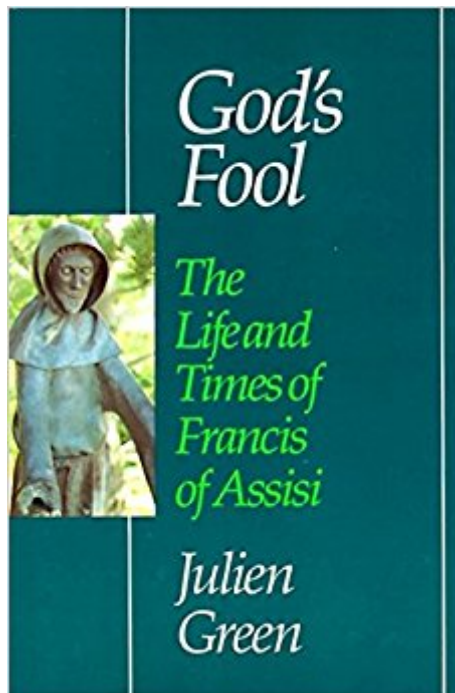




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God's Fool: The Life Of Francis Of Assisi (Perennial Library)



Synopsis

This warm, richly detailed biography brings the beloved saint alive in all his human and profoundly spiritual dimensions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The virtues of this portrayal of Francis of Assisi are those of its inspirer. With disarming simplicity and candor, Julien Green (a well-known bilingual novelist who was the first English-speaking person elected to the French Academy) unfolds the life of il Poverello , who was not merely converted to Christianity but utterly transformed and abandoned to the truth of the Gospel. Though familial ambitions attempted to shape and control him, and the historical milieu to set its mark upon him, Francis chose, instead, "perfect destitution," joy, song, and the wonders of nature. The rarity of such a transformation is the secret of Francis's endless appeal. The thoughtful, lucid prose that made the book a bestseller in Europe is marvelously evident in this translation. Highly recommended for general collections. Carol J. Lichtenberg, Washington State Univ. Lib., Pullman

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[At the request of the person who commented to my review, editing to identify myself. At least I hope this works....O.K. it won't let me change the "By" information so I'm having to add my name to the review title. Sorry about that]This is the richest, most truthful (and beautiful) biography of St. Francis of Assisi that I know. It is also sometimes painful in its honesty.To address a few points raised by Mr. Alsrue (below).-- You are quite right that Francis discouraged the possession of Bibles and Psalters among his followers. Since he lived about 300 years before the invention of the printing press, such items were hand-written, were few and far between, and were seen as signs of wealth and luxury. If you know anything about the Franciscan charism, you know that their chief vow is to live the poverty of Christ (and in my own fairly thorough study of the Bible, I don't remember reading anything about Christ carrying around copies of the Scriptures either). In Francis' day most people could not read in the first place and relied on others preaching and teaching from the Scriptures to learn about the Gospel life.-- Francis' regard for the Scriptures was so high that he radically changed his entire life on the strength of a few verses from it. Few "Christians" today would step out as far as he did in faith.-- Francis' approach to corruption in the Church (which I fully agree was a real problem) is the best one possible. He set about reforming from the inside. Due to his example, the Church was powerfully renewed. Christ did not ask Francis to build a new Church, but to rebuild the old.-- That Francis was flawed and human there is no doubt. I was surprised myself to read about how hard he could be on his followers, but especially on himself. It's reassuring to me that even someone so weak can put their entire trust in God and make a major difference in the world. Only God is perfect.-- It has been a while since I've read the book, so I don't remember what it was that made you think Francis believed people have to earn their salvation. Despite many misconceptions, that has never been official Church teaching (what individual, less careful ministers have said about it throughout history is another thing). He DID believe that if you are Christian you had better show it in your daily life. Even St. Paul said "work out your salvation in fear and trembling...."However one feels personally about Francis, his life was a total offering of love to God the best way he knew how. Learn from his good example and from his mistakes, but don't sit in judgement on him unless you are living a holier life than his.

This is a biography of St. Francis that was recommended to me but it is above my head. Granted, I only have 17 years of education, and not in English, literature or theology. As an example, here is a line from p. 40"Perhaps this was the source of the dactyls and spondees of Greek and Latin prosody."

Saints are always a fun read and Julien Green has done a classic job in illustrating the life of one of God's most interesting instruments, Francis of Assisi. Aptly titled God's Fool, Francis would probably have agreed with the assessment that a fool of the secular things makes for a great saint. An inspirational text that I constantly promote to those who are ready to listen to the Franciscan challenge amidst the comforts of the secular world.

The best biography of St. Francis out there. Full of imagery and lyrical language, God's Fool allows the reader to become immersed in his world, his Assisi, his living the Gospel wholeheartedly.

This was great for research. See my book: Francis of Assisi, a Novel approach to lady Poverty!
[http://contoveros.wordpress.com/2014/09/23/francis-released-on--com/Michael J Contoveros](http://contoveros.wordpress.com/2014/09/23/francis-released-on--com/Michael-J-Contoveros)

One of my favorite books. Have bought it twice so I can loan out a copy without the risk of losing a copy. Read it again and again.

Very interesting book on the life of St Francis. Enjoying it very much.

The author does not picture St. Francis as a plaster Saint. He is a flesh and blood human being who was tempted, fell and then rose again to become one of the greatest, most beloved Saints of all time. I love this book.

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