

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS CATHEDRAL

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The Good, the Bad, and the Heretical

Reading List

Eusebius, The History of the Church

- The history of the Church from Christ to Constantine. Very readable. Written by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, probably in 324/5

Philip Hughes, The Church in Crisis

- A history of the twenty great councils. Details of the heresies and the ecumenical councils of the Church up to the First Vatican Council.

William A. Jurgens, The Faith of the Early Fathers

- Three volume set with English translations of Christian writings of the pre-Nicene and Nicene eras.
- Can be a bit fragmented, because it includes all the fragments of ancient manuscripts. However, it is worthwhile to see the writings in their context.

John Henry Cardinal Newman, An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine

- Newman, an Anglican, set out to explain and refute the teachings of the Church. As he delved into the history, he realized that he must convert to Catholicism.

Jimmy Akin, The Fathers Know Best

- A popularly-written reference of the early Church. The book is organized by theme, i.e. the Trinity, Morality, or Mary, and under each theme the writings of the fathers on that theme are collected. It is, after all, written by an apologist! The volume also includes a handy summary of the Ecumenical Councils, the Fathers, the writings, and the heresies.

Henry Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma

- Denzinger provides in one volume all the major conciliar decrees of the Catholic Church before Vatican II. This resource is not just for Roman Catholics, but for anyone who is interested in the ancient, undivided church of the first thousand years. There are invaluable councils such as the Synod of Orange that adopted a modified approach to St. Augustine and other later councils that continued to address Augustine and the predestination issue. Trent and Vatican I and much more are all here.