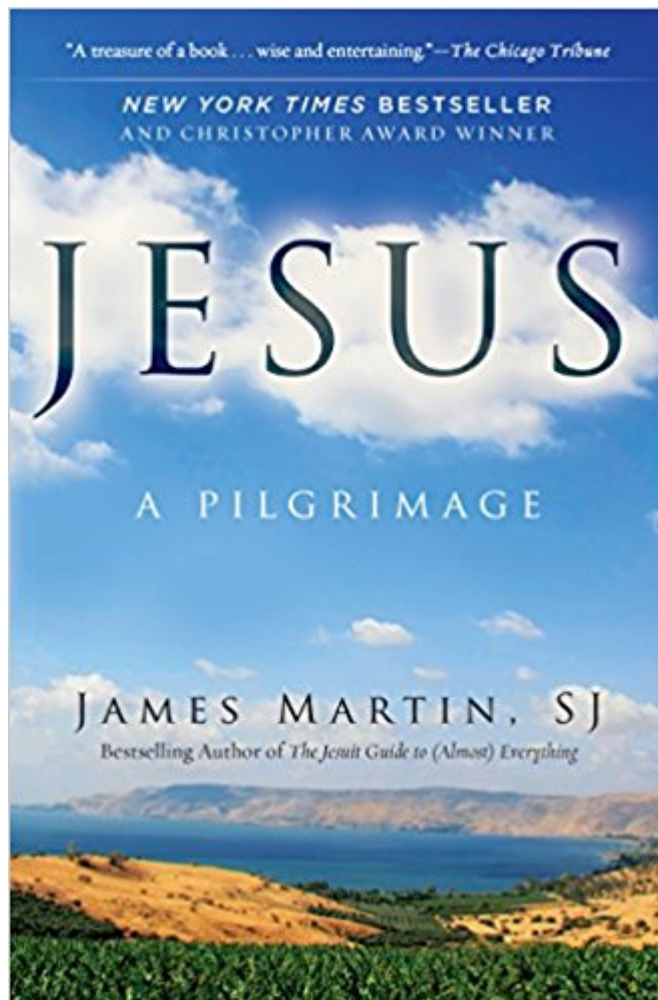


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Jesus: A Pilgrimage



Synopsis

James Martin, SJ, gifted storyteller, editor at large of America magazine, popular media commentator, and New York Times bestselling author of *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*, brings the Gospels to life in *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*, and invites believers and seekers alike to experience Jesus through Scripture, prayer and travel. Combining the fascinating insights of historical Jesus studies with profound spiritual insights about the Christ of faith, Father Martin recreates the world of first-century Galilee and Judea to usher you into Jesus's life and times and show readers how Jesus speaks to us today. Martin also brings together the most up-to-date Scripture scholarship, wise spiritual reflections, and lighthearted stories about traveling through the Holy Land with a fellow (and funny) Jesuit, visiting important sites in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. The person at the heart of the Gospels can seem impossibly distant. Stories about his astonishing life and ministry—clever parables that upended everyone's expectations, incredible healings that convinced even skeptics, nature miracles that dazzled the dumbstruck disciples—can seem far removed from our own daily lives, hard to understand, and at times irrelevant. But in *Jesus* you will come to know him as Father Martin knows him: Messiah and Savior, as well as friend and brother.

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Customer Reviews

“James Martin's riveting new meditation on Jesus is one of the best books

I've read in years on any subject. *Jesus* is a love letter to the first-century Jewish

radical Martin has devoted his life to following. Bravo, Father Martin, for writing a must-read. • (Mary Karr, author of *Lit*) “Do we really need yet another book about Jesus? If the book is this one, the answer is yes, we do. Jim Martin’s approach to a well picked-over subject is unique and original, and it will net the reader a glimpse into the Nazarene not available elsewhere. • (Harvey Cox, Hollis Research Professor of Divinity, Harvard Divinity School) “Fr. James Martin, S.J. is refreshingly innovative in his *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*. He has a knack for giving a new perspective to the familiar, making the reader exclaim, “Ah, yes! A superb gift. • (Archbishop Desmond Tutu) “One of the best religion writers today, Fr. Martin has produced a remarkable combination of modern scholarship on the Gospels, his experiences on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, his own creative imagination and sense of humor, and wise advice pertaining to Christian life. • (Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., Professor of New Testament, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, editor of *New Testament Abstracts*) “Martin communicates a joyful faith in God’s healing and the ultimate hope offered by the Resurrection. Throughout, vivid details of his search in blistering heat for holy sites both authentic and dubious anchor this complex, compelling spiritual testimony. • (Publishers Weekly, Starred Review) “What can be said about Jesus that’s never been said before? Martin helps answer that question through an insightful, balanced, intelligent, widely-embracing, and faith-filled account of his own journey in search of Jesus. A book for everyone, regardless of creed or background. James Martin at his best! • (Ronald Rolheiser, OMI, author of *The Holy Longing*) “This is a sensitive, heartfelt inquiry into the person of Jesus. James Martin encounters Jesus again and again on a pilgrimage through Israel. In his book the great texts of the Gospels come to live and are transformed for the reader into an encounter with Jesus as he really was. • (Rev. Gerhard Lohfink, author of *Jesus of Nazareth*) “James Martin does something remarkable in this book. He invites you to accompany him on a pilgrimage through the Holy Land. New Testament scholarship opens up the life of Jesus so that the Gospels can speak to each of us personally and transform us as they did their first hearers. • (John W. Martens, PhD, Associate Professor of Theology, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota) “Jim Martin’s book on Jesus is a gem. Learned yet highly accessible, he weaves together a number of insights gleaned from the Gospels, a recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Ignatian spirituality, and his personal and pastoral experience. This is a Jesus book I highly recommend. • (Thomas D. Stegman, S.J., Associate Professor of New Testament, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry) “James Martin has a gift for captivating both the reader’s head and heart. What a joy to take this personal and

fascinating pilgrimage with Fr. Martin, one that leads to a refreshing awareness and understanding of the beloved Carpenter from Nazareth. This book not only informs, it inspires. (Joyce Rupp, author of *Praying Our Goodbyes* and *Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self*)

“Father Martin calls archeologists and exegetes to witness in his narrative. He bares his own life experiences. It’s all at the service of the greater story—the greatest ever told. If I have the privilege of visiting the Holy Land again, I will see it differently because I’ve read this book. (Scott Hahn, Professor of Theology and Scripture at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, author of *Understanding Scripture*)

“It isn’t often that a book invites you to make a journey through the Holy Land in the company of an inspiring, well-informed and entertaining guide like James Martin. Enjoy the journey, but don’t be surprised if it changes you. (Margaret Silf, author of *Inner Compass* and *Simple Faith*)

“Martin offers a very personal meditative memoir, but one informed by critical biblical and archaeological scholarship and graced with his accustomed narrative skill. His entertaining, thoughtful, and inspiring account will delight both seasoned pilgrims and those who want to be. (Harold W. Attridge, Sterling Professor of Divinity and emeritus dean, Yale Divinity School)

“Whether encountering Jesus for the first time, or wanting to know him better, you’ll find a wonderful guide in Fr. Martin. He takes us on his tour of the Holy Land, treading in the footsteps of Jesus. More than a travelogue or commentary on scripture—it’s a life-transforming pilgrimage. (Robert Ellsberg, editor of *The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day*)

“Fr. James Martin, chaplain to the Colbert nation, uses the geography of the Holy Land to map out the separate plots of earth called historical Jesus, christology, and personal (as well as ecclesial) spirituality. Every reader will enjoy the journey through this triple territory with such an insightful companion. (Professor John P. Meier, William K. Warren Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame)

“In this inspiring medley of travelogue, academically informed Bible study, and pilgrimage, Martin resurrects an ancient Christian form of spirituality and serves as a trustworthy guide through the life of Jesus. Jesus is a must-read for those who want their Bible brought to life with accuracy, sincerity, and sparkle. (Candida Moss, Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, University of Notre Dame)

“Want a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with a reliable guide? Open these pages and travel with Fr. Jim Martin. He’s at his best here, opening the Gospel mysteries, but with a light touch. Serious scholar, yes—but mostly a pilgrim believer trying to make his way, just like us. (Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, author of *Dead Man Walking*)

“This delightful book combines personal reflections, spiritual nuggets, insights from top biblical scholars,

theologians, and archaeologists, in a folksy and engaging style. As Martin shares his pilgrimage, he makes Jesus and his land and times come alive, inviting others to meet Jesus and embark on their own pilgrimage. — (Barbara E. Reid, O.P., Professor of New Testament and Vice President and Academic Dean, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago) — “Written in clear, accessible prose and laced with the author’s trademark good cheer, this is a deeply personal narrative. Read this book and be inspired to encounter Jesus in your own way, in the company of a spiritually insightful guide. — (Elizabeth A. Johnson, CSJ, Distinguished Professor, Fordham University) — “Jesus is a delight to read and a work of substance for the committed Christian. Vividly written, and rich in historical detail and analysis, it’s also a movingly personal journey of faith. This is a book that will linger in the reader’s heart. — (Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. Archbishop of Philadelphia) — “This is an invaluable book for anyone desiring to know more about Jesus, and how his life can illumine our own spiritual pilgrimage. James Martin makes familiar Gospel stories fresh, and helps us see how in our ordinary lives we might better answer God’s call to conversation and conversion. — (Kathleen Norris, author of *The Cloister Walk*) — “Fr. Martin provides those who have stepped away from their faith, or who are not believers, the opportunity to better know who Jesus was. Whether you are one of Jesus’ most fervent disciples or a questioning observer, this book will help you understand Jesus is our brother and friend forever. — (Cardinal Sean O’Malley, archbishop of Boston) — “The book is solidly based in contemporary Jesus studies but its charm lies in the insight a fellow Christian has gleaned into the God-man of the Gospels through his own personal and deepening relationship with Jesus. — (Sandra M. Schneiders, Jesuit School of Theology, Santa Clara University) — “A consideration of Christ, human and divine, from an on-native-ground perspective. An intelligent, lively travelogue and a welcome complement to a direct reading of the Gospels. — (Kirkus Reviews) — “James Martin’s witty account of his pilgrimage in the Holy Land gives one an acute sense of how wonderful it is that God has walked in our land and shared our lives. It touches our imagination and ignites it anew. — (Timothy Radcliffe, OP, former Master General of the Dominican Order) — “Highly accessible, inviting-even magnetic-and meant to be read by those who have always wanted a companion, a mentor, and an understanding friend to accompany them. A profound book. — (Joan Chittister, OSB, author of *Called to Question*) — “Part travelogue, part memoir and part very Martinesque - that is, funny, conversational and deep. — (Washington Post) — “About halfway through the Gospel of Mark, Jesus asks... — “Who do you think I am? — In his new book, *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*, Jesuit priest, Jim

Martin, searches for an answer and his answer just might surprise you. (Huffington Post) "Mixed with theology, history, tradition, and Fr. Martin's wisdom and wit, we put ourselves in the exact moment and location of Jesus and try and picture what it must have been like for both Jesus and those around Him. (Stuart's Study Blog) "The more personal and the more subjective and even the more chatty the account of this pilgrimage becomes, the closer we draw, even without realizing it, to its divine-human subject. (Peter Milward, SJ, St. Austin's Review) "The blend of distilled scholarship and narrative is infectious. Travelogue, spirituality and theological reflection combine with wit and human insight. (The Tablet) "[Jesus] blends Bible study, spiritual reflection, personal memoir and travel writing in a way that (mercifully) differs from the classically dull, dry volumes on the life of Christ. (Busted Halo) An inspirational memoir that stands as a fresh perspective on Jesus with Martin's own travel narrative and a Bible study that is scholarly and inspirational, this book is perfectly pitched for general readers with his fluid, magazine-style prose- definitely a "mash-up" of styles, but Martin makes it work! (ReadTheSpirit) A treasure...a wise and entertaining book that should appeal to the spiritual pilgrim in all of us, no matter what the faith and no matter whether believer or nonbeliever. (Chicago Tribune) "Jesus: A Pilgrimage is the Jesus book for smart people who are seeking to understand the singular person of Jesus of Nazareth through the illuminated lens of Father Martin's intelligent, funny, prayerful and profound faith. (Paul Raushenbush, Executive Religion Editor for The Huffington Post) "I'm beginning to feel that [Jesus: A Pilgrimage] might be a must-have for Christians who want a more rounded, personal experience of Christ. Or for those who don't understand the "Christian thing" and would like some general context of their own. (Happy Catholic Blog) "Part travelogue, part biblical commentary, part memoir, part meditation | This will appeal to readers (not just Catholics) seeking an introduction to the Gospels that is personal but rooted in serious scholarship. (Library Journal) "It takes a human one to write well about the consummate Human One, Jesus. And James Martin does that very well! Come to see, and be seen by, the one who has loved so many of us into life. (Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Center for Action and Contemplation, Albuquerque, NM, author of Everything Belongs) "Martin draws on solid scholarship and also on his own experience, along with an accessible and attractive style, all of which makes this book an attractive and substantial spiritual reading. (The Bible Today) "Outstanding...[Martin is] a masterful teacher and story teller. (Our Sunday Visitor) "Remarkable...fascinating... Martin interweaves scholarship into a popular-level

narrative which will at once introduce many readers to their work and at the same time challenge readers to understand the Gospel narratives in new ways. – (Catholic News Service) – “Combining memoir, theology and history, Father Martin recounts how his sense of place in the churches and holy sites he visits illuminates his Sense of Place as a follower of Jesus. His honest, sensitive reading of Scripture through the lens of intelligence and faithfulness left me feeling joyful. – (First for Women) – “My highest recommendation...Just read this book and you will understand more about the times in which Jesus lived-and more about what the Gospel stories mean-than you could ever imagine. – (The Leaven)

A gifted storyteller and spiritual director, Father James Martin, SJ, invites readers to experience the stories of the Gospels in a completely new, vivid, and exciting way to gain a deeper understanding of Jesus. Moving sequentially through the Gospels, considering not only familiar passages but also the "hidden life" of Jesus, the book offers a bold retelling of the life of Christ, faithful to the Christian tradition, while meditating on parts of the narrative that have often escaped notice. Martin provides personal stories from his own life, the most up-to-date biblical scholarship, and powerful anecdotes from beloved spiritual teachers, and brings the reader along on his own real-life travels through the Holy Land. Combining the fascinating insights of historical Jesus studies with profound spiritual reflections about the Christ of faith, Martin re-creates the world of first-century Galilee and Judea to usher us into Jesus's life and times and reveal how Jesus speaks to us today. *Jesus: A Pilgrimage* is an invitation to know Jesus as Father Martin knows him: Messiah and Savior, as well as friend and brother. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Jesus: A Pilgrimage begins with an introduction that clearly lays out what the book is and more importantly, what the book is not. I point this out because, I generally go in with preconceived notions of what I expect or want from a book. Fr. Martin is quick to point out that this book is not a theological discussion on who Jesus is, nor is it a Bible commentary. This book, however, is a look at Jesus, as we see Him in the Gospels, through the viewpoint of Fr. Martin's education, experience, and a recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land. If we keep this in mind when reading the book, we can give it a proper review. Each chapter is laid out in the same format. Fr. Martin first mentions the place he is going to visit. He then describes the journey there. Details from this include the actual process of travelling to the location, scenery along the way, and bits of the culture and environment he encountered. Then, comes the heart of each chapter - his reflections. Mixed with theology, history, tradition, and Fr. Martin's wisdom and wit, we put ourselves in the exact moment and

location of Jesus and try and picture what it must have been like for both Jesus and those around Him. We then end with the Scripture passage which served as the basis for the site Fr. Martin visited. The most interesting chapter in this book to me was entitled, "Nazareth." In this chapter Fr. Martin talks about the "Hidden Life" of Jesus. This term refers to the period of Jesus' life, age 12-30, that is absent in the Bible. Fr. Martin, like many, are drawn to this period of Jesus' life because they imagine it is a lot like our lives. "None of us is going to be preaching and performing miracles - at least not as Jesus did - but all of us live everyday lives, as Jesus did in Nazareth, being taught and cared for by our parents, loving and squabbling with our families, playing with our friends, learning what it means to be an adult, and in time earning a living." I never thought of Jesus in this light, but it does make sense. In this chapter, I also learned about just how small and poor Nazareth was. Knowing this, it really puts into perspective the disparaging remarks people make regarding Nazareth. It also shows you the environment Jesus grew up in, and influenced his parables. Fr. Martin is an excellent storyteller. He does a fine job painting pictures of the places he visited, and he draws out details in the Gospels that one could easily miss. There were, however, parts of this book that I didn't enjoy. The beginning annoyed me a little when he waffled about wanting to go to the Holy Land. (Really what Christian, wouldn't want to see the place of Jesus?!) I also got bored in the beginning reading about the trek to get to each of their destinations, and would think to myself, "Hurry up and get there." However, I eventually accepted that that was the nature of this book as a personal pilgrimage. It would be incomplete to ignore the journey and focus solely on the destination. Those complaints aside, I still enjoyed the book. It was quite interesting to see Jesus, the Gospel passages, and the modern day Holy Land through the eyes of Fr. Martin. This book was provided to me for free by Harper Collins in exchange for an honest review.

I've read several of Fr. Martin's books and this one is possibly the best one of all. I've always wanted to visit Israel and take in the sites and reading this book, I feel like I'm there with him. He writes with such humor, wit and insight that it is hard to put this book down. Like the author says, this isn't a theology book, but a book about his travels seen through the lens of his faith (as a Catholic and Jesuit priest) - but his writing is "down to earth" and accessible. He isn't writing it just for Catholics or Christians necessarily, so I think anyone with an interest in the Jesus of history and/or Jesus of faith will find something to like here. I've never met Fr. Martin but I think he would be an excellent teacher and a fun person to travel with - and all of that comes out in this book. I just wish he could write books more quickly so we didn't have to wait so long between them - ha ha!

I have laughed out loud, been moved to contemplative prayer on aspects of Jesus' life and brought to tears, and I'm not completely finished with this book. I have read several of Father Jim's books, and he continues in this one to write in easy to read but informative prose. I find it hard to put down. The book weaves his joyful enthusiasm for the Gospel with his personal travel to the Holy Land with a brother Jesuit. I felt like I was there with him in the crowded, noisy Church of the Nativity, riding with the cab driver in Bethlehem and also at the peaceful Bay of Parables. Father Jim is down to earth, intelligent, inspiring and funny and this book reflects all of that. If you don't have a copy, what are you waiting for?

I found this book to be both an easy read and a difficult one! There were aspects of the book (such as the descriptions of the scenery etc) that were quick to read but other parts - how those scenes relate to the Gospels and how we might incorporate the teachings into our lives today that took a bit more thought and time to fully "consume". Overall I loved this book and believe that I learned a great deal from it. Additionally, I think the visual imagery Fr. Jim included will help me a great deal in my prayer life.

I've never left a rating on before but am writing one now since Fr. Martin just requested via twitter for some feedback and felt i should contribute. I am over halfway through the audiobook version (which the author reads) and it is no less wonderful than all of his other books. His way of weaving in the life/teaching of Jesus with his trip to the holy land is perfectly done. This might sound cheesy but he really makes you feel like you are there with him on his journey (which i feel saves me from taking the trip myself). In particular, his retelling of gospel stories not only breathes new life into them but also leads you to see them from several different perspectives. (Which is exactly what a great teacher does!) It's clear why Fr Martin has been so successful in spreading the good news. His genuine, down-to-earth, accessible writing style makes this book (as well as his others) a joy to read. I thank him for continuing to write!!

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