



The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints, Volume I

Jacobus de Voragine , William Granger Ryan (Translator)

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Depicting the lives of the saints in an array of both factual and fictional stories, "The Golden Legend" was perhaps the most widely read book, after the Bible, during the late Middle Ages. In his new translation, the first in modern English of the complete text from the Graesse edition, William Granger Ryan captures the immediacy of this rich, image-filled work, and offers an important guide for readers interested in medieval art and literature and in popular religious culture more generally.

The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints, Volume I Details

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From Reader Review The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints, Volume I for online ebook

Nick says

Supposedly the most widely-read book of the Middle Ages after the Bible. A quote on the back describes it as "the literary equivalent of...stained glass". Delightful and wonderfully strange.

Julie says

The imagery of the medieval world is vivid with all its demons and dragons attacking the Christians. But surprisingly, the individuals being attacked flinch not because they already know that Christ has overcome the world and this knowledge strengthens them to stand strong against the evils. I enjoyed this book. It was an easy read, but more than that, it helped me understand an era of great Christian Strength, strength that I hope someday to obtain!

Reader2007 says

I really enjoyed reading this. It's pretty easy to read, and the stories are so amazing! Literally! They're pretty much outrageous. Out of the gb books this year, this is one of the ones I enjoyed more.

Gretchyn says

A compilation of the lives of the saints, but honestly, only interesting if you are predisposed to that sort of thing. That said, I love it.

Fergus says

Sanctity in the unlikeliest places and reprobates who become learned Doctors of the Church...

Harlots who repent in the end and poor damsels who flee the lust of princes by entering a convent....

Medieval saints, all of 'em!

People you just won't hear about anywhere else.

These vivid stories run the gauntlet of brave ordeals, tortures and trials and helped fire the imaginations of ordinary folks all over the spooky European landscape of the Middle Ages.

Some seem fanciful, some syrupy - but ALL make for compelling reading!

You may be amazed to find yourself quite enjoying these tales.

They were written - or should I say, compiled (and embellished?) - by a Bishop named Jacobus de Voragine, who lived from 1229 to 1298.

And you know how stories change as they spread?

Well, who knows how many cultish superstitions or other tomfooleries developed as the result of passing these legends from illiterate neighbour to illiterate neighbour!

So it goes, as Vonnegut says...

When my wife and I first moved into our forever home, one beautiful fall day, I introduced myself to our new next-door neighbour and his young family.

They were Catholic like us, and often in those early days he'd take me over to his church on Sundays. He was originally from Central Ontario, quite a way from this, my home town.

Anyway, during the summer his family would vacation in his home town and I'd housesit for them.

As a gift on their return, one year, they gave me that classic book we all used to hear about in the old days, Lives of the Saints.

Well that, and my old Story of a Soul by St. Thérèse, barely whet my appetite for such fabulous tales... until I discovered THIS book!

This is the CADILLAC of ancient saints' lives.

Now, and here's the important part:

If you ever want to wade your eager soles through this HUGE collection, try getting only the first volume to wet your feet -

But make sure it's the great, modern translation published by Penguin (they also publish it in one large volume).

I made the mistake of getting the e-book for my Kindle as well - and, hey, was I taken for a ride.

It's a prolix Elizabethan translation, full of typos. Yikes!

So, a solid five stars for hours and hours of fascinating reading - in BOOK form only.

And a MERRY CHRISTMAS to you all on THIS Holy night!
