

CATHOLICISM: THE PIVOTAL PLAYERS, VOLUME I



ST. FRANCIS

The Reformer

Rebuild my Church! That's the mission Christ gave to St. Francis and it's the perennial task of the Church in every age of its life. But how is the reform and renewal of the Church to be accomplished? The life of St. Francis demonstrates that Christ intends the foundations of true and lasting reform to be built on the solid rock that is the radical witness of the saints.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

The Theologian

The relationship of faith and reason is under intense scrutiny in an age beholden to the competing claims of fundamentalism and secularism. So called "new atheists" insist that the claims of religion amount to mere superstition, a retrograde holdover from a time long ago. Others insist that the life of faith is a retreat into emotions and subjectivism. St. Thomas Aquinas anticipated these objections and trends and demonstrated that to believe is to think and that the life of the mind is integral to life in Christ.



BL. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

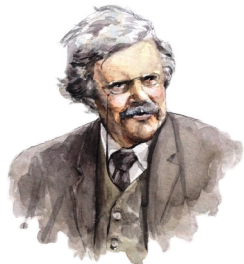
The Convert

Is there any truth in matters of religion? Should the Church simply retreat in the face of the challenges of culture? John Henry Newman came into the Church as a convert and used his prodigious intellectual gifts to help the Church better understand its identity and mission and engage the challenges of a secular age.

ST. CATHERINE of SIENA

The Mystic

Is the physical world all there is? Is science the only path to ascertaining truth? St. Catherine of Siena witnesses to a higher world beyond the material. Though the fourteenth century mystic never studied theology, and never learned how to read or write, her life constitutes a powerful challenge to the flattened-out secularism of our time.



G.K. CHESTERTON

The Evangelist

How does one engage a culture that is befuddled by Christ and suspicious of the Church? The life and witness of this nineteenth century literary convert shows that the fundamental disposition of effective evangelization is joy, and life in Christ is a day-to-day encounter with an abundant and surprising offer of grace.

MICHELANGELO

The Artist

The master of sculpture and painting is not a saint but serves as the privileged representative of the creative potential engendered by the Catholic Faith. The Church professes that beauty is a route of access to God, and through humanity's creative artistry we glimpse the power and glory of the Lord.

