

Four Witnesses The Early Church In Her Own Words Rod Bennett

The perfect gift! A specially priced, beautifully designed hardcover edition of *The Joy of the Gospel* with a foreword by Robert Barron and an afterword by James Martin, SJ. “The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus... In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church’s journey in years to come.” – Pope Francis This special edition of Pope Francis’s popular message of hope explores themes that are important for believers in the 21st century. Examining the many obstacles to faith and what can be done to overcome those hurdles, he emphasizes the importance of service to God and all his creation. Advocating for “the homeless, the addicted, refugees, indigenous peoples, the elderly who are increasingly isolated and abandoned,” the Holy Father shows us how to respond to poverty and current economic challenges that affect us locally and globally. Ultimately, Pope Francis demonstrates how to develop a more personal relationship with Jesus Christ, “to recognize the traces of God’s Spirit in events great and small.” Profound in its insight, yet warm and accessible in its tone, *The Joy of the Gospel* is a call to action to live a life motivated by divine love and, in turn, to experience heaven on earth. Includes a foreword by Robert Barron, author of *Catholicism: A Journey to the*

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Heart of the Faith and James Martin, SJ, author of Jesus: A Pilgrimage

The final book of the Bible, Revelation prophesies the ultimate judgement of mankind in a series of allegorical visions, grisly images and numerological predictions. According to these, empires will fall, the "Beast" will be destroyed and Christ will rule a new Jerusalem. With an introduction by Will Self.

The theory goes like this: Just a few centuries after Christ's death, around the time the Roman Empire converted to Christianity, the true Faith suffered a catastrophic falling-away, so obscured by worldliness and pagan idolatry, kicking off the Dark Ages of Catholicism, that Christianity required a complete reboot. This theory is popular]] but it's also fiction. This idea of a "Great Apostasy" is one of the cornerstones of American Protestantism, along with Mormonism, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and even Islam. Countless millions today profess a faith built on the assumption that the early Church quickly became broken beyond repair, and needed restoration to the "pure" teaching of Jesus and the apostles. Amid imperial intrigue, military menace, and bitter theological debate, a hero arises in the form of a homely little monk named Athanasius, who stands against the world to prove that there could never be a Great Apostasybecause Jesus promised his Church would never be broken With the touch of a master storyteller, Rod Bennett narrates the drama of the early Church's fight to preserve Christian orthodoxy, while powerful forces try to smash it.

This selection of writings from early church leaders includes work by Clement of Rome,

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Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Athenagoras, and Justin Martyr. Long recognized for the quality of its translations, introductions, explanatory notes, and indexes, the Library of Christian Classics provides scholars and students with modern English translations of some of the most significant Christian theological texts in history. Through these works--each written prior to the end of the sixteenth century--contemporary readers are able to engage the ideas that have shaped Christian theology and the church through the centuries.

St. Cyprian's writings portray vividly the life of the Christian Church in the middle of the third century. The two pastoral addresses of this intensely devout bishop reveal the aftermath of the persecution by the Emperor Decius.

Jehovah's witnesses Versus the Biblical Jesus is the fourth book in the "Leaving the Watchtower" series, written by Bishop Johnson. In this book we explore what the Church has believed about Jesus Christ, since its inception -- and in contrast with what Jehovah's witnesses teach about Him. By the grace of God, some of the issues about the deity of Christ have been settled by our ancient Church Fathers; and explored in depth by great Christian leaders and teachers, ever since. We re-open this conversation, though settled, for the sake of the thousands who are presently coming to terms with the Watchtower society's beliefs; and are seeking to understand what the Bible really says about Jesus Christ.

Jesus gave his followers a command: "Follow me." And a promise: "And I will equip

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you to find others to follow me.” We were made to make disciples. Designed for use in discipleship relationships and other focused settings, Multiply will equip you to carry out Jesus’s ministry. Each of the twenty-four sessions in the book corresponds with an online video at www.multiplymovement.com, where New York Times bestselling author David Platt joins Francis in guiding you through each part of Multiply. One plus one plus one. Every copy of Multiply is designed to do what Jesus did: make disciples who make disciples.... Until the world knows the truth of Jesus Christ.

If the word trinity isn’t in Scripture, why is it such an important part of our faith? And if the Bible can be interpreted in many ways, how do we know what to make of it? And who decided what should be in the Bible anyway? The Church Fathers provide the answers. These brilliant, embattled, and sometimes eccentric men defined the biblical canon, hammered out the Creed, and gave us our understanding of sacraments and salvation. It is they who preserved for us the rich legacy of the early Church. D’Ambrosio dusts off the dry theology and brings you the exciting stories and great heroes such as Ambrose, Augustine, Basil, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Jerome. This page-turner will inspire and challenge you with the lives and insights of these seminal teachers from when the Church was young. The audio edition of this book can be downloaded via Audible.

What Did Early Christians Really Believe?

Ignatius of Antioch and Polycarp of Smyrna were two of the greatest leaders of Christianity in the first half of the second century. Both suffered martyrdom: Ignatius in Rome during the reign of Trajan, and Polycarp in Smyrna some time in the mid-century. The letters of Ignatius

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advance the teachings of Christ and the apostles on such important subjects as church unity, the Eucharist, and the governmental structure of the church. The Martyrdom of Polycarp represents one of the earliest and most inspiring accounts of a Christian martyr that we possess. Their combined writings provide a unique window on the faith, life and practice of Christians in the second century. Careful reading of these writings demonstrates the unique place that the early fathers of the church hold in establishing the foundations of historic Christianity. Their relevance for contemporary ecumenical discussions is beyond dispute. We hear the voices of the early Church Fathers even today. Their teachings, their guidance, their insights, and their sacrifice shaped the Catholic Church. They defined the canon of Scripture. They developed our creeds and forms of worship. They defined Christianity's distinctive moral sense. But who were they? What can we learn from their ancient teachings? What can the Fathers teach the 21st century - about holiness, culture, faith, and the Gospel. This is the definitive resource for anyone interested in learning about the Church Fathers and their legacy. Ideal for RCIA, catechists, clergy, as well as lay Catholics who want to learn more about the great teachers of early Christianity. In this new and extensively updated Third Edition, you'll find: New! Twenty Church Fathers never before covered in this series Nearly 75 more pages of information on the early Church! New! Many poets of ancient Christianity, whose hymns we still sing today. An extensively revised introduction The Mothers of the Church and their impact Research-friendly references and citations, topical index, timeline, and detailed bibliography

This Christian classic tells the stories of brave men and women who were martyred for their faith in the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries.

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This monograph presents the most comprehensive investigation yet made into the healing activity of the Early Church. In contrast to early skeptics like B. B. Warfield, the author is convinced there was a vigorous healing ministry in the centuries that followed the apostles, though it fluctuated somewhat and changed its mode. Exorcism is prominently attested throughout the period. The pre-Nicene Fathers recognized its great apologetic value as a dramatic demonstration of the superiority of Jesus Christ over pagan gods. Interest in healing miracles per se appears to have been particularly characteristic of the less educated members of the Church and those who were chaste in their devotion to the cause of Christ. Amongst these groups gifts of healing were found, becoming rare it seems by the mid-third century, but well attested again later in monastic circles. In the pre-Nicene period anointing with oil (in the name of Christ) was clearly an avenue of healing and, though mentioned comparatively rarely, may have been widespread as part of the regular ministry of local clergy to the sick. Baptismal healing, physical as well as spiritual, also took place. In the post-Nicene Church the shrines of the martyrs became a prominent locus of healing. Devotion to this cult may have been encouraged by Church Fathers as an acceptable alternative to magical practices. But evidence suggests syncretism did occur and martyr's relics could be invested with quasi-magical awe. Most Fathers were positive about the medical profession, seeing it as an avenue of God's work, and in the late fourth century one pioneered the hospital which then spread throughout the eastern Mediterranean. In an appendix to his work, the author sets down nine pointers from the healing activity of the Early Church, and his own experience, to assist those engaged in the healing ministry today.

Taken together, these three volumes represent a basic English-language reference book of

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patristic works. Volume 1 ends circa 382; Volume 2 concludes with Julian of Eclanum (d. 454); Volume 3 ends with St. John of Damascene (d. 749).

Voted America's Best-Loved Novel in PBS's The Great American Read Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning masterwork of honor and injustice in the deep South—and the heroism of one man in the face of blind and violent hatred One of the most cherished stories of all time, *To Kill a Mockingbird* has been translated into more than forty languages, sold more than forty million copies worldwide, served as the basis for an enormously popular motion picture, and was voted one of the best novels of the twentieth century by librarians across the country. A gripping, heart-wrenching, and wholly remarkable tale of coming-of-age in a South poisoned by virulent prejudice, it views a world of great beauty and savage inequities through the eyes of a young girl, as her father—a crusading local lawyer—risks everything to defend a black man unjustly accused of a terrible crime.

Adrian Fortescue, a British apologist for the Catholic faith in the early part of the 20th century, wrote this classic of clear exposition on the faith of the early Church in the papacy based upon the writings of the Church fathers until 451. No ultramontanist, Fortescue can be a keen critic of personal failings of various Popes, but he shows through his brilliant assessment of the writings of the Church fathers that the early Church had a clear understanding of the primacy of Peter and a belief in the divinely given authority of the Pope in matters of faith and morals. Referring to the famous passage in Matthew 16: 18 where Jesus confers his authority upon Peter as the head of the Apostles, and the first Pope, Fortescue says that, while Christians can continue to argue about the exact meaning of that passage from Scripture, and the various standards that are used for judgments about correct Christian teaching and belief, the only

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possible real standard is a living authority, an authority alive in the world at this moment, that can answer your difficulties, reject a false theory as it arises and say who is right in disputed interpretations of ancient documents. Fortescue shows that the papacy actually seems to be one of the clearest and easiest dogmas to prove from the early Church. And it is his hope through this work that it will contribute to a renaissance with regard to the office of the papacy among those in communion with the Bishop of Rome, and that it will assist those outside this communion to seek it out, confident that it is willed by Christ for all who would be joined to him in this life and in the next.

We hear the voices of the early Church Fathers even today. Their teachings, their guidance, their insights, and their sacrifice shaped the Catholic Church. They defined the canon of Scripture. They developed our creeds and forms of worship. They defined Christianity's distinctive moral sense. But who were they? What can we learn from their ancient teachings? What can the Fathers teach us in the 21st century - about holiness, culture, faith, and the Gospel? This is the definitive resource for anyone interested in learning about the Church Fathers and their legacy. Ideal for RCIA, catechists, and clergy as well as lay Catholics who want to learn more about the great teachers of early Christianity. In this new and extensively updated *The Fathers of the Church*, 3rd Edition, you will find: New: twenty Church Fathers never before covered in this series, New: many poets of ancient Christianity, whose hymns we still sing today, An extensively revised introduction, Nearly seventy-five more pages of information on the early Church, The Mothers of the Church and their impact, Research-friendly references and citations, topical index, timeline, and detailed bibliography Book jacket. An exhilarating conversion story of a devout Baptist who relates how he overcame his hostility

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to the Catholic Church by a combination of serious Bible study and vast research of the writings of the early Church Fathers. In addition to a moving account of their conversion that caused Ray and his wife to "cross the Tiber" to Rome, he offers an in-depth treatment of Baptism and the Eucharist in Scripture and the ancient Church. Thoroughly documented with hundreds of footnotes, this contains perhaps the most complete compilation of biblical and patristic quotations and commentary available on Baptism and the Eucharist, as well as a detailed analysis of Sola Scriptura and Tradition.

The writings in this volume cast a glimmer of light upon the emerging traditions and organization of the infant church, during an otherwise little-known period of its development. A selection of letters and small-scale theological treatises from a group known as the Apostolic Fathers, several of whom were probably disciples of the Apostles, they provide a first-hand account of the early Church and outline a form of early Christianity still drawing on the theology and traditions of its parent religion, Judaism. Included here are the first Epistle of Bishop Clement of Rome, an impassioned plea for harmony; The Epistle of Polycarp; The Epistle of Barnabas; The Didache; and the Seven Epistles written by Ignatius of Antioch - among them his moving appeal to the Romans that they grant him a martyr's death.

Here is the long-awaited sequel to Rod Bennett's *Four Witnesses: The Early Church in Her Own Words*, a page-turning spiritual adventure following the lives and words of Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus of Lyons. *Four More Witnesses* invites readers to enter again the world of the early, influential Christian writers, this time meeting Hermas, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, and Origen. What did these witnesses have to say on the necessity of baptism? What did they think of "eternal security" and confessions to

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Church elders? What about Mary and her role in salvation history? Christian writers addressed all of these questions, and many more, in the decades following the Apostles--an era when even the Creed was still a work in progress. Like *Four Witnesses*, *Four More Witnesses* is a moving chronicle of the Christian Church in the flower of her youth.

This voluminous study examines the question of the Papacy in theological, biblical, and historical context, attempting to dispel doubts about the traditional Roman Catholic position by an impressive collection of data and commentary.

This collation presents the evidence for the earliest Latin versions of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Galatians, enabling scholars to examine the development of the biblical text at an important early stage in its history.

What was the early Church like? Contrary to popular belief, Rod Bennett shows there is a reliable way to know. Four ancient Christian writers—four witnesses to early Christianity—left us an extensive body of documentation on this vital subject, and this book brings their fascinating testimony to life for modern believers. With all the power and drama of a gripping novel, this book is a journey of discovery of ancient and beautiful truths through the lives of four great saints of the early Church—Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus of Lyons.

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Not a cloud in the blue Atlanta sky, Jeffrey Ross made his morning visit to the Dunwoody Starbucks, expecting this day to be like any other. It wouldn't. Samarra Russell left her meeting at Emory Medical Center after receiving the strange call and wondered if it had anything to do with her immunology research at CDC. It was a secret, or was supposed to be. Going home as instructed, Samarra opened the box of Valentine candy on the kitchen counter and collapsed. Before losing her balance, Samarra recognized the small finger, severed and still wearing the tiny ring she gave him for his 7th birthday. Her precious son. She opened the note after regaining limited senses and read. If she didn't want to receive young Thomas Russell's head in a box, she would do as instructed. And she did.

David Currie was raised in a devout Christian family whose father was a fundamentalist preacher and both parents teachers at Moody Bible Institute. Currie's whole upbringing was immersed in the life of fundamentalist Protestantism - theology professors, seminary presidents and founders of evangelical mission agencies were frequent guests at his family dinner table. Currie received a degree from Trinity International University and studied in the Masters of Divinity program. This book was written as an explanation to his fundamentalist and evangelical friends and family about why he became a Roman Catholic. Currie presents a very lucid, systematic and intelligible account of the reasons for his conversion to the ancient Church that Christ founded. He gives a detailed discussion of the important theological and doctrinal beliefs Catholic and evangelicals hold in common, as well as the key doctrines that separate us, particularly the Eucharist, the Pope, and Mary.

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Introduces young readers to Catholic beliefs as expressed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

"Magisterial. . . . A learned, brilliant and enjoyable study."—Géza Vermès, Times Literary Supplement In this exciting book, Paula Fredriksen explains the variety of New Testament images of Jesus by exploring the ways that the new Christian communities interpreted his mission and message in light of the delay of the Kingdom he had preached. This edition includes an introduction reviews the most recent scholarship on Jesus and its implications for both history and theology. "Brilliant and lucidly written, full of original and fascinating insights."—Reginald H. Fuller, Journal of the American Academy of Religion "This is a first-rate work of a first-rate historian."—James D. Tabor, Journal of Religion "Fredriksen confronts her documents—principally the writings of the New Testament—as an archaeologist would an especially rich complex site. With great care she distinguishes the literary images from historical fact. As she does so, she explains the images of Jesus in terms of the strategies and purposes of the writers Paul, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John."—Thomas D'Evelyn, Christian Science Monitor

"Who Do You Say I Am?" Four Witnesses Offer Strikingly Different Testimony to the Life and Death of Jesus Bringing the stories of Jesus to life for the contemporary reader, Robin Griffith-Jones revives the original power and intent of each of the four gospels. He presents a lively discussion of how and why each gospel was written, considering the substance and style of the testimony itself as well as the unique context of each story. Mark's gospel tells the rebel's story of Jesus as a failed revolutionary

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whose mission mysteriously succeeds. For the rabbi Matthew, Jesus is the long-awaited fulfillment of Jewish expectation. For Luke, Jesus is a heroic, compassionate social revolutionary who confidently and mercifully dies on behalf of all humanity. John's gospel is a mystic's interpretation of the divinity of Jesus told in powerful poetic language. "Who do you say I am?" Each gospel offers its own answer to Jesus' question, influenced by the context of its writing and the personality of its writer. All four gospels taken together provide what one alone could not: a remarkably full and compelling presentation of Jesus and his message.

Acts is the sequel to Luke's gospel and tells the story of Jesus's followers during the 30 years after his death. It describes how the 12 apostles, formerly Jesus's disciples, spread the message of Christianity throughout the Mediterranean against a background of persecution. With an introduction by P.D. James

Shocked to find corruption widespread in the ranks of their shepherds today, too many good Catholics are tempted to leave the Church, unaware that ever since the days when Jesus' own treasurer, Judas Iscariot, had his hand in the till, the Good Shepherd and His faithful followers have been regularly betrayed by bad shepherds. In these eye-opening pages, Church historian Rod Bennett introduces a number of those bad shepherds, including Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia, who regularly sold out the Church to the Roman emperor; Pope Stephen VII, who so hated his late predecessor that he had him dug up, put on trial, and flung into the Tiber; Benedict IX, who bought and sold

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the papacy (twice!); and Pope John XII, whose debauchery rivaled that of the corrupt emperor Caligula. Those were very bad shepherds indeed, but while they did the Devil's work, good Catholics not only survived — they thrived. They outlasted their bad shepherds, preserved in their ranks the Faith of our fathers, and served in each instance as the foundation for a cleansing of the House of God and a vigorous renewal of the Faith. These enlightening pages demonstrate that it can happen again!

As hunger for the faith continues to grow, Pope Benedict XVI gives the Catholic Church the food it seeks with 598 questions and answers in the

In the name of the Father, the Son, and ... the Holy Spirit. We pray in the name of all three, but how often do we live with an awareness of only the first two? As Jesus ascended into heaven, He promised to send the Holy Spirit—the Helper—so that we could be true and living witnesses for Christ. Unfortunately, today's church has admired the gift but neglected to open it. Breakthrough author Francis Chan rips away paper and bows to get at the true source of the church's power—the Holy Spirit. Chan contends that we've ignored the Spirit for far too long, and we are reaping the disastrous results. Thorough scriptural support and compelling narrative form Chan's invitation to stop and remember the One we've forgotten, the Spirit of the living God.

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First published in 1989, *A Cloud of Witnesses* has been completely rewritten to incorporate a multitude of minor amendments and a considerable amount of additional

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information. Like the first edition, it is intended as an introduction to the formative first five hundred years of the Christian theological tradition. In these pages the opinions and personalities of the Fathers of the Church that emerge are presented against the intellectual, social, and political world of their times, but since the book is only an introduction, the author presents the development of Christian doctrine in a rather more logical and cohesive manner than was the case in reality.

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