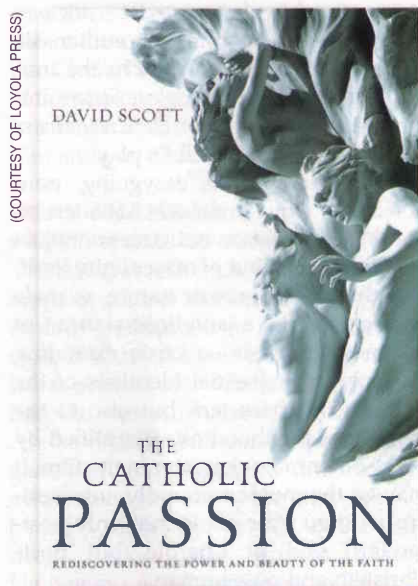


A Passion for the Faith



The Catholic Passion: Rediscovering the Power and Beauty of the Faith by David Scott, Loyola Press (2005).

Reviewed by MICHAEL DUBRUEIL

Pope Benedict's first encyclical takes on the theme of love, quoting from the First Letter of John: "God is love." He declares that in our times "love" is often misunderstood and is sadly separated from God—the true source of love—and the Holy Father points us back in the right direction.

In a different way, but with great effect, David Scott in *The Catholic Passion: Rediscovering the Power and Beauty of the Faith* also expounds upon the love of God in his presentation of how to be a Catholic. What he has written is a love story.

There are two lovers here. First, there is David Scott himself, whose writing reveals a fascination with the Church, a love affair—fueled by the many great witnesses of the Faith—that has moved him to follow in their footsteps.

David Scott's new book is both a celebration of the Catholic faith and the exposition of the love story between God and man.

In a survey of other reviews of *The Catholic Passion*, almost all gave it great praise, although Anne Carr did not in her review published in *America* magazine. Carr believed that Scott had ignored the pluralism present in the Church and did not discuss what unifies us as Catholics. I disagree. Carr apparently wanted Scott to focus more on what isn't Catholic rather than what really is the unifying "passion" of the Catholic Church; the love of God that has touched Scott and countless other Catholics throughout the ages. This is the "Catholic passion" and, to paraphrase St. Paul, without it we are just noisemakers. Scott's "passion" returns us to what is essential, just as Pope Benedict has begun his papacy by recalling *Deus caritas est*.

Scott sees the Church in the same way that a lover sees the object of his affection. There is a pleasant blindness to what then-Cardinal Ratzinger—in his meditation on the Ninth Station of the Cross on Good Friday in Rome last year—bemoaned as the "filth" present in the Church. This is an uplifting book at a time where those seeking to know more about the Church are likely to encounter lurid exposés and attacks on the Church rather than the glories of the Faith and its triumph.

The Catholic Passion is a positive look at the Catholic Church that sings of her ideals while relegating to individual ungratefulness the faults and scandals that we read about in the news today and the history pages of yesterday. *The Catholic Passion* is all about the Bride of Christ ready to meet Christ as well as sorrows over the foolish bridesmaids

not ready to receive him. Scott quotes G. K. Chesterton's response to the question "What is wrong with the world today?"

"Dear Sirs:

I am.

Sincerely, G.K. Chesterton"

The "filth" exists because we are ungrateful lovers—the "worthless wretch" in the parable of the wedding guests, unworthy to be called sons of so good and merciful a Father.

The "tremendous lover"

The Father is the other lover in Scott's *Passion*. He quotes Paul Claudel, a 19th century poet, playwright, and French diplomat: "Look, see God striding across the earth like a sower; he takes his heart in both hands and scatters it over the face of the earth!"

In the second chapter, he adds: "The whole Bible can be read as an epic chase—an adventure of divine pursuit." To understand Catholicism one must begin with the "tremendous lover" that is God.

The Catholic faith unfolds in *The Catholic Passion* like a slow blooming rose. Every aspect of Divine Revelation, the Incarnation, the Church, and her sacramental life continues to show forth how much we are loved by God. The sadness of those who reject this great love, who fall by the wayside on this pilgrimage of faith, accepting instead the empty love of self, is bemoaned. The reader is drawn into this story of love and it becomes his own story: will he accept the love that God is offering in his Church or will he reject it?

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