

The Faith Understood: An Introduction to Catholic Theology, Mark J.Zia, S.T.D. , Emmaus Road Publishing, 2013.

Professor Zia's new book is an excellent introduction to Catholic theology. It provides a clear, solid, and complete presentation of the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic faith. In the first chapter the author introduces the discipline of Catholic theology emphasizing the importance of the Bible as the primary source for the study of theology. The Second Vatican Council called the study of Scripture the "very soul of sacred theology." Borrowing the title of his new book from St. Anselm's famous definition of theology as "faith seeking understanding", Professor Zia then discusses the critical role played by the saints in understanding the Catholic faith. It is especially the Fathers and Doctors of the Church whose writings give us profound insights into our faith. Finally the author closes his opening chapter with a brief discussion of the role of the Magisterium as the official teaching authority of the Catholic Church. In subsequent chapters the author discusses such topics as the relationship between faith and reason, the nature of Biblical inspiration, the canon of Scripture, the principles of authentic biblical interpretation, the relationship between the Church and Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition as a source of Divine Revelation along with Scripture, and the Magisterium's role as the ultimate interpreter of God's Revelation. In the second half of his book, Professor Zia provides exceptionally good chapters on The Trinity and the Incarnation and useful summaries of Catholic teaching on sin, Marian doctrines, and eschatology. The Faith Understood would be ideal as an introductory text on Catholic theology for college freshmen. It could also be used in RCIA and adult faith formation classes. And because the writing style is so lucid and readable, this book could also be used for upper classmen in Catholic high schools. Professor Zia's book deserves a wide readership; it is a sure guide to understanding our beautiful Catholic faith.

Submitted by Fred Blonigen to CPO