

By design this list is deliberately partial and incomplete. Any attempt at an exhaustive list of recommendations would necessarily accidentally fail to include something highly relevant. Non-inclusion on this list should not be taken as a criticism. Contemporary spiritual writers are deliberately excluded from consideration as the passage of time is necessary to form long-term judgments. These are presented merely as one way for someone looking to get started to have a bit of an idea of where he or she might begin.

Classics

Various editions and translations of these classic works are easily found online and in bookstores

- *Confessions* by St. Augustine
- *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis
- *The Interior Castle* and other writings by St. Theresa of Avila
- *The Little Way* by St. Thérèse of Lisieux

Noted 20th century spiritual writers who wrote in English

Various editions of these writers are easily found online and in bookstores

- Thomas Merton (his classic spiritual autobiography is *The Seven Storey Mountain*)
- Henri Nouwen (he wrote over 30 books that most people find highly personal and easily accessible)
- C. S. Lewis (An Anglican whose writings nonetheless are generally within the bounds of Catholic theology. Books like *The Screwtape Letters*, *Mere Christianity*, and *The Great Divorce* are good popular explorations of important theological topics. His fiction was deliberately conceived as a way of shaping religious imagination according to Christian themes)
- G. K. Chesterton (A convert from Anglicanism to Catholicism in the early 20th century. Most famous for his novels and newspaper columns he also wrote the theological essays *Orthodoxy* and *The Everlasting Man*.)

Introductions to Scripture or Theology written at a popular level

- *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. This book is published by the bishops of the United States and is intended to be readable at a popular level. Unlike the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that is by nature more a reference book than an expository text, the USCCA contains stories, examples, and explanations.
 - Loyola Press has a series of 8 books called their *Catholic Basics* series that covers topics including Sacramental Theology, Christology, Moral Theology, and Ecclesiology. Each volume is relatively short, inexpensive, and easily read by those with very little background.
 - Twenty-Third Publications has a 7-book series called *Our Catholic Life* that attempts to present an easy comprehensive introduction to Catholic Theology
 - Liturgical Press publishes a large series *New Collegeville Bible Commentary* that can be purchased either in single volumes or in collected volumes that presents an excellent introduction to the various books of the Bible that does not require an extensive scholarly background.
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