Soul Survivors

Summer Spiritual Reading Plans

Below is a menu of summer spiritual reading plans with books that are informative and readable. Figure out a plan that fits with what you’re looking for and give the first one a try. If it doesn’t grab you, try the second. If that doesn’t work switch to a different plan.

Where to Buy Them?
Amazon is usually a good price, but they get you on shipping. If you want to keep it cheap, buy used! Alibris is another good source on-line. If you order in-store and pick it up from Barnes and Noble or Borders, you’ll only pay for the book.

The Basic Beliefs Plan
(a.k.a. “Confessions of a Catholic Moron.”)
May: Why Do Catholics Do That? by Kevin Orlin Johnson, Ph.D.
June: Theology for Beginners by E.J. Sheed
July: Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis
August: Fundamentals of the Faith by Peter Kreeft

Alt: Yes or No by Peter Kreeft

The Spiritual Life Start-Up Plan
(a.k.a. “Help! My Prayerlife is Pathetic”)
May: Prayer for Beginners by Peter Kreeft
June: Prayer Primer by Thomas Dubay
July: Difficulties in Mental Prayer by Eugene Boylan
August: Sacred Reading – The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina by Michael Casey

The Breaking Open the Bible Plan
(a.k.a. “You mean the Iliad and the Decameron Aren’t Books in the Bible?”)
May: A Father Who Keeps His Promises by Scott Hahn
June: The Catholic Church and the Bible by Peter Stravinskas
July, August and beyond: The Great Adventure Bible Timeline Study Kit by Jeff Cavins
(note: this one will run for a half a year, but by the end you’ll know your way around the whole Bible!).

The Just Darned Inspiring Plan
(a.k.a. “How Can I Keep My Soul from Wilting Like a Wet Noodle?”)
May: The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom
June: With God in Russia by Walter Ciszek
July: Lay Seige to Heaven – the Biography of St. Catherine of Sienna by Louis De Wohl
August: Letters to a Young Catholic by George Weigel

Alt: Amazing Grace for the Catholic Heart by Jeff Cavins, etc.
The Get More Out of Mass Plan
(a.k.a. “Mass Back Home is a One-Hour Yawn on Sunday Morning.”)
May: The Eucharist: Our Sanctification by Raniero Cantalamessa
June: Lamb’s Supper by Scott Hahn
July: If Your Mind Wanders at Mass by Thomas Howard
August: In the Presence of Our Lord by Benedict Groeschel

The Chastity, Dating and Relationships Plan
(a.k.a. “Can anybody find me somebody to love?”)
May: The Courage to Be Chaste by Benedict Groeschel
June (Women): Lady in Waiting by Kendall & Jones
June (Men): Gut Check by Tarek Saab
July: Good News About Sex and Marriage by Christopher West
August: Love and Responsibility by Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)
Alternate: Men And Women Are From Eden: A Study Guide to John Paul II’s Theology of the Body by Mary Healy

The Catholic Spirituality Classics Plan I
(a.k.a. “Caution: Life Will Never Be the Same”)
The Practice of the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence
The Cloud of Unknowing - author unknown (!)
Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi
The Spiritual Autobiography of St. Charles De Foucauld

The Catholic Spirituality Classics Plan II
(a.k.a. “Don’t Leave Earth Without Having Read…”)
May: St. Augustine’s Confessions (get the Chadwick translation – 1998)
June: The Imitation of Christ by Thomas a’ Kempis
July: Introduction to the Devout Life by St. Francis De Sales
August: The Autobiography of Teresa of Avila

The C.S. Lewis Plan
(a.k.a. “The Most Quoted Christian Writer of the Past Century”)
May: The Screwtape Letters AND The Great Divorce (they’re short).
June: The Abolition of Man
July: The Four Loves
August: Till We Have Faces