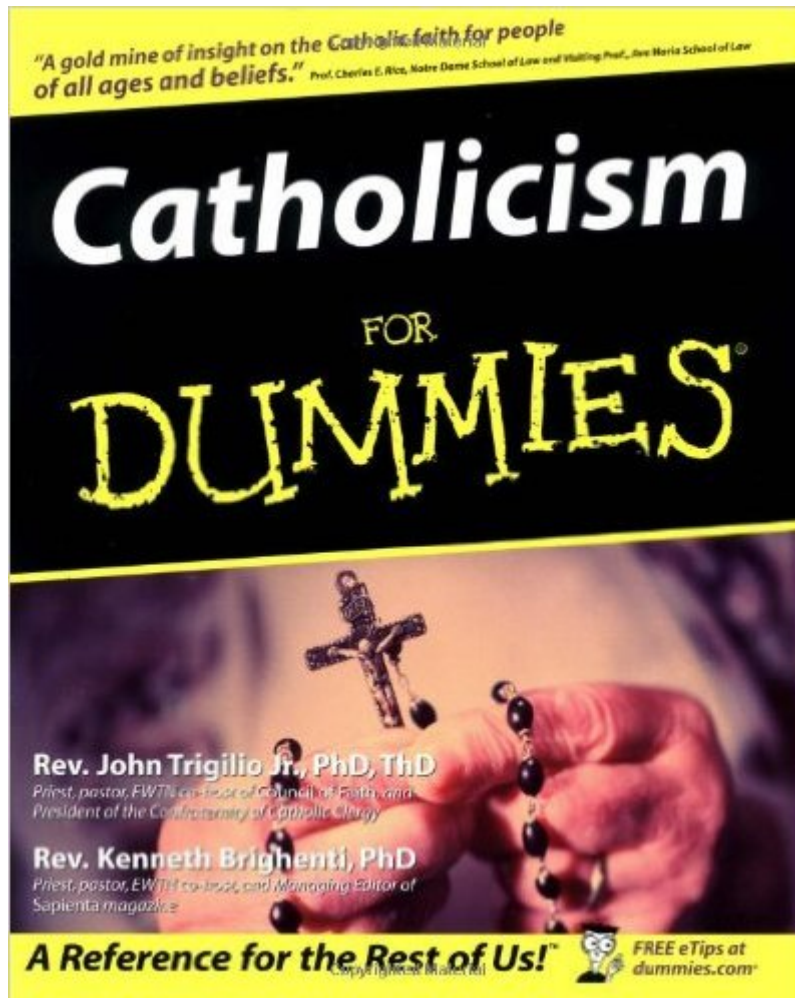


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Catholicism For Dummies



Synopsis

There are more than one billion Catholics in the world, and each one has a similar set of basic beliefs and practices that he or she follows. Some of the teachings of Catholicism are thousands of years old, while others are more recent. So what is the Catholic culture like and what do they believe? *Catholicism For Dummies* answers these and many other questions. Whether you're a Catholic or not, you may be totally clueless or just unaware of some aspects of Catholic traditions, history, doctrine, worship, devotion, or culture. No sweat. Regardless of whether you're engaged, married, related to a Catholic, or just curious about what Catholics really do believe, this book is for you. *Catholicism For Dummies* is not a catechism or religious textbook, but a casual, down-to-earth introduction for non-Catholics and reintroduction for Catholics. It gives commonsense explanations so that the next time you're invited to a Catholic wedding, Baptism, funeral, Confirmation, or First Communion, you won't be totally confused. You'll also discover other important topics that can help you better understand the Catholic culture—from morality and devotions to worship and liturgy. This book will familiarize you with Catholicism by showing you:

- What it means to be a Catholic: traditions, prayers, beliefs, and holidays
- Who is who in the Catholic hierarchy
- How Catholics worship
- What the Seven Sacraments and Ten Commandments are
- The book regarded as the holiest to Catholics: The Bible
- The Church's stand on some sticky issues

Catholicism For Dummies presents a rich tapestry and history of the Catholic faith—from devotions to doctrines. This intelligent and faithful look at Catholicism will open your eyes to this religion and answer many of the questions you may have about it.

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Customer Reviews

I am currently an Anglican/Episcopalian exploring the Catholic Church, likely to be received soon. I have an extensive background in Scripture, Church History, ancient languages, etc. Yet as I began to explore the Catholic Church I realized that I could tell you quite a bit about St. Thomas Aquinas' understanding of transubstantiation, but I didn't know something as simple as when to cross myself at Mass! I also didn't know the official differences between mortal and venial sins, the ins-and-outs of papal infallibility, or the difference between a sacrament and a sacramental. This book helped me understand all of these things and then some. My point is that virtually anybody can learn a lot about the Catholic Church from this book, even those who consider themselves fairly knowledgeable to begin with (like cradle Catholics). The style is easy-to-read, straight-forward, and the advice and information is always based on official Church teaching. So it is not a good place to go if you wish to join the Catholic Church because you like the stain glass windows but don't want to accept Church teachings. This does not mean the authors cover up or gloss over difficult issues. They clearly admit how some popes were awful, and they have harsh words for the minority of priests who sexually abuse children. They do put these issues in perspective, pointing out that the papacy has a better record than most secular leaders, and the sinfulness of Peter, who was still chosen as first of the apostles. They also compare molestation by priests to molestation within families, showing that within families it is far more rampant (without excusing bad priests' behavior!). These are fair and balanced assessments in my opinion.

As with other "Dummies" titles, "Catholicism for Dummies" gives the reader a good introduction to the topic at hand. It doesn't get pulled down by extensive, excessive theological arguments or apologies that can confuse or bore the average reader. Instead, it offers a brief but thorough explanation of all things Catholic. From rosaries to charismatics to papal infallibility, it's covered here. The information is presented in an easy to read, easy reference style. You learn why Catholics do certain things and why they don't do others. You get the Church's stand on certain major issues such as abortion, homosexuality and family planning. This is a good book to introduce any non-Catholic to the beliefs of the Church. It also gives cradle Catholics a refresher course on their faith. I highly recommend this book for RCIA candidates and catechumens because it offers the Church's teachings in a quick-read format and can answer many questions for interested people. I wish I knew about this book when I was going through the RCIA process. Another good introductory book to the Church is "Why Do Catholics Do That?" It's written by Kevin Orlin Johnson and is available here on . If books don't provide enough answers, attend RCIA classes, talk to Catholic

friends, or talk to the local parish priest. These are all good resources for answers about the Church. However, if you want a full explanation of the Church and her flock, get a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It can be difficult to read, especially if you are not familiar with many Catholic terms, but it provides an extensive and concise description of the Catholic Church. Reading the Catechism with the Bible will give you an even deeper understanding of the Church.

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