



# Treachery and Truth

*Katy Huth Jones*

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## **Treachery and Truth** Katy Huth Jones

Immersed in the historical background of the tenth century, this true tale of Good King Wenceslas, as told by his faithful servant Poidevin, brings the reader into the Dark Ages. Fear grips the land of Bohemia as the faithful face betrayal and persecution under the reign of the pagan Duchess Dragomira. As she struggles for power with the rightful heir, Prince Vaclav, her foes forge alliances in secret despite the risk of discovery. Who will survive?

## **Treachery and Truth Details**

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Author : Katy Huth Jones

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# From Reader Review Treachery and Truth for online ebook

## Wayne Walker says

You have undoubtedly heard, and maybe even sung, that “Good King Wenceslas looked out on the Feast of Stephen,” but do you know the true story of the real Wenceslas, or Vaclav as he was called in his native language? It is during the “Dark Ages,” around A. D. 921, and the Duchy of Bohemia is ruled by the Premyslid dynasty. Vaclav is fourteen years old. His late grandfather Duke Borivoj, and his father, Duke Vratislav who was killed in battle with the Magyars, had been Christians, but his mother Dragomira, who ruled as regent for her minor son, had reverted to paganism, closed all the churches, and prohibited the practice of Christianity. However, Vaclav had been raised at the castle of his grandmother Ludmila, and both of them are Christians.

A twelve-year-old orphaned slave named Poidevin is brought to the castle to serve Dragomira but becomes much attached to Vaclav. So when Vaclav is crowned Duke at age sixteen, Poidevin is made his personal servant. Because Dragomira and her younger son Boleslav are implicated in the murder of Ludmila, Vaclav banishes them. However, they still have a lot of influence among some of the voyvodes or nobles and plot to get rid of Vaclav. What will happen to him? How will the people of Bohemia react? And what will become of Poidevin? Cleverly told through the eyes of the faithful servant Poidevin, Treachery and Truth is a good little historical novel about a period of European history with which most people are unfamiliar. The only complaint that I saw was from someone who objected that narrative is one-sided because “the author was glossing over the intolerance Price Vaclav shows to the Pagans while at the same time condemning his mother for her intolerance for Christians.”

My response is that this is simply not true. Both the book and my research show pagans murdering Christians but no examples of Christians murdering pagans. Yes, Vaclav executed righteous judgment on criminals, but he was not intolerant. Yet, this same critic wrote, “The imagery in this story is well done and...I found it pretty accurate.” I guess that for historical fiction I would be quite satisfied with “pretty accurate.” Though it is a work of fiction, the account is based on known facts, and all the main characters are genuine historic figures. While both teenage boys and girls will like this well written and exciting novel, boys will especially find several strong figures to serve as good role models. And adults can enjoy it too. Yes, there is sadness at the end, but the Epilogue, Afterword, and Author’s Note in the back all point to a more hopeful future. The story of Vaclav’s bravery, honesty, humility, and generosity also delivers a powerful message about the meaning of suffering, fidelity to Christ, and loving our enemies.

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## C.A. says

Name: C.A. Davis

Grade/Age: 6th Grade/12

I liked the story line mainly because its about a boy servant Poidevin who lost his parents, and was forced into slavery at Castle Praha by infamous Dragomira, and later in the book was saved by her son Prince Vaclav.

My four favorite characters are Prince Vaclav, Pribislava, Poidevin, and Zito. I like Prince Vaclav because he believes in God, he is a very good mentor to Poidevin, and he is a kind and just ruler. I like Pribislava because she knows Vaclav is trying to mentor Poidevin but she doesn’t tell anybody. Boy, would I be lucky

to have a sister like that! Poidevin, I like because he is courageous and very humble, and he thinks a lot like me. However, Zito is my favorite of all of the characters he is strong, faithful, he is also very protective of his master.

I would recommend this book to all of my friends. I absolutely LOVE THIS BOOK! It only took me a couple days to read it. But I think anyone ten and older would really enjoy this book.

I thought the fact that Ms. Jones tells the reader how to say the names of people and places, and gives explanation of the history, in her Author's Notes, was very helpful.

Pauline Books & Media provided me with a free copy Treachery and Truth in exchange for an honest review.

C.A. Davis

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### **Cynthia says**

I love history, and this YA historical novel was refreshing. It brought to life a Czech hero and saint previously unknown to me, Vaclav, called Wincelas in English. I'd heard the name Wincelas but didn't know anything about him.

The narrator, Poidevin, stole my heart immediately. This child slave learned the kindness and generosity of Vaclav, who became his master and friend after a turn of political events. Through Vaclav, Poidevin grew from a follower of his people's pagan teachings to one of Christ's.

I eagerly returned to this novel each day until I completed it, while reading a few novels at once. Treachery and Truth is short as novels go, but that's a good thing to draw the interest of young male readers. If I were to suggest one thing for the story, it's this: Toward the end, Poidevin has matured and says he has been trained by Zito to defend Vaclav. I wish there had been a scene earlier that shows him in training. I think teen boys would enjoy that.

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### **Sarah Green-Hart says**

I lamented that there seemed so few books meant for boys nowadays. I know the complaint is often that there aren't enough girls in books for young people, but I have the opposite problem. I'd like to see moral, strong, heroes for my boys to admire and be inspired by. I received this book as a gift in response to my complaint, and I'm thankful for it.

Katy has woven an excellent story around what is known of Vaclav or Wenceslas. I found the historical facts to be enlightening, and her interpretation, inspiring. It is an excellent story of a young person who is strong in faith, strong in mind, and strong in love and forgiveness, all qualities that I would hope to see my children develop.

Well written, Treachery and Truth is not a book that you will regret purchasing, and the important principles

it relays aren't meant just for the young. My heart was touched more than once as I read it myself. As always, Katy's stories strike a chord of weakness in me and seem to find a way to edify and build up my faith in God for the grace to overcome and become stronger.

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### **Christine says**

TREACHERY AND TRUTH by Katy Jones is well-researched about a little known historical figure, Vaclav, known as King Wenceslas in the English Christmas carol. Vaclav, a devout Christian, struggled against paganism in 929 AD in Bohemia.

Author Katy Jones sheds light on the fascinating political and religious intrigue of the Bohemian royalty. There is also a helpful map of 10th century Central Europe and Cast of Characters and Places in the front of the novel.

This novel is appropriate and accessible for middle grade (MG) readers ages 8-12, and yet would interest high school (YA) readers as well. It would be good to use in classroom settings with guided discussions.

I received a copy of TREACHERY AND TRUTH from Pauline Books in exchange for a fair review.

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### **Leslea Wahl says**

Treachery and Truth is the fascinating true story of Good King Wenceslas. I, of course, knew the name thanks to the Christmas carol but I honestly never thought about the inspiration for this classic song but I'm sure glad someone did. Katy Huth Jones writes a beautiful story about this beloved Czech duke, who was a faithful Christian during a time filled with pagan gods, betrayal and war.

The story is cleverly written through the eyes of the Duke's faithful servant, which was an intriguing way to tell this story. Though it's a work of fiction, the story is based on the facts known about this historic figure and draws the reader into his fascinating life. It was inspiring to see this young hero's faith and goodness that affected so many around him. I read this novel during Advent but it's a fabulous book any time of the year. I look forward to reading more from this author.

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### **Loretta says**

This is a book I've long wanted to read but it is quite expensive which is what put me off.

I know very little about East European medieval history and almost nothing about King Wenceslaus apart from the fact that he was a Christian king, honoured in the carol, which only served to pique my curiosity the more.

I do think it's a shame about some of Wenceslaus' decisions but since he was a real person, that is hardly the fault of the author.

The story is told through the eyes of his personal servant, once a slave of his mother, who was known for her enthusiasm for human sacrifices, and I found it really interesting.

His page is the page of the carol who followed his master into the snow.

I thought the author caught his character well, making him a good person via whom to view the story. Well worth a read.

UPDATE: Since I wrote this review I've discovered the ebook price is set by the publishing company and the author gets almost nothing in royalties. Now I wish I'd bought the paperback as she gets proper royalties on those. If you want to read this book, get the paperback so you're supporting the author.

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### **Jim Midgley says**

This is a well-written short historical novel. The story is told through the eyes of a likable boy, Poidevin, who eventually becomes the servant of Duke Vaclav of Bohemia. I enjoyed the way the author contrasts constantly the old -- but still alive -- pagan religion with Christianity, the newcomer religion in that part of the world at that time. Poidevin's gradual coming to understand the new religion in a personal way is believably done. The saintliness of Duke Vaclav, who was in fact declared a saint in medieval times, is brought out admirably. He is indeed, to use Jesus' words, as gentle as a dove, but not quite as wise as a serpent; his naive idealism leads to his assassination. But given that the real Vaclav died in his twenties, perhaps his naivete is not so hard to believe. In any case, I enjoyed reading the story, and in the process, learned some history I had known very little about. The list of characters and other vocabulary items, with their pronunciation, is a big help, as is the map. I recommend the book to adults and young people. There are discussion questions at the end, which parents and teachers should find useful.

Pauline Books & Media provided me with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Sarah says**

What to say? A lot.

The only downside, I wanted more battles. I had the impression there would be a lot more battles. I also thought Dragomira would be the main villain, but Boleslav was the overarching main antagonist. (I don't think that's much of a spoiler. The reader catches on early enough).

But those are minor things. This is a lot better than other history stuff I read. This is NOT dry and dull.

I liked Vaclav, but the kid would always put himself needlessly in danger. He would always say, "God needs us to love our enemies" when some guy wanted to kill him. I mean, if someone tries to kill you, you are allowed to kill them first to save yourself. Also, Poidevin, Zito, and Bora would continuously warn him of Boleslav, but he kept ignoring them. If they kept telling him over and over, they must be telling the truth. He was too trusting.

That's not the author's fault, though, since it was her job to write history. But I wanted to shake Vaclav. (SPOILER) "NO! YOUR BROTHER WANTS TO KILL YOU! HE KILLED YOUR GRANDMA; YOU'RE NEXT!" (END SPOILER)

I loved Pribislava and Ana. I know Dragomira introduced them so they would become best friends and then maybe Ana's dad would like Dragomira for being nice to his daughter, but the relationship was odd. (SPOILER) Dragomira martyred Christians, and once Vaclav overthrows her, Ana goes to church a lot. It

seemed weird Dragomira would want her daughter hanging out with a Christian if she wanted to exterminate them from the earth. I mean, she wanted to sway her dad, but knowing her and Boleslav, they would've just murdered them. (SPOILER OVER).

I liked them, so that's actually not a complaint, just an observation. Maybe since Dragomira was baptized as a Christian (that's not a big spoiler, guys. It's like in chapter 1 or 3), she had a soft spot for them?

(SPOILER) It was pretty disappointing that the good guys get massacred by Boleslav, but, being well-acquainted with the Roman empire, I was not surprised. More the reason I knew it was coming and wanted to shake Vaclav. "No, no, no. The Roman Empire lit us on fire when they wanted a reading light! I don't know that your brother will do to you, but it will not pretty." (END OF SPOILER)

Overall, the only down-side was that I wanted more battles and an intense hatred for the evil characters.

It was pretty good. I know something about the Czech Republic, ancient Bohemia, and a Christmas carol, which is a pretty solid combination.

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### **Cathy says**

I am the publicist for this author. Filled with history, intrigue and stories of unwavering faith, this book is appropriate for both teens and adults. Well researched for historical accuracy, this story of Good King Wenceslas includes a scene from the traditional carol. A welcome addition to any library.

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### **Theresa Linden says**

I just finished reading and thoroughly enjoyed this saint story. This is a story about Good King Wenceslas--you know, from the Christmas song! This story is told by his faithful servant Poidevin, whom I really came to love as I watched him grow over the pages of this story. Katy Huth Jones does a fantastic job bringing the reader into the story through descriptions and little details. I enjoyed watching the saintly actions of Vaclav (Wenceslas) through the eyes of this servant as they faced trials and conflict and in his everyday acts of charity. The story is very moving in several places, especially at the end. It inspires me to pursue holiness and even gives me hope for when I fail.

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### **Susan Peek says**

I have always wanted to learn more about Saint Wenceslaus, the famed "Good King" who "went out on the feast of Stephen" in the Christmas carol. So I was very excited to discover this novel about his life! I bought it for my 13-year-old son, but couldn't resist sneaking it into my room to read it myself! I was not disappointed. I read the entire book in two nights, both times staying up way later than I should have, because it was just too good to put down.

The story is told through the eyes of Wenceslaus's young servant, Poidevin, who was a true historical figure. I don't know how old he was in reality, but the author has made him a couple years younger than Wenceslaus, who, at the start of the book, is about sixteen. This thoughtful touch makes the story all the more appealing to young adults, who can easily relate to both the saint and his servant.

Although it's a relatively short novel at only 160 pages, it instantly immerses the reader deep into the atmosphere and history of the turbulent tenth century. Bohemia at the time was divided between Christianity and the old pagan religion, and although Wenceslaus (called throughout the book by his authentic Bohemian name, Vaclav) is baptized and a loyal follower of Christ, his mother and brother Boleslaus still cling to belief in many gods. Thus the holy young heir to the throne becomes the object of his own family's hatred. Treachery follows, leaving readers breathless with suspense until the very end, even if they already know the facts of Wenceslaus's life.

This is a delightful, inspiring, and fast-moving novel, sure to be enjoyed by teens and adults alike. Since reading it, I've been praying to Saint Wenceslaus every day. I guarantee you will too!

Highly recommended.

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### **Steven R. McEvoy says**

I had this book on my Kindle for a little over a year. It kept popping up in recommendations from friends, fellow reviewers and authors. And every time I moved it towards the top of my reading list, it was quickly bumped down and forgotten until I was reminded about it again. This last time I was reminded about it, I immediately started reading the book. And what an excellent read it is. I had a hard time putting this book down; and ended up devouring it in three sessions over two days. Over the last few years I have read several Christian, Catholic historical fiction novels. Based on a life of a saint, that gives us a glimpse of the life of a saint. And this book does an incredible job of just that.

This is a story filled with history, betrayal, faith, and following God. Most people are aware of the Christmas carol 'Good King Wenceslas'. This is a story of that man's life. Saint Wenceslaus, or Vaclav in the Bohemian or Czech as is used in the story. The story is told through the eyes of a servant a young man named Poidevin. Many of the characters are real historical figures, as is the main story. Liberties have been taken to write it into a compelling novel. Set in the 'dark ages' around the year 930 A.D. The story takes place between the years 920 and 929 approximately. It is a time of clashes between Pagan religions and the growing Christian Catholic influence. After the death of his father, his mother acting as regent returns to the pagan ways. While Vaclav is faithful to the Catholic church, as was his father and his paternal grandmother. The conflict grows until Vaclav must seize the throne that is rightfully his from his own mother. But his own Christian beliefs prevent him from taking the life of his mother and brother, and it eventually has dire consequences for the king, his family and the whole kingdom.

At one point in the story Poidevin reflects:

"I turned and watched the candle's flame in the dark room. I'd never noticed before how much light a single candle could produce, how much darkness it dispelled. In that moment, a thought came to me. My master was like a flame burning brightly in the darkness of Bohemia, the darkness of selfishness, greed, ignorance, and an insatiable hunger for power. It was heartening to know how much goodwill one man could spread to others."



And in many ways that is what this book does for us 1100 years after the events of the story. Wenceslaus or Vaclav depending on what name you prefer for him was by all accounts a good man, a devoted man, and an honest man. He was canonized less than 70 years after his death.

This story is a great read for young men, it will captivate their interest, and show them a man living his faith well. It was written with a Young Adult audience in mind, and yet I believe it can be enjoyed by readers of all ages. It is wonderfully written. The characters are well written, and the plot, written around the facts we know about this saint's life. A great read that I can give a solid 5/5 stars.

Read the review on my blog [Book Reviews and More](#).

Note: This book is part of a series of reviews: 2018 Catholic Reading Plan!

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### **Carolyn says**

I won a copy of *Treachery and Truth* through a Facebook party and immediately handed it to my 13-year-old son, who has long roamed the house singing the "Good King Wenceslas" carol, no matter the time of year. Once he finished the book, I got a hold of it.

While it is written for teens, I enjoyed it immensely! I knew next to nothing about King Wenceslas/Vaclav nor Bohemian history. As seen through the eyes of his servant Poidevin, the reader glimpses the bravery, fortitude, humility, and generosity of Vaclav as well as the history of his life, political alliances, marriage, and death. His story also delivers beautiful messages about the meaning of suffering, fidelity to Christ, and loving our enemies.

I'm happy to pass this well-written story along to my other children when they grow older.

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### **Emily Davis says**

*Treachery and Truth: A Story of Sinners, Servants, and Saints*

Katy Huth Jones

Taken from my blog:

I have been so blessed by my relationship with Catholic Publishers. Recently, one of my favorites, Pauline Books & Media, sent me a few books to review. The first one I read is called *Treachery and Truth*. From the beginning of this book, I knew it was going to be spectacular. I love historical fiction. Stories that happened, but there is some creative license taken by an Author to fill in the gaps.

*Treachery and Truth*, by Katy Huth Jones, is set in tenth century Praha, Bohemia (now Prague, Capital of the Czech Republic), and narrated by faithful Poidevan, Prince Vaclav's servant, is a glimpse into how dangerous it was to be a Christian, back in the Dark Ages.

Poidevan, the narrator, made a slave of Dragomira's as a child, worked hard and aligned himself with the

right people. The reader (I) could see God working in his life, from the beginning of the story.

Brutal pagan Duchess Dragomira tortures and steals from the peasants, but worse, she kills Christians and displays their heads publicly. She rules by fear and has raised her youngest son, Boleslav, to be the same.

Her oldest son, Prince Vaclav, rightful heir of the kingdom, spends much time away from his evil mother. He has been influenced by his Grandmother, the Dowager Duchess Ludmila. Vaclav is a Christian and he is determined to bring Christianity, peace, and joy back to his war-torn and savagely-ruled kingdom.

One of the most powerful pieces of this book is the humble and loving Christian example of Prince Vaclav and the Priests who serve him, his body guard Zito, and of course, my favorite Poidevan.

Katy Huth Jones takes us through a series of secrets, history, and cruel events. But while you are reading this book, and offering it to your pre-teens and teens to read, I want to make sure you know that --- as it always is with Our Lord - HE triumphs in the next generation of the family, when Christianity is publicly restored.

While I think boys and girls alike will love this easy-to-read and exciting novel, I think that especially boys have several strong figures to look up to and model. Strong, faithful and protective men. We need characters like these. That they are real people is a huge bonus.

Two things I want to point out that were instrumental for my son and I, while reading this book.

The Cast of Characters and People, Places and Things in The Tenth Century - Pages. These pages help readers pronounce names and give a little information about each person, place or thing.

The Author's Note. It was here, we realized that this story was about King Wenceslaus, a Catholic Saint. We just about jumped up and down with excitement.

Well done, Katy Huth Jones. Well done, my fellow Catholic and Texan. (You see how I just claimed her for Texas! That's how we roll). LOL

Have a great rest of your day. And.... go get this book.

Hugs & Blessings,

Em

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