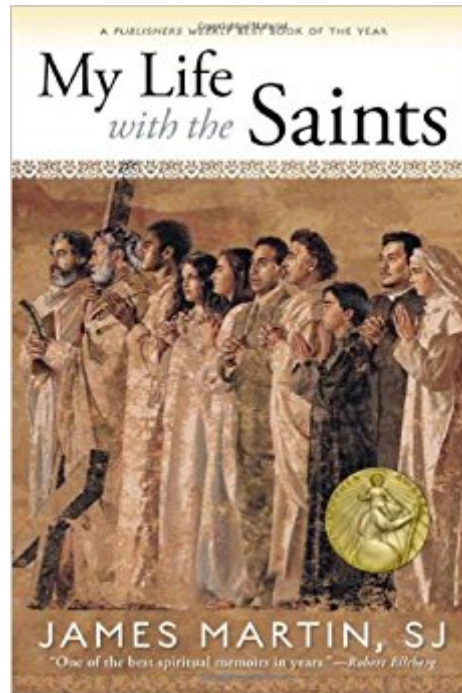




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# My Life With The Saints



## Synopsis

One of Publishers Weekly's Best Books of the Year • Winner of a Christopher Award • Winner of a Catholic Press Association Book Award Meet some surprising friends of God in this warm and wonderful memoir James Martin has led an entirely modern life: from a lukewarm Catholic childhood, to an education at the Wharton School of Business, to the executive fast track at General Electric, to ministry as a Jesuit priest, to a busy media career in Manhattan. But at every step he has been accompanied by some surprising friends—the saints of the Catholic Church. For many, these holy men and women remain just historical figures. For Martin, they are intimate companions. “They pray for me, offer me comfort, give me examples of discipleship, and help me along the way,” he writes. The author is both engaging and specific about the help and companionship he has received. When his pride proves trouble—some, he seeks help from Thomas Merton, the monk and writer who struggled with egotism. In sickness he turns to Thérèse of Lisieux, who knew about the boredom and self-pity that come with illness. Joan of Arc shores up his flagging courage. Aloysius Gonzaga deepens his compassion. Pope John XXIII helps him to laugh and not take life too seriously. Martin's inspiring, witty, and always fascinating memoir encompasses saints from the whole of Christian history—from St. Peter to Dorothy Day. His saintly friends include Francis of Assisi, Ignatius of Loyola, Mother Teresa, and other beloved figures. They accompany the author on a lifelong pilgrimage that includes stops in a sunlit square of a French town, a quiet retreat house on a New England beach, the gritty housing projects of inner-city Chicago, the sprawling slums of Nairobi, and a gorgeous Baroque church in Rome. This rich, vibrant, stirring narrative shows how the saints can help all of us find our way in the world. “In a cross between Holden Caulfield and Thomas Merton, James Martin has written one of the best spiritual memoirs in years.”—Robert Ellsberg, author of *All Saints* “It isn't often that a new and noteworthy book comes along in this genre, but we have reason to celebrate *My Life with the Saints*. It is earmarked for longevity. It will endure as an important and uncommon contribution to religious writing.”—Doris Donnelly, *America* “An account . . . that is as delightful as it is instructive.”—*First Things* “In delightful prose Martin recounts incidents, both perilous and funny, that have prompted him to turn to the saints, and in doing so shows us a new way of living out a devotion that is as old and universal as the Church.”—Avery Cardinal Dulles, SJ, Fordham University “An outstanding and often hilarious memoir.”—Publishers Weekly “Martin's final word for us is as Jungian as it is Catholic: God does not want us to be like Mother Teresa or

Dorothy Day. God wants us to be most fully ourselves. *The Washington Post Book World*

## Book Information

Paperback: 414 pages

Publisher: Loyola Press; Reprint edition (October 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0829426442

ISBN-13: 978-0829426441

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 376 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #24,897 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in *Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Catholicism > Roman Catholicism* #12 in *Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Angelology & Demonology* #12 in *Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Biographies > Saints*

## Customer Reviews

Before you know it you're swept under his writerly wing, and riding along on his mystery tour of saints he wants you to know and befriend. And through some transitive literary property, it works. (Barbara Mahany *Chicago Tribune*) It isn't often that a new and noteworthy book comes along in this genre, but we have reason to celebrate *My Life with the Saints*. It is earmarked for longevity. It will endure as an important and uncommon contribution to religious writing. *America* (Doris Donnelly) In a volume that is part spiritual memoir, part inspirational guide, Martin, a Jesuit priest and associate editor at *America*, applies the teachings of great saints to everyday life. Martin is interested in holding up the saints not as paragons but as exemplars of holy struggle. All the saints, he writes, struggled in one way or another. . . . Martin's final word for us is as Jungian as it is Catholic: God does not want us to be like Mother Teresa or Dorothy Day. God wants us to be most fully ourselves. *The Washington Post Book World*) Martin takes a splendid idea and develops it masterfully by weaving stories from his life into those of his favorite saints. Martin's animated style and wide-ranging experiences will make this a book readers of diverse backgrounds will enjoy. *Publishers Weekly*) The saints are given to us as patrons and companions. James Martin tells us how they have been resources for him in every time of need. In delightful prose he recounts incidents, both perilous and funny, that have prompted him to turn to

the saints, and in doing so shows us a new way of living out a devotion that is as old and universal as the church. ~ (Avery Cardinal Dulles, SJ) This wonderfully written volume interweaves the spiritual pilgrimage of a young Jesuit and his discovery of the saints of the Catholic tradition. Readers of this book will receive both the abundant gift of good writing and the more abundant grace that flows from the witness of the saints. Enthusiastically recommended. ~ (Lawrence S. Cunningham) The saints' stories and their relevance to Martin's own spiritual journey form the spine of this remarkably engaging book. A mix of history, memoir, social commentary, and spiritual exercise, *My Life with the Saints* reveals the familiar and not familiar stories of a handful of holy people. ~ (U.S. Catholic) In a cross between Holden Caulfield and Thomas Merton, James Martin has written one of the best spiritual memoirs in years. With help from the saints who have inspired and guided his way, he recounts a journey that is as entertaining as it is profound. ~ (Robert Ellsberg) --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

James Martin has led a thoroughly modern life: from a lukewarm childhood Catholicism, to the Wharton School of Business, to the executive fast track at General Electric, to the Jesuits, to a media career in Manhattan. ~ But at every step along the way he has been accompanied by special friends--the saints of the Catholic Church. ~ These holy men and women are not just historical figures to him. Martin's attachment to them is real and personal. The saints have guided him. ~ He convincingly shows how the saints can be our friends too. Martin's saintly friends come from the whole of Christian history--from St. Paul to John XXIII--and they include Therese of Lisieux, Joan of Arc, Ignatius Loyola and other beloved figures. ~ They accompany the author on a pilgrimage that includes stops in a sunlit square of a French town, a quiet retreat house on a New England beach, the housing projects in inner-city Chicago, the sprawling slums of Nairobi, and a gorgeous Baroque church in Rome. ~ As James Martin's inspiring, witty, and surprising account unfolds, we see how saints can help us to find our way in the world. ~ ~

James Martin is an author that is not afraid to share his heartfelt emotions with the reader. He openly describes how the saints in this book touched his own life and his vocation as a Jesuit priest. After reading this book twice I am impressed by the extraordinary lives of these special, but ordinary, people who have been called by God to perform a mission on this earth. I am equally touched by the spiritual benefits James Martin has received through the intercession of these saints. We can all be transformed as believers or non-believers if we read about these saints and the great gifts they have shared with us.

The first two stories didn't capture much attention, but after awhile the journey with Rev. James Martin relating his stories to the life of each saint began to really capture my attention. Still it took to the last chapter to really make me glad that I had read this book. I learned the secret of becoming a saint and it sure wasn't what I expected. This book really changed a lot of my attitude toward reading about lives of saints. It wasn't just about saints, but also a journey with Rev. Martin.

I very much enjoyed this book as a topical exposure to several "saints." I take a slight exception to the inclusion of some of those who are not canonized as I feel it is somewhat misleading, especially to the lay reader. However, I wholly loved this book and Father Martin's writing. I intend to read more of his work. And this book gives a wonderful explanation as to why we, as Catholics, look to saints for inspiration and sometimes for intercession.

Loved this book, it's a very fun and fascinating read. Fr. Martin writes in a very conversational style that is easy to read, I found myself laughing at many of his stories. The stories from his life flow seamlessly into the stories of the saint's lives. I will definitely be reading more of his books in the future, as well as stories of the saints he covered in this book.

As with all of Fr. Martin's books, I found it spiritually uplifting, as well as entertaining. I've read 4 of Fr. Martin's books and since they include his personal experiences there are some overlapping stories but nothing that prevents each book from having it's own unique storyline.

Interesting and absorbing, this book taught me how to view the saints in a different way. I love how Fr James shows how saints were real people, encountering same challenges as we all do, but responding in a different, more self-giving way. He has a knack of connecting the past with the present realities and a talent for relating his experiences but producing a book that isn't about him.

As usual, Fr. Marten 's book make saints the kind of people we can like, imitate not because they are perfect but because , like us, they are humans with flaws who sometimes used those weaknesses to better serve their God.He makes us realize that all God asks of us is to be our TRUE SELVES , for as the Psalm says 'we are wonderfully made'.

I Loved it! Humorous, Entertaining, Informative. Recommend it highly to all who think of the Saints

as too ancient to be relevant in today's society. James Martin S.J. through his memoir introduces us to his friends & makes them human & gives up the opportunity to also become their friends too. They become "alive" & we get to know them "up close" and personal. They become your friends as well as your patron saint. I find myself opening this book often, seeking their support & intercession. Many thanks Fr. James Martin for sharing your journey & your friends. God Bless You!

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