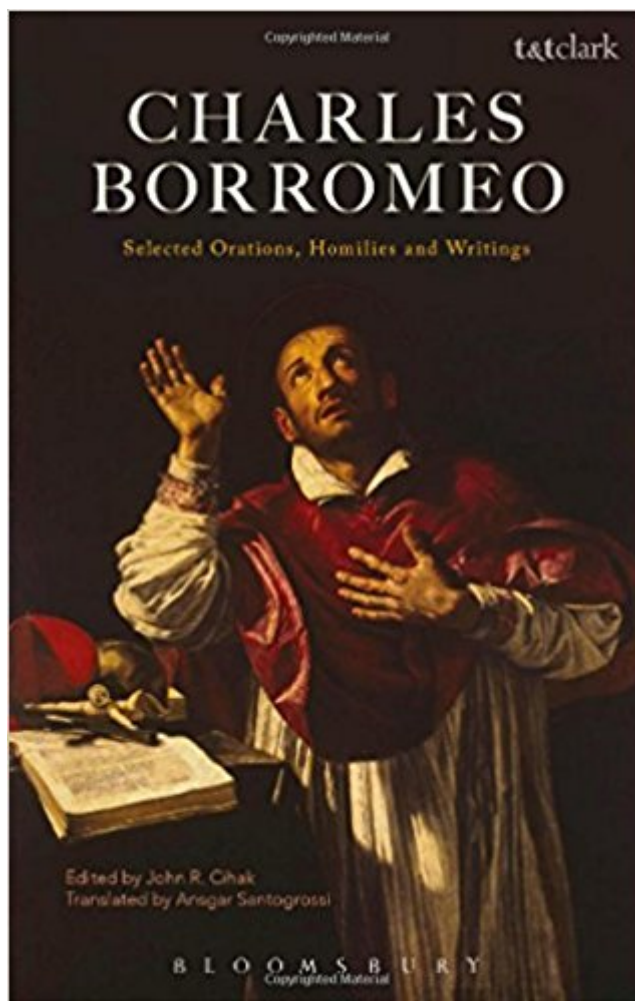


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Charles Borromeo: Selected Orations, Homilies And Writings



Synopsis

Charles Borromeo (1538-1584) should have been part of the problem. As nephew of a Medici Pope who made him a Cardinal at 22 years of age, Borromeo could have become just another corrupt Renaissance Bishop. Instead he became the driving force of reform within the Catholic Church in the wake of the Council of Trent following the Protestant Reformation and the primary reason Trent's dramatic reforms were successful. His remarkable accomplishments in Milan as Archbishop became the model of reform for the rest of Western Europe. Change is never easy, but St. Charles's approach - deeply biblical, personal, practical and centered on Christ - offers a road map of reform, even for today. Now for the first time in over 400 years a significant selection of his works appears in the English language. Chapter One offers three orations that St Charles gave as Archbishop of Milan to the other Bishops. These texts were among those that Pope Paul VI sent out to the Bishops of the world in 1963 during Vatican II. These orations reveal Borromeo's foundational ideas of reform. Chapter Two contains a selection of homilies on the Eucharist, which for St. Charles was crucial for authentic and lasting reform. Chapter Three treats of the reform of the clergy, the reform for which Borromeo is most known and on which he spent most of his efforts. Recurrent Borromeoan themes to his priests are the greatness of the priestly vocation and the consequent necessity to live that call with integrity through humility, prayer and self-sacrifice. Chapter Four presents St. Charles's efforts at mobilizing the laity in their own reform of imbuing the secular world with holiness in the workplace and within the family. This translation is intended to be faithful to Borromeo's Latin or Italian texts rendered into contemporary English and is currently the largest collection of primary source material of his works in English.

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Customer Reviews

Cihak and Santogrossi have managed to bring alive one of the great figures of the Counter-Reformation. Borromeo is generally known for being a patron of the Arts and a defender of polyphonic chant, but this collection of homilies, speeches and occasional writings showcases the full breadth of Borromeo's genius. This collection will be inspirational for priests, bishops, seminarians and anyone else interested in the topic of how one saint overcame a culture of clerical decadence and turned a sinking Barque of Peter around and got it floating again. In a radically egalitarian world, it also showcases the value of one aristocratic leader with his heart in the right place. -Tracey Rowland, John Paul II Institute, Australia

There may be only one instance of Papal nepotism within the history of the Church that actually served the good of the Church - Pope Paul IV appointing his non-ordained nephew Charles Borromeo a Cardinal at the age of 22. This book demonstrates why this is true. Fr John Cihak, editor, and Br Ansgar Santogrossi, OSB, translator, have provided for the English speaking Church, long overdue, an excellent selection of St Charles' Orations, homilies and writings that bear witness to his reputation as an ardent reformer, inspiring preacher and practical administrator. In so doing, Charles emerges not only as an exemplary bishop, but more importantly as a beloved Saint. Today's seminarians, priests and bishops, as well as the Catholic laity at large, who desire to further reform the Church in our time to make it vibrant and saintly, will find in this marvelous book St Charles' wisdom, courage and inspiration to help them do so. -Thomas G. Weinandy, OFM, Cap, Capuchin College, USA

The great bishop of Catholic reform appears here in new light. Many know only Borromeo's demanding ordinances of regular and attentive pastoral practice and of disciplined lay life. But these texts show him renewing the deteriorated church of Milan by setting forth attractive motives for pastors to lead by example and nourish their people by word and sacrament. Borromeo offers high ideals of life and service, drawing on Scripture, the saints and daily life to encourage all to walk resolutely in the way of Christ. -Jared Wicks, S.J, Gregorian University, Italy

To have the words of this great Bishop, Saint and Reformer resound in the English language is a wonderful contribution. This book will be a marvelous resource for clergy, scholars and anyone who seeks to live a more authentic life in Christ. -Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops

This is a timely and important book. St Charles Borromeo's practical wisdom about following Jesus can inspire and guide our ongoing efforts at renewal within ourselves and the Church today. -Alexander K. Sample, Archbishop of

Portland, USA

John R. Cihak is an Official of the Congregation for Bishops and a Papal Master of Ceremonies at the Vatican. A priest of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, USA, he studied philosophy at the University of Notre Dame and obtained his Licentiate and Doctorate in theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, where he also teaches. Ansgar Santogrossi, O.S.B., is a Benedictine monk of Mount Angel Abbey and Adjunct Professor of Philosophy at Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon and at Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary in Nebraska, USA. He earned his Doctorate in philosophy from the Institut Catholique de Paris. Charles Borromeo was a Cardinal and Archbishop of Milan, Italy, from 1564-1584. He was also a leader within the Counter-Reformation and was responsible for significant reforms in the Catholic Church.

This is a wonderful, well-researched book. It is an asset to anyone studying for the priesthood and for those who teach. This book is a fine compilation of the writings of St. Charles Borromeo and his homilies. The time and effort that went into creating this valuable book are more than evident. I would recommend this book to those who are interested in the history of the church (The counter-reformation) and the inner workings of the church post the Council of Trent. The Magisterium was preserved showing that massive changes can happen when God presents His choice to lead and to guide the church in a new and holy direction. Monsignor John R. Cihak, S.T.D., and translator Ansgar Santogrossi, O.S.B., PhD, created a book that can be read and clearly understood.

St. Charles Borromeo lived at a time when the Church seemed to be falling apart. There was a lack of holiness in those who had allegedly given their lives to Christ as His priests and religious. And there was a leadership vacuum as many bishops at the time lived outside of their dioceses and did little to lead or protect their flocks. The Church was in a time of crisis, as she so often is throughout history, including in our times. This book presents the response of a saint to difficult times. St. Charles Borromeo responded to the crisis with personal holiness as well as a pastoral plan of action that has something to teach bishops, priests, and laity in our times too. I found the lengthy historical introduction to be extremely helpful, even apart from the collection of Borromeo's own texts. The introduction painted a vivid picture of the times and circumstances in which Borromeo lived, and explained his strategies for meeting those times head-on — not with negativity and constant lamenting, but with hard work, leading by example, and faith in Jesus Christ, who promised

that the gates of hell would not prevail against the Church. This is a must-read for seminarians, deacons, priests, and bishops.

The great influence of this saint for the Church is still being realized today, and this book is a clear testament to that. This impressive collection of writings is a must read for priests, seminarians and all Catholic faithful who want to encounter St. Charles Borromeo in a new way. I highly encourage all those who may not know much about this saint to discover a man who although young, was a great defender of the Church and a true example of what it means to be a shepherd of souls. I highly recommend this book.

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