

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

## Grades 9-12

---

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Autobiography (Franklin)                                      | Funeral Oration (Pericles)   |
| Democracy in America, [selections] (de<br>Tocqueville)        | Harvard Address and/or Nobel Prize<br>acceptance speech (Solzhenitsyn) |
| Forget Not Love: The Passion of<br>Maximilian Kolbe (Frossad) | I Have a Dream (King)  |
|   | Night (Wiesel)   |

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