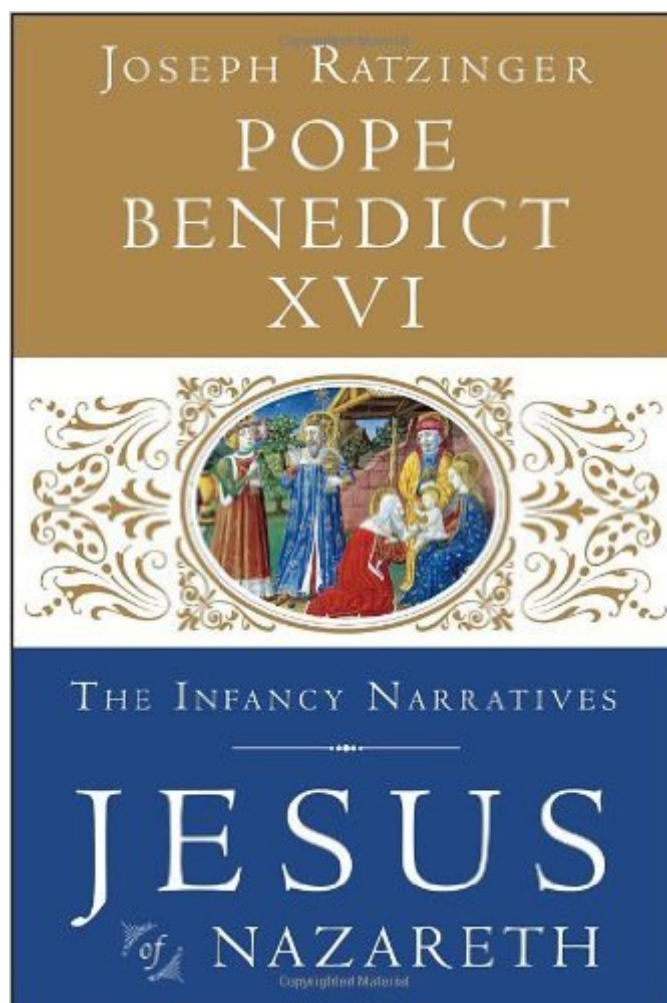


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Jesus Of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives



Synopsis

New York Times Bestseller! The momentous third and final volume in the Pope's international bestselling Jesus of Nazareth series, detailing how the stories of Jesus' infancy and childhood are as relevant today as they were two thousand years ago. In 2007, Joseph Ratzinger published his first book as Pope Benedict XVI in order to make known the figure and message of Jesus. Now, the Pope focuses exclusively on the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life as a child. The root of these stories is the experience of hope found in the birth of Jesus and the affirmations of surrender and service embodied in his parents, Joseph and Mary. This is a story of longing and seeking, as demonstrated by the Magi searching for the redemption offered by the birth of a new king. It is a story of sacrifice and trusting completely in the wisdom of God as seen in the faith of Simeon, the just and devout man of Jerusalem, when he is in the presence of the Christ child. Ultimately, Jesus' life and message is a story for today, one that speaks to the restlessness of the human heart searching for the sole truth which alone leads to profound joy.

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Customer Reviews

In his previous two volumes of his "Jesus of Nazareth," Pope Benedict XVI showed his academic background and writing abilities as he was able to craft books that would appeal to scholars and general readers alike. In his third volume, a look at the infancy narratives, Benedict continues to make books that are accessible to readers of various backgrounds and, more importantly, offer them new insights into the Gospels. In tackling the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke, Benedict is treading over familiar ground. But Benedict is able to offer a refreshing look at the subject while

still defending traditional Christian teachings and holding his ground against the likes of the Jesus Seminar. Benedict is also able to call upon a wealth of material--other Gospels, theologians both ancient and modern, the Old Testament, Jewish and Roman chronicles and other sources. Flipping through the bibliography reminds readers that Benedict is a master of several languages. While the book will probably not convert readers who do not accept the divinity of Jesus Christ to Christianity, this book will reinforce Christians in their beliefs. Benedict is solid on looking at the main story of course. But he also offers thoughtful portraits on Joseph and Mary; an interesting breakdown on the differences between the genealogies offered by Matthew and Luke; a contrast between Gabriel's messages to Zechariah and Mary; a look at the finding of Jesus in the Temple; a glance at the slaughter of the innocents and flight into Egypt; a fine sketch of King Herod; and a solid overview of the magi and the star they followed. It's these moments where Benedict truly shines some new light on the familiar accounts. Benedict shows some hints about the Passion that readers may have never picked up on. It's an amazing book despite being much shorter than the other two volumes of the series. Benedict continues to astound with his abilities to teach and appeal to readers with various backgrounds. As Advent approaches, Benedict has offered the world a wonderful Christmas gift in his third volume of "Jesus of Nazareth." Highest recommendation.

Though the shortest and final volume of the Jesus trilogy, once again the Holy Father has found a way to challenge unbelief and strengthen the faithful both intellectually and spiritually. This volume is an exposition and discourse on the infancy narratives of the gospels. Through Old Testament parallels and historical background these seemingly mythic stories are affirmed as historically reliable and spiritually encouraging. Once again Pope Benedict does not shy from acknowledging the questions raised by those who have challenged the historical reliability of the gospels. But with that acknowledgement he once again brings their methods into question and demonstrates the shaky foundations on which the criticisms have been built. But, it is not just critics and apologists who will find intellectual food in this volume. Those everyday mystics who pray the rosary will find new food for meditation on the joyful mysteries in particular and for Marian devotion in general. Evangelists will find fresh insight into sharing the joy Pope Benedict finds necessarily linked to grace. This work has been one we have anticipated for some time and though it is short it is no less profound and fulfilling than the preceding volumes. I will be re-reading this one often. And, I suspect it will become a favorite advent devotional for many readers.

I had no idea that the pope was such a good communicator. His style is conversational, and easy to

follow. Although his positions are based on scholarly research, the text is not tedious or overly academic. A very good read. I was able to read this book in two evenings.

I expected something more complex, and was surprised to see a very accessible book, well written and easily read. A trademark of his style, the author is thoroughly rational and clear in his discussion of the different topics covered in the book. My only caveat is that this book is more useful for those readers who have already enjoyed the first two volumes of Jesus of Nazareth: it should not be considered a stand-alone book.

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