



## **Practicing Christianity *Christianity as a Way of Life,* A review**

**Kevin W. Hector says faith is  
about what we do, not just what  
we believe.**

**By Andrew Prevot**

LOVING, SINGING, PRAYING, lamenting,

forgiving, being grateful, being generous, even laughing – these are just a few of the Christian practices that inform Kevin W. Hector’s consideration of more traditional theological topics such as the problem of sin and evil, the saving mission of Jesus, and the end of the world. *Christianity as a Way of Life* shows that the discipline of systematic theology, which traditionally seeks to clarify Christian beliefs, can be reconceived as a study of the embodied, communal practices that make up the Christian life. From start to finish, the prose is clear and the uplifting vision of a life reoriented toward God shines through.

This book reunites doctrine and practice in a manner that many Christians will appreciate, but it also aims to persuade sceptics that theology has a legitimate place in the academy. It does this by arguing that theology offers understanding and wisdom that even scholars who are not devoted to Christianity can recognize as good. By interpreting Christianity not as a collection of beliefs but as a way of life among other ways to live in the world, theology has the potential to broaden anyone’s understanding of life, regardless of his or her religious or nonreligious commitments. Moreover, by explaining how Christian practices can make people better by directing them toward recognizably good ends, theology may help even those who do not adhere to Christianity find some practical wisdom within it.

Yet such gains in broader legibility come with trade-offs. Some Christian readers may find the distinctiveness of their faith underemphasized. Hector’s book, which aims for academic legitimacy, might be helpfully complemented by other works that more boldly affirm aspects of Christianity that make it seem strange or even “foolish” (1 Cor. 1:27).

Hector’s treatment of prayer provides a useful example. Hector describes prayer as an intentional practice of asking God for goods we desire, which can help us assess whether those goods align with our highest values. Over time, such a practice has the potential to transform our desires in beneficial ways. It helps us avoid taking good things in our lives for granted and heightens our gratitude. If we pray for others, this can increase our ability to love them, while curbing our egoism. In all of these respects, Hector makes a strong case for the practical wisdom of prayer. However, he does not give detailed discussions of what difference it might make to pray in the name of Jesus, what role the Holy Spirit plays in prayer, or the possibility of God speaking to us during prayer.

Though packaged for academic recognition, the Christianity presented here remains powerful, inspiring, and authentic. Informed by diverse traditions and brimming with fresh insights, Hector’s book is a gift to theologians, Christians, and seekers of all kinds.

Source: *The Plough* accessed 26/03/24

## Thousands of young people gather in Rome to delve deeper into meaning of Holy Week

ACI Prensa Staff, Mar 25, 2024

By Almudena Martínez-Bordiú



In 1968, St. Josemaría Escrivá inspired and promoted UNIV, an international meeting of young university students seeking to deepen their faith. Since then, thousands of students travel to Rome every Holy Week.

This year, approximately 3,000 young people will gather in the Eternal City from March 24–31 to participate in liturgical ceremonies with Pope Francis and in several meetings with the prelate of Opus Dei, Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz.

In addition, participants will have the possibility of attending university events for further study and debate on the topic “The Human Factor,” concerning artificial intelligence.

The purpose is to create a time for reflection so that young people, in dialogue with experts from different fields, can consider in depth how to contribute to the humanization of different social and professional environments.

The event is an opportunity to participate in Holy Week with a life of more intense prayer, get to know the city of Rome, go on guided tours of museums and art exhibits, and visit places related to the history of the first centuries of the Catholic Church.

This story [was first published](#) by ACI Prensa, CNA’s Spanish-language news partner.



### EASTER AROUND THE WORLD

#### Asia

Christians in Jerusalem, Israel, mark Good Friday by walking the same path they believe Jesus took before his crucifixion, many with their own crosses, before attending mass. Pilgrims also congregate for an Easter sunrise service at the Garden Tomb.

In the Philippines bloody Easter rituals see some Filipino Catholics whip their backs with blades and bamboo sticks in religious penance as a form of worship and supplication.

#### Africa

Many Christian communities in Africa celebrate with an Easter Vigil, for which the church is decorated by ‘*Vitenge*’ and ‘*Kanga*’, clothes formed into shapes including butterflies and flowers. Mass is followed by traditional dances held outside the church and a celebratory meal.

#### Mexico

In Mexico, Easter celebrations involve two big observances, *Semana Santa* (Holy Week) and *Pascua* (Resurrection Sunday to the following Saturday). Starting on Palm Sunday, *Semana Santa* sees Passion Plays take place and locals buy special elaborately woven palms from outside churches, before hanging them on their doors to ward off evil. Easter Sunday morning marks the start of *Pascua*, where great celebrations follow the morning service, with towns often having fêtes including stalls and even fair-ground rides.

#### Collections Last Sunday

First Collection: €1,195

Share: €810

THANK YOU

#### Mass Intentions.

Easter Sunday

11am: Joan Fahey

Contacts: Fr Fachtna McCarthy, Administrator, Fr Patrick Claffey, svd C.C. Fr Miron Sikivic OFM, Deacon Greg Pepper., . Tel 01-6600075

Streaming and Website [www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie](http://www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie) email: [info@stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie](mailto:info@stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie)

Child Protection: <http://www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie/ministries/child-protection/> also [www.csp.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.csp.dublindiocese.ie)

Streaming also at [www.churchservices.tv/haddingtonroad](http://www.churchservices.tv/haddingtonroad)

Funded by Living the Joy of the Gospel Campaign