

Selected Reading List for Catholic K-12 Schools

by Denise Donohue, Ed.D., and Dan Guernsey, Ed.D.

Updated February 27, 2019

The following reading list is offered for use with The Cardinal Newman Society's *Literature, Library, and Media Guide for Catholic Educators*.

The authors assembled this list based on their experience as educators and Catholic school administrators, and by consulting sources including schools recognized by The Cardinal Newman Society's Catholic Education Honor Roll for their commitment to strong Catholic identity. The list suggests options for Catholic educators, but it is not exhaustive of all possible literature that might be suitable for Catholic education. Many factors must be considered when deciding which particular works should be included in a curriculum.

This list may be adopted in whole or in part by educators. All Newman Society resources are available for free online at NewmanSociety.org.

K-4

K-4 Fiction- General

Adapted Greek and Roman Myths
Aesop's Fables
Bible Stories
Poetry
Folk tales

Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes
Selected Fairy Tales from Grimm
Selected Fairy Tales from Hans
Christian Andersen

K-4 Titles

Adapted Greek and Roman Myths
Aesop's Fables
A Book of Nonsense (Lear)
A Pair of Red Clogs (Matsuno) A Seed
is Sleeping (Aston) Alexander & the
Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad
Day (Viorst) An Egg is Quiet (Aston)
Andy and the Circus (Daugherty)
Angus and the Ducks (Flack)

Before I Was Me (Fraser)
Blueberries for Sal (McCloskey)
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You
See? (Martin)
Caps for Sale (Slobodkina)
Charlotte's Web (White)
Clown of God (de Paolo)
Cranberry Thanksgiving (Devlin)
Curious George Series (Rey)

- Favorite Uncle Remus (Harris)
 Frog and Toad Series (Lobel)
 Harold and the Purple Crayon (Johnson)
 Heavenly Hosts: Eucharistic Miracles
 for Kids (Swegart)
 If You Give A Mouse A Cookie
 (Numeroff)
 Lentil (McCloskey)
 Madeline (Bemelmans)
 Make Way for Ducklings (McCloskey)
 Mama, Do you Love Me? (Joesse)
 Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel
 (Burton)
 Millions of Cats (Gag)
 Mirette on the High Wire (McCully)
 Molly McBride and the Purple Habit
 (Schoonover – Egolf)
 Mr. Popper’s Penguins (Atwater)
 Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH
 Series (O’Brien) Mufaro’s Beautiful
 Daughters (Steptoe) Nate The Great
 series (Sharmat)
 Owl Moon (Yolen)
 Papa Piccolo (Talley)
 Peppe the Lamplighter (Barton)
 Peter Pan (Barrie)
 Rikki Tikki Tavi (Kipling)
 Roses in the Snow: A Tale of Saint
 Elizabeth of Hungary (Jackson &
 Kadar-Kallen)
 Saints Chronicles Series (Milgrom &
 Davis)
 St. Clare of Assisi Runaway Rich Girl
 (Hee-ju)
- St. George and the Dragon (Hodges)
 Storm in the Night (Stolz)
 The Animal Hedge (Fleishman)
 The Blue Fairy Book; The Red Fairy
 Book (Lang)
 The Bobbsey Twins (Hope)
 The Children’s Book of Virtues
 (Bennett)
 The Elves and the Shoemaker (Galdone)
 The Five Chinese Brothers (Bishop &
 Wiese)
 The Quiltmaker’s Gift (Brumbeau)
 The Little Engine That Could (Piper)
 The Little Flower: A Parable of Saint
 Therese of Lisieux (Arganbright &
 Arvidson)
 The Little House in the Woods (Wilder)
 The Moffats (Estes)
 The Mystery at Midnight (Hendey)
 The Princess and the Kiss (Bishop)
 The Snowy Day (Keats)
 The Story About Ping (Fleck & Wiese)
 The Story of Ferdinand (Leaf)
 The Story of Peter Rabbit (Potter)
 The Trumpet of the Swan (White)
 The Velveteen Rabbit (Williams)
 The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Carle)
 The Wind in the Willows (Grahame)
 Treasure Box Set (Maryknoll Sisters)
 Wee Gillis (Leaf)
 Where the Wild Things Are (Sendak)
 Winnie the Pooh (Milne)

Grades 5-8

Grades 5-8 Fiction Titles

- 7 Riddles to Nowhere (Cattapan)
 A Horse and the Boy (Lewis)
 A Christmas Carol (Dickens)
 A Story of Joan of Arc (Earnest)
 A Wrinkle in Time (L’Engle)
 Ablaze: Stories of Daring Teen Saints
 (Swaim)
- Adam of the Road (Gray)
 Amos Fortune, Free Man (Yates)
 Anne of Geen Gables (Montgomery)
 Around the World in Eighty Days
 (Verne)
 Beowulf: A New Telling (Nye)
 Black Beauty (Sewell)

- Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of
 the Iliad (Lee)
 Blessed Marie of New France
 (Windeatt)
 Break in the Basilica (Ahern)
 Caddie Woodlawn (Brink)
 Captain Courageous (Kipling)
 Cyrano de Bergerac (Rostand)
 Death Comes for the Archbishop
 (Cather)
 Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (Stevenson)
 Fingal's Quest (Pollard)
 Freckles (Porter)
 Hans Brinker (Dodge)
 Heidi (Spyri)
 Hero of the Hills (Windeatt)
 Holy Twins: Benedict and Scholastica
 (Norris)
 Homer Price (McCloskey)
 I Am David (Holm)
 I, Juan de Pareja (de Trevino)
 If All the Swords in England (Willard)
 Johnny Tremain (Forbes)
 Journey to the Center of the Earth
 (Verne)
 Kidnapped (Stevenson)
 King Arthur and His Knights of the
 Round Table (Green)
 Kon-Tiki (Heyerdahl)
 Lay Siege to Heaven (de Wohl)
 Legend of Sleepy Hollow (Irving)
 Leif the Lucky (D'Aulaire)
 Lilies of the Field (Barrett)
 Little House in the Big Woods (Wilder)
 Little Women; Little Men (Alcott)
 Log of a Cowboy (Adams)
 Lost in St. Peter's Tomb (Ahern)
 Madeline Takes Command (Brill &
 Adams)
 Midshipman Easy; Masterman Ready
 (Marryat)
 Misty of Chincoteague (Henry)
 My Antonia (Cather)
 My Side of the Mountain (George)
 Narrative of the Life of Frederick
 Douglass (Douglass)
- Old Yeller (Gipson)
 Our Town (Wilder)
 Outlaws of Ravenhurst (Wallace)
 Patron Saint of First Communicants
 (Windeatt)
 Penrod and others (Tarkington)
 Pied Piper of Hamelin (Browning)
 Pygmalion (Shaw)
 Radiate: More Stories of Daring Teen
 Saints (Swaim)
 Redwall series (Jacques)
 Rip Van Winkle (Irving)
 Robin Hood (Pyle)
 Robinson Crusoe (Defoe)
 Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry (Taylor)
 Saint Catherine of Siena (Forbes)
 Saint Dominic (Windeatt)
 Saint Hyacinth of Poland (Windeatt)
 Saint John Masias (Windeatt)
 Saint Martin de Porres (Windeatt)
 Saint Monica (Forbes)
 Saint Rose of Lima (Windeatt)
 Saint Thomas Aquinas (Windeatt)
 Sarah Plain and Tall (Wilder)
 Secrets of Siena (Ahern)
 Son of Charlemagne (Willard)
 St. Benedict, Hero of the Hills
 (Windeatt)
 St. Joan, The Girl Soldier (De Wohl)
 St. Patrick (Tompert)
 St. Thomas Aquinas for Children
 (Maritain)
 Story of a Bad Boy (Aldrich)
 Swallows and Amazons (Ransome)
 Swiss Family Robinson (Wyss)
 Tales of King Arthur (Talbot)
 Tanglewood Tales (Hawthorne)
 Tarzan Series (Burroughs)
 The Adventures of Robin Hood (Green)
 The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
 (Doyle)
 The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (Twain)
 The Black Arrow (Stephenson)
 The Black Cauldron (Alexander)
 The Blood Red Crescent (Garnett)
 The Boxcar Children (Warner)

- | | |
|--|--|
| The Bronze Bow (Speare) | The Spear: A Novel of the Crucifixion (De Wohl) |
| The Call of the Wild (London) | The Story of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Walsh) |
| The Children of Fatima (Windeatt) | The Story of Rolf and the Viking Bow (French) |
| The Children's Homer (Colum) | The Swiss Family Robinson (Wyss) |
| The Chronicles of Narnia (Lewis) | The Tale of Despereaux (DeCamillo) |
| The Crucible (Miller) | The Trumpeter of Krakow (Kelly) |
| The Fellowship of the Ring (Tolkein) | The Twenty-One Balloons (Du Bois) |
| The Hiding Place (ten Bloom) | The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (Lewis) |
| The Hobbit (Tolkien) | The Wanderings of Odysseus: The Story of the Odyssey (Lee) |
| The Hound of the Baskervilles (Doyle) | The Weight of the Mass (Nobisso) |
| The Innocence of Father Brown [or others] (Chesterton) | The White Stag (Seredy) |
| The Island of the Blue Dolphins (O'Dell) | The Wind in the Willows (Grahame) |
| The Jungle Book (Kipling) | The Winged Watchman (van Stockum) |
| The Lord of the Rings (Tolkien) | The Witch of Blackbird Pond (Speare) |
| The Last Battle (Lewis) | The Yearling (Rawlings) |
| The Legend of Sleepy Hollow (Irving) | Thomas Aquinas & the Preaching Beggars (Larnen & Lomask) |
| The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe (Lewis) | Tommy Playfair (Finn) |
| The Little Flower (Windeatt) | Treasure Island (Stevenson) |
| The Living Wood (De Wohl) | Trumpeter of Krakow (Kelly) |
| The Miracle Worker (Gibson) | Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea (Verne) |
| The Miraculous Medal (Windeatt) | Two Years Before the Mast (Dana) |
| The Phantom Tollbooth (Juster) | Uncle Tom's Cabin (Stowe) |
| The Pearl (Steinbeck) | Westward Ho (Kingsley) |
| The Ransom of Red Chief and other short stories (O. Henry) | Where the Red Fern Grows (Rawls) |
| The Railway Children (Nesbit) | White Fang (London) |
| The Red Badge of Courage (Crane) | Will Wilder Series (Arroyo) |
| The Red Keep (French) | |
| The Restless Flame (de Wohl) | |
| The Secret Garden (Burnett) | |
| The Song at the Scaffold (Von le Fort) | |

Grades 9-12

Grades 9-12 Non-Fiction Titles (original or in translation)

- | | |
|--|---|
| Autobiography (Franklin) | Harvard Address and/or Nobel Prize acceptance speech (Solzhenitsyn) |
| Democracy in America, [selections] (de Tocqueville) | I Have a Dream (King) |
| Forget Not Love: The Passion of Maximilian Kolbe (Frossad) | Poetics, Ethics [excerpts] (Aristotle) |
| Funeral Oration (Pericles) | Self-Reliance (Emerson) |
| | Slave Narratives (Douglass, Jacobs) |

The Apology, Dialogues, Republic [excerpts] (Plato)
 The Communist Manifesto (Marx)
 The Declaration of Independence
 The Federalist Papers [selections] (Hamilton, et. al)
 The Gettysburg Address (Lincoln)
 The Gulag Archipelago [abridged] (Solzhenitsyn)

The Histories [selections] (Herodotus)
 The Magna Carta
 The Prince (Machiavelli)
 The Rights of Man (Paine)
 The Rule of St. Benedict
 The Social Contract (Rousseau)
 The United States Constitution
 Treatise on Law and excerpts from other works (Aquinas)

Grades 9-12 Fiction Titles

A Man for All Seasons (Bolt)
 A Voyage Round the World (Dampier)
 Aeneid [excerpts] (Virgil)
 All Quiet on the Western Front (Remarque)
 An Enemy of the People (Ibsen)
 And Then There Were None (Christi)
 Animal Farm and/or 1984 (Orwell)
 Beowulf (trans. Tolkien)
 Billy Budd, Bartleby the Scrivener, and other short stories (Melville)
 Brideshead Revisited (Waugh)
 Brothers Karamazov or Crime and Punishment (Dostoyevsky)
 Canterbury Tales [excerpts] (Chaucer)
 Come Rack! Come Rope! (Benson)
 Death Comes for the Archbishop (Cather)
 Death of a Salesman (Miller)
 Diary of a Country Priest (Bernanos)
 Doctor Faustus (Marlow)
 Doctor Zhivago (Pasternak)
 Don Quixote (Cervantes)
 El Cid (Racine)
 Forget Not Love: The Passion of Maximilian Kolbe (Frossad)
 Frankenstein (Shelley)
 Great Expectations, David Copperfield, or A Tale of Two Cities (Dickens)
 Gulliver's Travels (Swift)
 Hamlet, Macbeth, and if possible King Lear and others (Shakespeare)
 Huckleberry Finn (Twain)
 Hunchback of Notre Dame (Hugo)

Jane Eyre (Bronte)
 Joan of Arc (Twain)
 Kim (Kipling)
 Lieutenant Hornblower Series (Forester)
 Le Morte D'Arthur (Malory)
 Les Miserables (Hugo)
 Lord Jim (Conrad)
 Lorna Doone (Blackmore)
 Man in the Iron Mask (Dumas)
 Metamorphoses [excerpts] (Ovid)
 Mill on the Floss [others] (Eliot)
 Moonstone [and others] (Collins)
 My Antonia (Cather)
 Night (Wiesel)
 Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus, or Antigone (Sophocles)
 Old Man and the Sea (Hemingway)
 One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich (Solzhenitsyn)
 Oresteia (Aeschylus) and/or Andromache or Medea (Euripides)
 Paradise Lost [excerpts] (Milton)
 Portrait of Lady or The American (James)
 Pride and Prejudice (Austen)
 Quo Vadis (Sienkiewicz)
 Red Badge of Courage (Crane)
 Sense and Sensibility or Persuasion, or Emma (Austen)
 Short Stories (Poe)
 Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (anonymous)
 Stories (Chekhov)
 The Betrothed (Manzoni)

The Chosen (Potock)	The Prince (Machiavelli)
The Cloister and the Hearth (Reade)	The Prisoner of Zenda (Hawkins)
The Count of Monte Cristo (Dumas)	The Scarlet Letter (Hawthorne)
The Divine Comedy [excerpts] (Dante)	The Scarlet Pimpernel (Orczy)
The Epic of Gilgamesh (anonymous)	The Song of Roland (anonymous)
The Great Gatsby (Fitzgerald)	The Three Musketeers (Dumas)
The Heart of Darkness (Conrad)	The Thirty Nine Steps (Buchanan)
The Hoosier Schoolmaster (Eggleston)	The Time Machine (Wells)
The Iliad [excerpts] (Homer)	The Virginian (Wister)
The Invisible Man (Wells)	To Kill a Mockingbird (Lee)
The Longest Day (Ryan)	Tom Brown's School Days; Tom Brown at Oxford (Hughes)
The Man Who Was Thursday (Chesterton)	Trilby (Du Maurier)
The Mayor of Casterbridge (Hardy)	Uncle Tom's Cabin (Stowe)
The Odyssey [excerpts or full] (Homer)	Up From Slavery (Washington)
The Open Boat (Crane)	Vanity Fair (Thackeray)
The Picture of Dorian Gray (Wilde)	Wuthering Heights (Bronte)

Authors

Catholic Authors

George Bernanos, Laura Berquist, G.K. Chesterton, Louis DeWohl, Shusaku Endo, Graham Greene, Victor Hugo, Mary Flannery O'Connor, Percy Walker, Sigrid Undset, Evelyn Waugh

Other Authors

Jane Austin, James Fenimore Cooper, Charles Dickens, Washington Irving, Rudyard Kipling, Herman Melville, Sir Walter Scott, William Shakespeare

Poets

Matthew Arnold, W.H. Auden, Hilaire Belloc, William Blake, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Browning, Lord Byron, G.K. Chesterton, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Richard Crashaw, Emily Dickenson, John Donne, T.S. Eliot, Robert Frost, A.E. Hausman, George Herbert, Gerard Manley Hopkins, John Keats, Joyce Kilmer, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Andrew Marvell, Alexander Pope, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Siegfried Sassoon, William Shakespeare, Percy Shelley, Robert Southwell, Edmund Spenser, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Dylan Thomas, Francis Thompson, William Wordsworth, William Butler Yeats

Spiritual Classics

Confessions [excerpts] (St. Augustine of Hippo)
 Screwtape Letters, Mere Christianity, or The Abolition of Man (Lewis)
 Selections from: The Documents of Vatican II, The Catechism of the Catholic Church, Veritatis Splendor, Humane Vitae
 Story of a Soul (St. Therese of Lisieux)

Summa Theologica [excerpts] (St. Thomas Aquinas)
 The Bible
 The Desert Fathers [excerpts]
 The Imitation of Christ [excerpts] (Thomas a Kempis)
 The Introduction to the Devout Life [excerpts] (St. Francis de Sales)

Additional Reading Lists:

Institute for Excellence in Writing, (n.d.). Books for boys and other children who would rather make forts all day. Retrieve at <https://iew.com/sites/default/files/videocourse/fileattachment/TB-Resources.pdf>

About the Authors

Dr. Denise Donohue is the Deputy Director of K-12 Programs at The Cardinal Newman Society. She earned her doctorate in school administration, with a concentration in curriculum development and a dissertation on the establishment of private, independent Catholic schools. She has served as interim chair and visiting assistant professor of a college education department, founder and principal of a Catholic high school, founder and religion coordinator for a Catholic grade school, and assistant head of a Catholic K-12 school.

Dr. Dan Guernsey is the Director of K-12 Programs at The Cardinal Newman Society. He is principal of a diocesan K-12 Catholic school. He earned his doctorate in educational administration and has master's degrees in English and educational administration. He has worked for over 25 years in Catholic education as a teacher and a principal at the K-12 level and as an associate professor, department chair, dean of education, and president at the college level.

Copyright © 2019 The Cardinal Newman Society. Permission to reprint is hereby granted provided no modifications are made to the text and it is identified as a publication of The Cardinal Newman Society. Note: The views expressed herein are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Cardinal Newman Society.