. Clement I to St. John Damascene. It includes an invaluable topical index that spans all three volumes.*

Rengers, Rev. Christopher, O.F.M. Cap. *The 33 Doctors of the Church*. Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 2000. – *Contains great biographical info on all 33 Doctors of the Church, including St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, and more.*

Ricciotti, Giuseppe. *Julian the Apostate*. Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1999 (Reprint). – *An interesting look at this fascinating character, the only apostate Christian emperor in history.*

Waugh, Evelyn, *Helena*. Loyola Press, 2005. – *A fictional novel about Helena, mother of Constantine the Great.*

Missionaries & the Emperor:

Ali, Daniel and Spencer, Robert. *Inside Islam: A Guide for Catholics*. West Chester, PA: Ascension Press, 2003. – *a question and answer book that provides a wealth of information on the history and theology of Islam.*

Anonymous. *The Song of Roland*. Translated by Dorothy Sayers. New York: Penguin Books, 1957. – *This poem is a legendary depiction of a battle between some of Charlemagne's forces and a Basque army in the Pyrenees. While both Roland and the battle are historical, the descriptions in the poem are dramatic exaggerations. However, this is certainly one of the jewels of Catholic literature, and it reveals the way in which the men who lived in the centuries immediately following his rule viewed Charlemagne.*

St. Benedict. *The Rule of St. Benedict*. New York, NY: Image Books, 1975. – *The Rule of the Father of Western Monasticism whose monks preserved the patrimony of Western Civilization.*

Bostom, Andrew, MD. *The Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2005. – *This book is a compilation of eyewitness accounts, taken from Muslim and non-Muslim sources alike, of the early conquests of Islam. While modern Muslim scholars may argue that the jihad is to be interpreted as an internal struggle, it is clear that the early Muslim warlords took the idea of Holy War quite literally.*

Carroll, Warren H. *The Building of Christendom*. Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 1985. – *Volume 2 of a planned 6-volume work on the history of Christendom. These volumes are a scholarly read but highly enlightening and entertaining. Chapters 6-16 deal with this time period.*

St. Gregory of Tours. *The History of the Franks*. Penguin Classics Edition. New York: NY: Penguin Books, 1974. *A fascinating look at the history of the "Eldest Daughter of the Church". St. Gregory offers a brief history of the world up to the conquest of Gaul by the Franks and then provides a narrative of the kingdom of the Franks to the late 6th century.*

Spencer, Robert. *The Truth about Muhammad – Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishers, Inc., 2006. – *A fascinating and well-documented look at Mohammed, his life, beliefs and influence.*

Wallace-Hadrill, J.M. *The Barbarian West, 400 – 1000*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, Ltd. – *a study of the Germanic tribes in Western Europe that shaped the history of Western Civilization and the Church*

Crusaders & Scholars:

Belloc, Hilaire. *The Crusades – The World's Debate*. Rockford, IL: TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., 1992. – *a military analysis of the Crusades. Belloc spends the most time on the First Crusade and ends with the defeat at Hattin in 1187. An insightful and thought-provoking work.*

Karsh, Efraim. *Islamic Imperialism – A History*. New Haven and London CT: Yale University Press, 2006. – *a secular historian traces the rise of Mohammed and the history of Islam to the present day. Focus is on the imperialistic ambitions (present from the beginning) of Islam. The chapter on the crusaders does not reflect current scholarship but overall a well-done and engaging narrative.*

Madden, Thomas F. *The New Concise History of the Crusades – Updated Edition*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005. – *the best overview of the crusades. Madden provides significant detail in a very readable work covering all 8 traditionally numbered crusades as well as a discussion on the crusades outside of the Holy Land. This work ends with a fascinating discussion on the effects of the crusades on the current situation between Islam and the West.*

Pernoud, Regine. *The Crusaders – the Struggle for the Holy Land*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2003. – *Pernoud traces the history of the crusades by focusing on the men and women who participated in the movement. An enjoyable and educational book.*

_____. *Those Terrible Middle Ages! Debunking the Myths*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2000. – *a classic on illustrating the modern prejudice against the medieval world. Pernoud debunks the many modern myths through interesting topical studies.*

Peters, Edward. *Inquisition*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1988. – *a thoroughly scholarly work that debunks the myths surrounding the Inquisition. A must read for anyone seeking to understand the truth of the Inquisition and the context explaining its development and existence.*

Rega, Frank M. *St. Francis of Assisi and the Conversion of the Muslims*. Rockford, IL: TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., 2007. – *a short work that provides an overview*

of the life and work of St. Francis with a particular emphasis on his participation in the Fifth Crusade and his desire and efforts to convert Sultan al-Kamil to the Christian Faith.

Riley-Smith, Jonathan. *What were the Crusades? Third Edition.* San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2002. – *a short work from one of the most renowned crusade historian. In this book, Riley-Smith provides a sketch on the crusades with an emphasis on illustrating the characteristics of the movement.*

Strayer, Joseph R. *The Albigensian Crusades.* Ann Arbor MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1992. – *this book provides an outstanding overview of the political, social and economic situation in southern France at the beginning of the 13th century. Strayer sheds light on why the Albigensian heresy arose and took root. He provides great detail on Albigensian belief and the crusade launched to restore unity.*

Walsh, William Thomas. *Characters of the Inquisition.* Rockford, IL.: TAN Books and Publishers, 1987 (reprint). – *Beginning with the Old Testament, extending through the medieval Inquisition and concluding with the Spanish Inquisition, Msgr. Walsh examines the chief characters in this history of the Inquisition. A delightful and informative read of the people involved in one of the most fascinating events of history.*

Weak Leaders & Schism:

Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy: Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso.* – *Numerous translations are available. This is another crown jewel of Catholic literature. Constructed entirely around the theme of the Holy Trinity (from 3 books and 3 line verses to Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven being 3-levels of 3 circles each and a rhyme scheme where each word rhymes 3 times), Dante weaves Catholic doctrine through a captivating story and masterful poetry.*

Chaucer. *Canterbury Tales.* – *Numerous editions exist, some with the original text and others with modern translations. Be sure that whatever edition you have includes the full Parson's Tale, which is a long sermon that serves as the real conclusion to the book.*

Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition – A Historical Revision.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997. – *a thoroughly scholarly read at one of the most misunderstood institutions in history. Kamen presents an unbiased and well-researched account of the true Spanish Inquisition.*

Pernoud, Regine. *The Retrial of Joan of Arc.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007 (Reprint). – *One of the best French historians offers a compiled edition of the manuscripts of St. Joan's retrial. Packed with the actual sworn testimony of St. Joan's friends, family, soldiers, and even enemies, this is an invaluable treasure which Ignatius Press has graciously reprinted.*

Twain, Mark. *Joan of Arc*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989. – *Mark Twain was no friend of the Catholic Church, but even he fell in love with St. Joan of Arc. Calling her one of the most captivating human beings to ever live, he spent years researching this book and often remarked that he was most proud of it amongst all his other works.*

Walsh, William Thomas. *Characters of the Inquisition*. Rockford, IL.: TAN Books and Publishers, 1987 (reprint). – *Beginning with the Old Testament, extending through the medieval Inquisition and concluding with the Spanish Inquisition, Msgr. Walsh examines the chief characters in this history of the Inquisition. A delightful and informative read of the people involved in one of the most fascinating events of history.*

Protestors & Defenders:

Belloc, Hilaire. *How the Reformation Happened*. Rockford, IL: TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., 1992. – *Belloc's insightful analysis of one of the most important events in the history of Western Civilization. Belloc traces the careers of Luther and Calvin and includes a discussion of what he terms "the English Accident". This work also covers the warfare that erupted in the latter 16th and 17th centuries as well as a brief discussion on the Catholic response.*

_____. *Characters of the Reformation*. Rockford, IL: TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., 1992. – *Character sketches of the men and women main characters in the drama of the Reformation.*

Carroll, Warren H. *The Cleaving of Christendom*. Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 1985. – *Volume 4 of a planned 6-volume work on the history of Christendom. These volumes are a scholarly read but highly enlightening and entertaining.*

Erkison, Erik H. *Young Man Luther – A Study in Psychoanalysis and History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962. – *Fascinating book by a psychologist who studies Luther the man in an attempt to understand his rebellion against the Church.*

Hughes, Philip. *A Popular History of the Reformation*. New York: Hanover House, 1957. – *an excellent and highly readable book by a master Church historian. Hughes provides an overview of Christian belief prior to 1500, the practice of the Faith in 1500 as well as in-depth chapters on Luther, Calvin, England and the Council of Trent.*

Luther, Martin. *Ninety-Five Theses*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957. – *this edition contains the 95 Theses translated into English with an informative introduction.*

Luther, Martin. *Three Treatises*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966. – *this volume contains Luther's three 1520 treatises, Appeal to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church and The Freedom of a Christian translated into English.*

The Catholic Reformation:

Beeching, Jack. *The Galleys at Lepanto*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983. – *a history of the Battle of Lepanto with an in-depth overview of the Muslim menace in the Mediterranean in the 16th century and the inner-workings of court life in Spain. Provides significant biographical information on Don Juan and Philip II.*

de Brébeuf, Jean. *The Huron Relation of 1635*. Midland, Ontario: Martyrs' Shrine, 1993. – *the account of one of the North American martyrs among the Hurons with an historical overview of the Jesuit missionary efforts in New France.*

Chesterton, G.K. *Lepanto – with Explanatory Notes and Commentary*, edited by Dale Ahlquist. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003. – *the classic, yet almost forgotten, poem by Chesterton on the Battle of Lepanto. This edition contains several chapters that provide further background and insight into the battle. A bonus Chesterton essay is included on what would have happened had Don Juan and Mary Stuart (Queen of Scots) married.*

Daniel-Rops, Henri. *The Catholic Reformation – Volumes I & II*. Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1964. – *an excellent work from a great Catholic historian. Daniel-Rops provides a compelling and entertaining narrative that traces the events and people of The Catholic Reformation.*

Macdougall, Angus J., editor. *Martyrs of New France*. Midland, Ontario: Martyrs' Shrine, 1992. – *a collection of short chapters on the lives of several Jesuit martyrs of North America including a first-hand account of the martyrdom of René Goupil by his companion, St. Isaac Jogues.*

Rowland, Wade. *Galileo's Mistake – A New Look at the Epic Confrontation between Galileo and the Church*. New York: Arcade Publishing, 2001. – *A fascinating book with a refreshing and objective look at the Galileo Affair. The author provides appropriate scientific background to help understand the story and intersperses his Galileo narrative with modern day conversations between himself, a nun and a skeptical friend.*

Stoye, John. *The Siege of Vienna – The Last Great Trial between Cross and Crescent*. New York: Pegasus Books, 2000. – *Stoye describes the 1683 siege of Vienna with great detail and an insightful narrative. He concludes with a discussion of the importance of the Christian victory and how the event shaped the history of Western Civilization.*

Revolutions & Modernism:

- Carroll, Warren H. *The Revolution Against Christendom*. Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 2005. – *Volume 5 of a planned 6 volume work. This volume presents a detailed narrative of the events of the French Revolution and its effect on the Church.*
- De la Torre, Teodoro. *Popular History of Philosophy*. Houston: Lumen Christi Press, 1988. – *a well written history of philosophy stretching from ancient Greece to the 20th century, including chapters on the important “Enlightenment” philosophers.*
- John Paul II. *Memory and Identity – Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium*. New York: Rizzoli, 2005. – *the last book of Pope John Paul II. In this work, the late pontiff provides his insights on the European history and the politics of the modern world. He gives an excellent and insightful discussion on the Enlightenment and how it affected the Church and European society.*
- Mioni, Anthony J., Jr. *The Popes Against Modern Errors: 16 Papal Documents*. Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1999. – *An invaluable collection of decrees from Popes Leo XIII, Pius IX, and Pius X, among others.*
- Newman, John Cardinal. *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2005 (Reprint). – *This time period was witness to an English Catholic Renaissance. When the well known Anglican, John Henry Newman, converted to the Catholic Faith, he received much criticism, especially from a man named Charles Kingsley. This amazing defense of his conversion is only one of the many brilliant books Cardinal Newman contributed to the treasure trove of Catholic literature.*
- ### **A World at War:**
- Blet, Pierre, S.J. *Pius XII and the Second World War According to the Archives of the Vatican*. New York: Paulist Press, 1999. – *Blet provides a summation of the 12 volumes of Vatican archival wartime information on Pius XII and his efforts to help the Allies and the Jews.*
- Carroll, Warren H. *1917: Red Banners, White Mantle*. Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 1981. – *A compact history of the rise of Communism in Russia. This book explores the influences of Rasputin, Stalin, and Lenin while setting everything in the context of World War I.*
- Ciszek, Walter J., S.J. *With God in Russia*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997. – *the personal story of a missionary priest who spent 23 years in Soviet prison camps in Siberia. Father Ciszek provides an insight account into the Soviet system, its distrust of the Vatican and its barbarity.*
- Dalin, David, G. Rabbi. *The Myth of Hitler’s Pope: How Pope Pius XII Rescued Jews from the Nazis*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2005. – *A thorough*

defense of Pope Pius XII against modern critics who claim he was in league with the Nazis.

Keegan, John. *The First World War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999. – *an excellent overview of the Great War by the top-notch military historian of our time.*

_____. *The Second World War*. New York: Penguin Books, 2005. – *another excellent work by Keegan – explores both fronts of the war with penetrating analysis and riveting narrative.*

McFadden, Charles J. *The Philosophy of Communism*. New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1963. – *Recommended by Archbishop Fulton Sheen as the best treatment of Communism in any language. The first half of the book is designed to persuade the reader with Communist arguments. The second half of the book reveals the inherent errors of those arguments.*

Royal, Robert. *The Catholic Martyrs of the 20th Century – A Comprehensive World History*. New York: Crossroads Publishing Company, 2000. – *a moving work providing the historical background to the fierce and widespread persecution of the Church in the 20th century complete with the stories of the holy martyrs of this time period.*

Rychlak, Ronald J. *Hitler, the War and the Pope*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2000. – *one of the first works defending Pius XII and dismantling the modern myths concerning his wartime efforts regarding the Jews.*

West, Christopher. *Theology of the Body for Beginners – a Basic Introduction to Pope John Paul II's Sexual Revolution*. West Chester, PA: Ascension Press, 2004. – *an excellent summary of the major points of Pope John Paul II's "theological time bomb."*

The New Springtime:

Allen, John L. Jr. *Opus Dei – An Objective Look Behind the Myths and Reality of the Most Controversial Force in the Catholic Church*. New York: Doubleday, 2005. – a penetrating look into the ecclesial movement, *Opus Dei*. Allen provides a brief overview of the organization and its founder as well as a look inside the membership and how they live their vocation. He raises and answers some of the major issues and criticisms levied against the group and finishes with an evaluation of the future of *Opus Dei*.

Flannery, Austin O.P. general editor. *Vatican Council II – The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1992. – the translated documents of the Council – a must read for Catholics today.

Hahn, Scott. *Ordinary Work, Extraordinary Grace – My Spiritual Journey in Opus Dei*. New York: Doubleday, 2006. – Hahn provides an overview of *Opus Dei* and the teachings of St. Josemaría Escrivá in the context of living these teachings as a member of *Opus Dei*.

Kelly, George Msgr. *The Battle for the American Church*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1979. – a frank assessment of the crisis in the Church and the failed implementation of the Council in the United States. Delves deeply into the situation of the Church in the U.S. pre and post Council. A fascinating and enlightening book.

_____. *The Battle for the American Church (Revisited)*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995. – almost 20 years after the original book, Kelly revisits his thesis and updates his assessment of the Church in the United States.

Schreck, Alan. *Vatican II – The Crisis and the Promise*. Cincinnati: Servant Books – St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2005. – a review of the implementation of the Council and an analysis of the future. Schreck also provides highlights of the major constitutions and many of the other documents of the Council.

Smith, Janet. *Humanae Vitae – A Generation Later*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1991. – Smith provides a scholarly treatment of the issue of contraception, the papal commission established to review the Church's teaching in light of modern advances, and the dissent from the teaching. This work also provides a thorough analysis from philosophical and theological reasoning why the Church teaches that contraception is intrinsically evil. This work also includes an author's translation of the encyclical from the Latin and a commentary

The Threshold of Hope:

John Paul II. *The Theology of the Body – Human Love in the Divine Plan*. Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1997. – the translated Wednesday afternoon catecheses Pope John Paul II delivered from 1981 – 1984 outlining his thoughts on the human person, marriage and married love.

Ratzinger, Joseph Cardinal. *Europe – Today and Tomorrow – Addressing the Fundamental Issues*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007. – *before his election to the papacy, Cardinal Ratzinger wrote and spoke on the most pressing questions facing Europe in the new millennium. He reflects on the history of Europe, her roots and her future.*

_____. With Vittorio Messori. *The Ratzinger Report – An Exclusive Interview on the State of the Church*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985. – *while Prefect for the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Ratzinger spoke with an Italian journalist on the state of the Church. A fascinating and enlightening interview and worth the read.*

_____. *Salt of the Earth – The Church at the End of the Millennium – an Interview with Peter Seewald*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997. – *a little more than 10 years after the Ratzinger Report, this work addresses the pressing issues in the Church and Cardinal Ratzinger's thoughts and analysis.*

_____. *God and the World – Believing and Living in our Time - A Conversation with Peter Seewald*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002. – *another book length interview with German journalist Peter Seewald. This work focuses on who is God, what is Faith and what it means to believe while residing in the modern world.*

Weigel, George. *Witness to Hope – the Biography of Pope John Paul II*. New York: HarperCollins, 1999. – *the definitive biography of John Paul II tracing his life from childhood through his pontificate. Filled with fascinating and insightful stories on the life of this amazing man. The events of the pontificate are placed in context with the larger political and economic events.*

_____. *The Cube and the Cathedral – Europe, America and Politics without God*. New York: Basic Books, 2005. – *a frank assessment of the situation of Europe in light of her relationship with the United States and her disassociation from her Catholic roots.*

West, Christopher. The Theology of the Body for Beginners.

Wojtyla, Karol. *Love and Responsibility*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993. – *a discussion of the human vocation to love and the responsibility it entails with a focus on married love. An excellent work that sheds light on the meaning of a much misunderstood action.*