



The Life and Prayers of Saint Joan of Arc

Wyatt North

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One part biography, one part prayer book, The Life and Prayers of Saint Joan of Arc is an essential book for any Christian.

Though Joan described herself as “a poor girl who knew neither how to ride nor lead in war,” she did know how to obey God. That simple skill changed the course of both her life and that of the entire nation.

Twenty-five years after her execution, Saint Joan was pronounced innocent, and declared a martyr. Joan stood up for her belief and against all odds fought for her people.

She was a true hero, and remains an inspiration to this day.

The Life and Prayers of Saint Joan of Arc Details

Date : Published May 29th 2014 by Wyatt North Publishing, LLC (first published January 24th 2013)

ISBN :

Author : Wyatt North

Format : Kindle Edition 67 pages

Genre : History, Biography, Christian, Religion, Faith, Cultural, France, Inspirational, Business, Amazon

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From Reader Review The Life and Prayers of Saint Joan of Arc for online ebook

susan says

Short but very informative

This was a very good account of Joan's life and subsequent death. It is not a long book, but was presented in an interesting manner

Susan Matthews says

The Life and Prayers of Saint Joan of Arc

This was a very short book with a brief history of her life. I have always enjoyed reading about the Saints. It gives one inspirations to do better.

Erin Blancett says

Young girl with strong faith. Show when Gods hand is in your work anything is possible

Amira says

Love it

Concise and good enough for a reader who needs to get basic information about saint Joan of ARC . May she rests in eternal peace and bliss.

Ali Murphy says

We listened to the audio book version of this with our 13-year-old and 12-year-old in an effort to impart valuable lessons about history, character and virtue. This book failed on all of these things. It failed to give adequate historical background to show why Joan acted the way she did and why it mattered. It failed completely to convince me that Joan was worthy of being a saint. And while it touched on Joan's great virtues, without an adequate framework to support them, they got lost in the wash. The narrator's voice was a sleep-inducing monotone that did nothing to convey the great drama of Joan's life. This one was a complete bust.

Jeanie McCarthy Pityinger says

I was disappointed in this book, I'd expected more

Sky says

The Life and Prayers of Saint Joan of Arc

Andrew says

This is a brief summary of the life of "Joan of Arc." It includes a few prayers and hymns written by Therese of Liseux in the hope of presenting Joan in the cause of sainthood (which ended up being the case).

There are no doubt less hagiographical, more informative works, but this isn't a bad place to start if you want to learn about who she was and why she's such a big deal.

William says

This book was not what I was looking for: I was hoping for more of a history and possibly some prayers she was recorded to have prayed.

Rather, this was a Catholic devotional and a handful of prayers to Joan of Arc at the back.

Dana says

Very fast read. My favorite part of the whole 60-some odd pages, was this quote. During the trial of Joan of Arc, it was asked of her if she was in a state of grace? Her reply was with perfect honesty- "If I am not, may God put me there; If I am may He keep me there." If you take anything away from this book its that Joan was a very chaste and pious young lady with a mission. We should all be so brave in the face of adversity...

Amanda says

Very very short, but interesting.

Benjamin Barnes says

Wow

I never realized Saint Joan of arc was such an interesting Saint. I absolutely loved this book. Definitely worth reading.

Charles says

This book is pure hagiography. While I suppose hagiography has its uses, mostly to gull and overawe the under-educated, I dislike hagiography. But at least it can be good hagiography; it can be great literature by towering men of intellect, or if not that, at least it can interest and inform the reader. Not this book, though, which is unrelievedly bad on every level, and whose only virtue is extreme brevity.

I am not even sure who the audience is for this book. It is written simplistically, as if for children, a common target of hagiography. But it is also written joylessly, as if for an audience of mental defectives serving prison sentences. Thus, I was simultaneously infantilized and abused, and the experience was not pleasing.

My wife bought the Audible version to play to our children, as combination education and religious formation. It fails dismally at both. The writing is bad; it is a flat recitation of basic facts about St. Joan of Arc, combined with frequent asides hammering the reader didactically in the face about the alleged theological soundness and heroism of one or another of Joan's actions. There is no historical background offered; if you come to this book knowing nothing about the basic framework of St. Joan's times, you'll also leave knowing nothing. But you will have gained the feeling of having been flogged.

It's not even clear who the author is. The author is listed as "Wyatt North," and the publisher is "Wyatt North Publishing," which offers a variety of similar "inspirational" books. If you read between the lines, Wyatt North appears to be a collective pseudonym for "writers from across the country"—kind of like Victor Appleton for Tom Swift, without the ray guns or the fun. (I didn't like the Audible narrator, either, who sounded kind of creepy to me, but that's more personal taste.) In addition, at the end are tacked on some prayers to St. Joan (then not yet St. Joan), composed by the French saint, Thérèse of Lisieux, as part of the campaign for Joan's canonization. (Thus, the book has no prayers "of" St. Joan, only prayers "to" St. Joan.) I was not impressed by those either; they were florid, ahistorical, and smacked of French nationalism in the period after the 1870 Franco-Prussian War. I do not recommend them as spiritual formation.

I have to admit that if the subject of the book were different I might not be quite so negative. I have never understood why St. Joan is a canonized Roman Catholic saint. Of course, she was only canonized in 1920, but devotions to her have been common, at least in localized areas of France, since her death in 1431. To some extent, I can understand those devotions, since Joan's devout and pious nature, combined with an unswerving obedience to God as she saw His commands, capped off by her brutal death, seem to make her a charismatic martyr. But unlike the martyrs of the early Church, the facts of her life are known and undisputed, so she is a type of modern martyr not especially common and therefore valuable as an exemplar (although the 21st Century is giving us plenty of new martyrs in the Middle East). On the other hand, Joan wasn't killed by pagans or heathens, but by Catholic compatriots with the active cooperation of the local Church, which tends to erode her martyr status. I'd give her about an 70% Martyr Quotient, and it seems to me you should have to hit 100% to be canonized.

More seriously, though, what good argument is there that God cared who was to win the Hundred Years' War? Two Catholic powers, with intertwined dynastic lines up and down the nobility, fought each other across the brutal decades. You can make a good argument that the war itself was not in harmony with God's will. You can say that heroism was on display, or cruelty, or stupidity, or many other things. But it's much harder to claim that God preferred the French. Didn't St. Michael the Archangel have better things to do than help the Dauphin, such as put the followers of Mahomet under his mailed boot? Joan resembled William Wallace, as far as I'm concerned. At a stretch she resembled El Cid. Neither of those two is a candidate for sainthood (it doesn't help that the latter sold his services to the Muslims for much of his career, but I digress). Thus, I understand why the French admire Joan, but I, at least, don't identify being French with being higher in the Great Chain of Being. And if God didn't care who won the Hundred Years' War, the argument for Joan's sainthood seems, to me, to be further substantially undermined, since her deeds were focused solely on that goal. I am not alone in this opinion—apparently, she was formally rejected for canonization at first by the relevant Church committee, in 1902.

True, there are possible theological counterarguments that favor Joan (as opposed to practical arguments, such as that making Joan a saint curried favor for the papacy with the French). The main one seems to be essentially "we don't know God's purposes—perhaps He was strengthening Catholicism in France so it could do good work later." Maybe. But that evades the question by assuming as the answer an unprovable claim; it is a form of begging the question. You can't claim inscrutability as a proof. An equally valid (i.e., invalid) claim would be "If Joan had not done what she did, Henry VIII would never have removed England from the Church." Who knows? Not me. (I am unsure, as a theological matter, as to the mainstream Christian position on whether God has foreknowledge of all possible alternate futures—but I'm sure I don't have it.)

This line of pseudo-argumentation is related to another line of theological thought that has always puzzled me. Christians ascribe to God a variety of characteristics also found in humans, such as justice and love, but hold they are perfected in God. As to love, we are often told that God loves us as His children, in the exact same way we love our children, only more so. But, at the same time, wholly orthodox Christianity does not offer a compatible answer as to why, if God loves us as His children, He would allow some of us to suffer eternally. No parent would ever do such a thing, regardless of whether it was abstractly just. The response (by non-universalists) is usually a retreat to some variation of "God is inscrutable and his nature is in no way amenable to human analysis." Maybe. But that, I think, necessarily conflicts with the original premise, which treats God as (in part) understandable as the perfection of certain virtues that we can understand.

The Christian God is not like Allah, capricious, able to contradict and overrule himself (as he does in the Qur'an), delighting in the suffering of sinners, and able to declare what he thought evil one day good the next. But if the Christian God is the perfect version of certain virtues visible in humans as well, and unable to act otherwise, there is, at least to my relatively untutored mind, a conflict between God's love and the supposed possible consequences of God's justice. There may be a satisfying answer to that that still permits eternal punishment in the framework of paternal love, but I haven't found it. Perhaps this is a failure of subtlety on my part—after all, many heresies are appealing, which is why they get traction, from Marcionism to Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, and that doesn't mean they're right. Nonetheless, I tend to believe, with Gregory of Nyssa and, more recently, Hans Urs von Balthasar, in the possibility (if not certainty) of the apocatastasis—the universal reconciliation of all created creatures to God.

But enough about my personal proto-heresies. Short answer—don't bother with this book.

Michael says

This is a pretty short, but concise, biography of Joan of Arc that presents her life in a synopsis that takes about an hour to read – the early years, visions from God, the battles, and her death. It is written in an easy-to-read, almost conversational narrative that makes you think you're getting more than the Cliff's Notes version but less than say a 1,000 page book. I learned a lot more about Joan of Arc than I previously knew, and enjoyed the book.

I picked this up during a Kindle promotion for 99 cents vs. its normal price of \$2.99; if you're looking for a good biography of Joan of Arc, I would recommend this one even at the \$2.99 regular price.

Dennis Knappenberger says

Great

For the first time I have read the story Joan de Arc, to think that there were people back then as ignorant as people in today's time. it was a great story .
