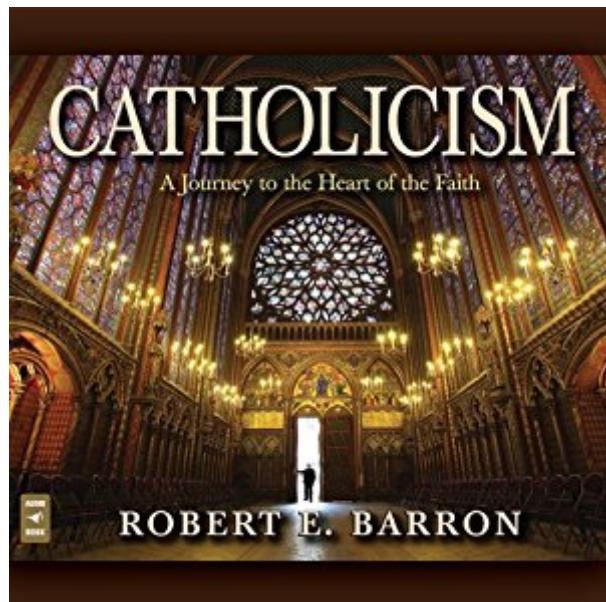


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Catholicism: A Journey To The Heart Of The Faith



Synopsis

Fr. Robert Barron's comprehensive work goes straight to the core of the Catholic faith. He first examines the foundations of Christ's incarnation, life and ministry, and then works through the essentials of the Catholic tradition: from sacraments, worship and prayer, to Mary and the saints, and on to salvation, heaven and hell. Throughout this epic journey, Fr. Barron uses art, literature, personal stories, Scripture, theology, philosophy and history to present a complete picture of the Church to the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When defining Catholicism, many first turn to its unique practices and characters--the Mass, the sacraments, Mary, priests, and the Pope. Others point to its intellectual traits--its distinctive apologetics, theology, and philosophy. In his new book, *Catholicism: A Journey to the Heart of the Faith* (Image, hardcover, 304 pages), Fr. Robert Barron explores these typical characteristics but doesn't stop there. He looks through many more lenses to reveal the core of Catholicism. Barron is not just concerned with what's good and true about the Catholic tradition but also what's beautiful. The Catholic faith is not just a matter of the mind and the soul but of the body and the senses. Therefore if we want to fully understand "the Catholic thing", we need to gaze on art, history, culture, music, literature, and architecture: "In order to grasp (Catholicism) more fully, we have to read the Gospels, the Epistles of Paul, the Confessions of St. Augustine, the Summa Theologiae of Thomas Aquinas, The Divine Comedy of Dante, Saint John of the Cross' Ascent of Mount Carmel, The Story

of a Soul of Therese of Lisieux, among many other texts. But we also have to look and listen. We must consult the Cathedral of Chartres, the Sainte-Chapelle, the Arena Chapel, the Sistine Chapel ceiling, Bernini's Ecstasy of Saint Teresa; the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Grunewald's Crucifixion in the Isenheim Altarpiece, the soaring melodies of Gregorian chant, the Masses of Mozart, and the motets of Palestrina.

If you've seen the Catholicism series, then this book will prove to be nothing new under the sun. In fact, this book is almost a transcript of the video series. This is both good and bad. It is bad because the book will never match the visual appeal of the videos. They were breathtaking presentations that brought us to many great landmarks of Roman Catholicism. However, there is a lot of dense material in the videos that is easy to miss, unless you rewind and re-watch several times. Having it presented to you in book format gives you a chance to see the words in front of your face, chew on them a bit, and hopefully understand. There are many great parts in this book, which Roman Catholics (and I stress Roman Catholics) will appreciate, including focus on the Mass, the Sacraments, and great saints. Now don't get me wrong, this book and series has done a great deal of good for a great many people. Instead of telling you about the good parts, which you can read in the hundreds of reviews on , I will tell you about the parts that bothered me. For starters, there is also a lot of bias in this book. Fr. Barron states that Protestants and Orthodox don't hold as firm a conviction on the doctrine of the Incarnation as Catholics do. I would agree with him regarding Protestants, but disagree regarding Orthodox. He mentions sacraments, Liturgy, bishops, cathedrals, etc. All of which the Orthodox have. He then uses an image from the Hagia Sophia (a once Orthodox Church) on the opposite page. Sadly, the whole book only shows you the Western view of Catholicism, and completely ignores Eastern Catholics. The Roman Rite is but one of the many rites in the Catholic Church. This book doesn't even mention them and gives the feeling of "If it ain't Roman, it ain't rite.

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