

The Deacon's Corner by Deacon Ron Desmarais

Have you read any good books lately?

I don't know how many of you are readers, but I know I'm one. My dad was a reader and I got it from him. Of course it wasn't always that way. I remember when I first started school I was in remedial reading. That was so long ago I don't remember what my problem was. Probably I just wasn't ready to start reading. I guess a little old enough for school, but not quite ready for the subjects at hand. However, by the time I reached the fourth grade I became an avid reader and haven't stopped since.

My kids are readers as well. The girls they were easy to get to read. Especially my youngest daughter, Renee being a Daddy's girl she started reading because her daddy did. She likes mysteries, forensic novels, horror stories, and ghost stories. Now I wonder where she got that. The boys on the other hand were not into reading as much as I would have liked. Matter of fact they didn't like to read at all and trying to get them to do so was like pulling teeth. Then one day I decided to try something. I gave them one of my syfi-fantasy books to read. I told them that if they read that one I'd buy them the next one. Good idea, bad outcome. Oh they started reading that isn't the problem. What happened is they read all the paperbacks and then were asking me to buy the hardbacks when they came out. I had made a bargain with them and I kept it. Finally when they were in their twenties I told them they were old enough to buy it themselves. They just waited until I bought the book and then borrowed it so I never did win. Now I have bought them all Kindles and we are still sharing. They even buy a book now and then.

So you're asking yourselves, "So what is the point here?" Well, the point is I just wanted to share with you that I like to read books. I read just about everything except romance novels. But all my books are just

leisure books. I do like to read church related material as well. Being a history buff I like to read church history and about our faith. I do read some spiritual reflection books, but because of RCIA and Adult Education I spend a lot of time reading about how our faith came down to us and what it teaches. It is some of those books I would like to share with you.

Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist

I found this book fascinating. I love history and I want to know more about our Jewish roots. After all Jesus and the Apostles were Jews so to understand them I want to know more about Judaism. This book does not disappoint. As you know the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Catholic faith, but how do we understand the Eucharist? This book not only covers that but so much more. I was enthralled by the amount of information about the Passover and Eucharist that is in Jewish teachings and writings. I was amazed at how rich the understanding of the Passover meal and the Jews waiting for their Messiah. The other thing that amazed me was how all this information is in Jewish teachings and that they don't grasp the significance of the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Body and Blood presented to us each week.

A Biblical Walk through the Mass

This turned out to be a timely book especially with the coming of the new lectionary. Mr Siri was in the midst of writing a book on the Liturgy of the Mass when the new guidelines were adopted. He was able to take his material and tailor it to the new Liturgy. His book as it says in the title walks you through the Mass from beginning to the end. As he goes along he explains the changes, the reasons behind them, and most especially what we are to understand about what the Church is attempting to teach us. But that is not all he also gives you the background from

the Jewish tradition, even the prayers we use in the Mass. I really enjoyed this book it flows along and before you know it you find yourself having a hard time putting it down. The only problem I had with the book is I would get so engrossed in reading that I wasn't taking the time to stop and think about the things he was telling me. This is definitely one of those books you have to read again. It is also one you will find yourself referring to often to refresh your memory.

The Crucified Rabbi: Judaism and the Origins of Catholic Christianity This is a really good book. Taylor Marshall was an Episcopal Priest who converted to Catholicism. This book was part of his journey, but that isn't what the book is about. It is about Judaism and roots of where we as Catholics get many of our understanding of scripture, church holidays and where our beliefs stem from. If you want to understand why Catholics are so different from Protestant then this is the book to start with. It is very easy to read and Mr. Marshall has a sense of humor that will make you chuckle. One of the first chapters is "Does the Pope wear a Yarmulke" informative yet sets the tone of the book. Mr. Marshall will present the Jewish background and then explain the Catholic position. When you are finished you will have a very good understanding of our Jewish roots.

The Mass: The Glory, the Mystery, the Tradition This is a very good book for anyone who wants to know about the Mass, its development, and how and why we do the things we do in the Mass. Although it is new it only covers the current Mass using the current wording. However, the structure of the Mass and what is taking place is the important. You are walked through the Mass step-by-step explaining everything in a clear and easy to understand manner. This is a good book for the beginner just stepping into the subject. They don't assume you know everything so they spend time explaining different aspects. I

recommend this book for any Catholic - practicing, non-practicing, and those in RCIA.

Jesus of Nazareth Holy Week: From The Entrance Into Jerusalem To The Resurrection

What can I say about this book that hasn't been said before? Pope Benedict is a teacher and a scholar, but don't let that intimidate you. This is a fine book that walks through Holy Week with insight, reflection, and insight into the mysteries of our faith. Pope Benedict writes in an easy to read manner, you don't have to have a degree to understand what he is writing about. However, I will say that there are places in the book where you can see that Professor Ratzinger starts to come through. I read this book during Lent as part of my Lenten reflections; however this book is good any time of the year. I highly recommend this book for its insight into scripture, but most of all to spend time in thinking about the mystery of our faith based on the Cross and Resurrection.

Bibliography

Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist: Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper
Brant Pitre and Scott Hahn
Double Day

A Biblical Walk through the Mass: Understanding What We Say and Do In the Liturgy
Edward Sri
Ascension Press

The Crucified Rabbi: Judaism and the Origins of Catholic Christianity
Taylor R. Marshall
St. John Press

The Mass: The Glory, the Mystery, the Tradition
Cardinal Donald Wuerl and Mike Aquilina
Double Day

Jesus of Nazareth Holy Week: From The Entrance Into Jerusalem To The Resurrection
Pope Benedict XVI
Ignatius Press