Books That Do Justice: Incorporating Catholic Social Teaching into Summer Reading

The summer season presents a wonderful opportunity to catch up on those books you have been meaning to read or to pick up something completely new. Whether you’ll be relaxing on the beach, reading during your morning commute, or enjoying a quiet evening at home, consider adding the following books to your summer reading list or book club rotation. The suggested works are of varying genres—fiction, young adult, memoir, graphic novel, poetry, and nonfiction—and all connect to themes of Catholic social teaching. The books are organized according to some of the most crucial issues currently facing our global community. The following selections are all recently published (2010 and after), and highlight diverse authors, narratives, and experiences from our world today.

**Race and Identity**

*Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015)
Genre: Memoir
Coates’ acclaimed memoir explores America’s fraught history and relationship with race, and recounts his own life experiences as a Black man. Written as a letter to his son, Coates painfully and honestly writes about the impact of the deaths of Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, and those killed in Charleston, sharing his fears about his son’s future and the world he will inherit.

*Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America* by Michael Eric Dyson (2017), Genre: Nonfiction
In *Tears We Cannot Stop*, Dyson makes a deeply personal and provocative call for change. He argues that if we are to achieve racial progress, we must face difficult truths about the realities of enduring racism and discrimination in America, and recognize how Black pain and grievance have too long been ignored.

*The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead (2016)
Genre: Fiction
Winner of the National Book Award for Fiction (2016) and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction (2017), *The Underground Railroad* tells the story of Cora and Caesar, two slaves who make a bid for freedom and escape from their Georgia plantations. In Whitehead’s imaginative rendering, the Underground Railroad is a literal secret network of tracks and tunnels. This novel is a gripping adventure tale of one woman’s determination to escape the horrors of slavery.
**All American Boys** by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely (2015)
Genre: Young Adult, Fiction
Winner of numerous awards for young adult literature, *All American Boys* begins with Rashad, a Black teen, being wrongfully assaulted by a white cop who assumes he is stealing. Quinn, his white classmate, witnesses the brutal attack that places Rashad in the hospital, but is torn about whether he should speak up about what he saw. Quinn deeply respects the officer, who has been a sort of father figure since his own father’s death, but also recognizes that something is deeply wrong. This novel is a necessary, timely read about racial prejudice, privilege, police brutality, and refusing to be a bystander in the face of injustice.

**This Is How You Lose Her** by Junot Díaz (2012)
Genre: Short Stories, Fiction
*This Is How You Lose Her* is an acclaimed collection of interlinked short stories, featuring Diaz’s recurring protagonist, Yunior. The short stories humorously deal with infidelity in romantic relationships, but also deftly grapple with issues of Latino identity, masculinity, transnational politics and history, and diaspora.

**March Trilogy** by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell (2013-2016), Genre: Graphic Novel, History, Young Adult
This graphic novel trilogy brings the history of the civil rights movement to life, chronicling the nonviolent resistance of Congressman John Lewis and the Freedom Riders. These graphic novels provide a vivid and engaging first-hand account of the most important struggle for civil and human rights in American history.

**Everything I Never Told You** by Celeste Ng (2014)
Genre: Fiction
Ng’s debut novel is a gripping and moving story about a mixed-race Chinese American family living in 1970s small-town Ohio. When the middle daughter, Lydia, is found dead in the local lake, the Lee family is thrown into chaos.

**Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race**
Edited by Jesmyn Ward (2016)
Genre: Multi-genre
*The Fire This Time*, named after James Baldwin’s 1963 examination of race in America, is a collection of short essays, memoir, and poems. Through the voices of numerous activists and thinkers, this work challenges the idea that we are living in a post-racial society, and encourages us to wrestle with our current predicament and imagine a better future.
**Juliet Takes a Breath** by Gabby Rivera (2016)
Genre: Fiction, Young Adult
This young adult, coming-of-age novel tells the story of Juliet Milagros Palante, a queer Puerto Rican who moves from the Bronx to Portland, Oregon. Over the course of the summer, Juliet aims to learn more about her intersecting identities and make peace with herself.

**From Black Lives Matter to Black Liberation** by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor (2016), Genre: Nonfiction
Activist and scholar Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor traces the history of the Black struggle in the United States and examines contemporary movements for Black liberation. Her incisive analysis draws on historical fact and emphasizes the powerful intersections of race with anti-capitalism and class-based solidarity.

**LaRose** by Louise Erdrich (2016)
Genre: Fiction
Landreaux Iron shoots at a deer at the edge of his property, but then realizes in horror that he has accidentally killed his close friend and neighbor’s five-year-old son, Dusty Ravich. Landreaux turns to an Ojibwe tribe tradition—the sweat lodge—for guidance and finds a way forward. The Irons, following the ancient tradition of atonement and retribution, give their own young son LaRose to the grieving Ravich family. As years pass, the families’ mutual pain begins to heal, but this tenuous peace is threatened by a vengeful man with a long-standing grudge against the Iron family.

**Labor, Inequality, and Working America**

**Janesville: An American Story** by Amy Goldstein (2016)
Genre: Nonfiction
Goldstein, a Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington Post reporter, tells the story of Janesville, Wisconsin, where the nation’s oldest General Motors plant shut down in the midst of the Great Recession. Her reporting examines the lives of the townspeople and shows how working-class communities have struggled to survive in an era of economic upheaval and decline of industrial cities in the American Heartland.

**Glass House: The 1% Economy and the Shattering of the All-American Town** by Brian Alexander (2017)
Genre: Nonfiction
In Glass House, journalist Brian Alexander explores the history of Lancaster, Ohio—a city that in 1947 was declared by Forbes Magazine as the epitome of the all-American town. Today, it is wrestling with the heroin epidemic, low-wage jobs, and the demands of contemporary American life.
Genre: Short Stories, Fiction
In this collection of over 40 short stories, Berlin crafts stories about everyday moments in the laundromats and halfway houses of the Southwest, the homes of the Bay Area upper class, and among switchboard operators, struggling mothers, and hitchhikers.

Genre: Nonfiction
Putnam presents a groundbreaking examination of the growing inequality gap and explains why fewer Americans today have the opportunity for upward mobility. Our Kids combines individual testimony and extensive research to recount the stories of rich and poor kids from cities and suburbs across the country.

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond (2016), Genre: Nonfiction
Desmond delves into the poorest neighborhoods of Milwaukee to tell the story of eight families on the edge of eviction. Today, most poor renting families spend more than half of their income on housing and eviction has become painfully common. Desmond’s heartbreaking reportage shows the human cost of inequality, extreme poverty, and economic exploitation.

The Divide: American Injustice in the Age of the Wealth Gap by Matt Taibbi (2014), Genre: Nonfiction
Journalist Matt Taibbi takes up the question of why, over the last two decades, we have seen both growing wealth inequality and a surge in mass incarceration. These two trends side by side represent “The Divide”—when basic rights are now determined by our wealth. The Divide lays bare our perverse system of “justice” that criminalizes the poor, yet turns a blind eye to the destructive crimes of the wealthy.

White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America by Nancy Isenberg (2016), Genre: Nonfiction
Isenberg examines the history of the class system in America, extending from colonial times to the present. Surveying political rhetoric and policy, popular literature, history, and scientific theories over four hundred years, Isenberg challenges the American myth of social mobility and the idea of the United States as a classless, meritocratic society. She demonstrates the persistence of the “white trash” underclass in American political ideology and culture, and reveals the truth about the enduring, malevolent nature of class division in our society.
**CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM**

**Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and Its Legacy**
by Heather Ann Thompson (2016), Genre: History, Nonfiction
Winner of the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for History, *Blood in the Water* is a powerful account of the infamous 1971 Attica prison uprising in which 39 men were killed and close to one hundred were injured. Thompson comprehensive work explores the uprising and its legacy, from the state’s violent response to the victims’ 45-year fight for justice.

**Pushout: the Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools** by Monique Morris (2016), Genre: Nonfiction
Though only 16 percent of female students, Black girls make up more than one-third of all girls with a school-related arrest. *Pushout* chronicles the experience of girls across the country who are misunderstood and judged by teachers, administrators, and the justice system, and subsequently pushed out of school into unhealthy, unstable, and often unsafe futures.

**Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption** by Bryan Stevenson (2014), Genre: Memoir
Bryan Stevenson founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice to defend the poor, the wrongfully condemned, and women and children trapped within the criminal justice system. *Just Mercy* describes the case of Walter McMillan, a young man who was sentenced to die for a murder he insisted he did not commit, and whose case changed Stevenson’s understanding of mercy and justice forever.

**Lockdown** by Walter Dean Meyers (2010)
Genre: Young Adult, Fiction
Reese is a 14-year-old in his second year at the Progress juvenile detention center. If he behaves and follows the rules, he can get out early; if he can’t, he’ll get sent “upstate” to a real prison. Reese struggles to survive the violence he faces in the prison system and make it through the rest of his sentence.

**Chasing Gideon: The Elusive Quest for Poor People’s Justice** by Karen Houppert (2013), Genre: Nonfiction
On March 18, 1963, the Supreme Court ruled in *Gideon v. Wainwright* that all defendants have the constitutional right to free legal counsel if they cannot afford their own. *Chasing Gideon* examines the legacy of this decision, chronicling cases of defendants across the country who rely on overburdened and underfunded indigent defense programs.
**The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness**
by Michelle Alexander (2010), Genre: Nonfiction
Recognized as one of the most important works on criminal justice reform, *The New Jim Crow* tackles the crisis of mass incarceration in the United States. Alexander argues that although Jim Crow laws are no longer in place, the racial caste system has been redesigned through the criminal justice system. By targeting Black men and communities of color, this system functions as a form of racial control even as it purports to be “colorblind.”

**Refugees, Migration, and Diaspora**

Genre: Essay
*Tell Me How It Ends* is based on Luiselli’s experience working as an interpreter for Central American child migrants who risked their lives crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. The title refers to the forty questions asked of the undocumented minors facing deportation. This powerful work offers an important, humane portrait of child migrants, and of the hope driving them to an uncertain future.

*The Refugees* by Viet Thanh Nguyen (2017)
Genre: Fiction
*The Refugees* gives voice to the experience of living between two worlds—adopted homeland and country of birth. The characters include a young Vietnamese refugee who suffers culture shock when he comes to live with two gay men in San Francisco; a woman whose husband is suffering from dementia; and a girl living in Ho Chi Minh City, whose stories all capture the dreams and hardship of immigration.

*Behold the Dreamers* by Imbolo Mbue (2016)
Genre: Fiction
Mbue’s novel tells the story of a young Cameroonian couple living in Harlem. When Jende Jonga lands a job for a senior executive at Lehman Brothers, the couple looks forward to a brighter future and life for their young son. However, when the financial world is rocked by the collapse of Lehman Brothers and the Great Recession begins, the Jongas’ lives are dramatically upended.

*Laughing All the Way to the Mosque* by Zarqa Nawaz (2014)
Genre: Memoir
Nawaz, creator of the first sitcom about a Muslim community living in the West, paints a humorous portrait of her experiences and challenges as a Muslim woman navigating her way through western society.
**Homegoing** by Yaa Gyasi (2016)
Genre: Fiction

Homegoing begins with the story of two half-sisters: one sold into slavery, the other married to a British slaver. One thread follows Effia’s descendants through centuries of warfare in Ghana; the other follows Esi and her children into America, from slavery in the South, to the Great Migration, to twentieth-century Harlem. The novel follows each sister’s descendants into the present day and captures the enduring legacy and stain of slavery on our nation.

**American Street** by Ibi Zoboi (2017)
Genre: Young Adult, Fiction

American Street is a coming-of-age novel about Fabiola Toussaint, a young Haitian immigrant. After her mother is detained by U.S. immigration authorities, Fabiola is forced to navigate her loud American cousins, the grittiness of Detroit’s west side, a new school, and a surprising romance on her own. Just as she is growing used to her new world, Fabiola is faced with a dangerous proposition and the realization that freedom comes at a cost.

**The Best We Could Do** by Thi Bui (2017)
Genre: Graphic Novel, Memoir

Bui’s beautifully illustrated and emotional memoir recounts her family’s escape after the fall of South Vietnam in the 1970s and the difficulties they faced as they built a new life. She recounts both her traumatizing experience as a child and her life in the present as a first-time mother, coming to understand the sacrifices and love that come with being a parent. Bui examines the anguish of immigration and displacement, the strength of family, the importance of identity, and the meaning of home.

**Exit West** by Mohsin Hamid (2017)
Genre: Fiction

A young couple, Saeed and Nadia, are forced to flee their home country as it is embroiled in a violent civil war. They escape through a series of magical doors into an alien and uncertain future, and struggle to hold on to each other, to their past, and to who they are.

**The Beast: Riding the Rails and Dodging Narcos on the Migrant Trail** by Óscar Martínez (2013), Genre: Nonfiction

Each year, more than a quarter of a million Central Americans attempt this journey, and each year as many as 20,000 of them are kidnapped. Others are robbed, beaten, and raped, or die while attempting to ride the “Beast” (trains heading north). Martínez’s powerful account and full-color photographs shed light on the harsh realities of this journey and emphasize the human face of the migration debate.
**SCIENCE, CLIMATE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

*This Change Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate* by Naomi Klein (2014)

Genre: Nonfiction

Klein powerfully argues that the climate crisis cannot be addressed within our current capitalist system, which incentivizes rampant consumerism, extraction, and consumption. She builds the case for why we must restructure the global economy, and documents inspiring movements occurring throughout the world where communities have stood up and refused to be sites of further fossil fuel extraction.

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot (2010)

Genre: Biography

Henrietta Lacks went to Johns Hopkins University Hospital in the 1950s, where her cervical cancer cells were taken by researchers without her knowledge. “HeLa” cells became crucial in developing the polio vaccine and led to a number of important advances in the medical field, but Lacks, her children, and grandchildren have seen none of the profits (numbering in billions of dollars). This biography grapples with the question of bioethics and the United States’ dark history of experimentation on African Americans.

*Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver (2012)

Genre: Fiction

This novel, set in present day Appalachia, begins with Dellarobia Turnbow’s startling discovery—the Tennessee valley behind her house is covered in millions of monarch butterflies, displaced from their usual winter location in Mexico. *Flight Behavior* addresses the issue of global warming and how changes in our environment can drastically change our lives.

*The Beekeeper's Lament* by Hannah Nordhaus (2011)

Genre: Nonfiction

Journalist Hannah Nordhaus tells the story of John Miller, a migratory beekeeper, and the myriad threats facing American honeybee populations. She explores the role that honeybees play in American agribusiness, the maintenance of our food chain, and the future of our nation.

*The Death and Life of the Great Lakes* by Dan Egan (2016)

Genre: Nonfiction

The five Great Lakes hold 20 percent of the world’s freshwater, but are under growing ecological threat. Egan examines the damage wrought by the decimation of native species by invasive ones, and new risks such as unsafe drinking water, water diversions, and “dead zones.” However, Egan also shows how the Great Lakes can be restored and preserved for the future.
**The True Blue Scouts of Sugar Man Swamp** by Kathi Appelt (2013)
Genre: Young Adult, Fiction
Raccoon brothers Bingo and J’miah are new recruits of the Official Sugar Man Swamp Scouts, who must try to awaken the Sugar Man to save the day from an approaching gang of wild feral hogs. Twelve-year-old Chap Brayburn will do anything to protect the swamp from Jaeger Stitch, who wants to turn Sugar Man Swamp into an Alligator World Wrestling Arena and Theme Park.

**Yellow Dirt: An American Story of a Poisoned Land and a People Betrayed** by Judy Pasternak (2010), Genre: Nonfiction
*Yellow Dirt* exposes a dark period in modern history that resonates with ongoing Native struggles for land and environmental rights today. From the 1950s into the early twenty-first century, the United States heavily mined uranium on Navajo lands. Years later, many residents are still suffering and dying from the radioactive “yellow dirt” that has contaminated their air, water, and soil. Pasternak navigates the political maneuverings that allowed such injustice to transpire, and gives voice to the Navajos’ long fight for justice.

**War and Conflict**

**Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War** by Robin Yassin-Kassab and Leila Al-Shami (2016), Genre: Nonfiction
Yassin-Kassab and Al-Shami present an unflinching, comprehensive account of present-day Syria, with testimonies from opposition fighters, human rights activists, and refugees. The authors also provide incisive analysis of the history of the uprising, the role of Syria’s government in exacerbating the conflict, and the failures of the international community to deal with the growing humanitarian crisis.

**Guantánamo Diary** by Mohamedou Ould Slahi (2015)
Genre: Nonfiction, Memoir
Mohamedou Slahi was imprisoned at Guantánamo from 2002 until his release in October 2016; in the fourteen years he was held, he was never charged with a crime or allowed a trial. His diary is a vivid record of a horrific miscarriage of justice; he shares details about his imprisonment and interrogation, and his life before he disappeared into Guantánamo.

**Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: the Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa** by Jason Stearns (2011), Genre: Nonfiction
The country of Congo has been wracked by brutal, endless war since 1996, in which millions have died. Stearns includes the voices of those who engineered, perpetrated, and survived the conflict, trying to understand why the Congolese state continues to experience mass violence and instability.
I Shall Not Hate: A Gaza Doctor’s Journey on the Road to Peace and Human Dignity by Izzeldin Abuelaish (2011), Genre: Memoir
Abuelaish is a Harvard-trained Palestinian physician who was born and raised in the Gaza Strip. In January 2009, his daughters were murdered during Israel’s incursion into the Gaza Strip. Abuelaish’s account shares his perspective as a physician and humanitarian who treats patients on both sides of the line. Both heartbreaking and hopeful, I Shall Not Hate shares his deepest hope: that his daughters will be “the last sacrifice on the road to peace between Palestinians and Israelis.”

This Divided Island: Stories from the Sri Lankan War by Samanth Subramanian (2014), Genre: Nonfiction
In 2009, Velupillai Prabhakaran (leader of the Tamil Tiger guerrillas) was killed, bringing an end to nearly thirty years of violent civil war in Sri Lanka. Subramanian’s book provides an extraordinary portrait of post-war Sri Lanka, with first-hand accounts and historical analysis of the long-standing ethnic and religious divide undergirding the war.

Like Water on Stone by Dana Walrath (2014)
Genre: Young Adult, Fiction
Blending magical realism and lyrical free verse, Like Water on Stone takes place in 1914 at the beginning of the Armenian Genocide—the Ottoman government’s systematic extermination of 1.5 million Armenians over the course of World War I. A horrifying attack leaves Armenian twins Shahen and Sosi orphaned; they flee into the mountains with their little sister, Mariam, as an eagle named Ardziv watches over them.

How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything: Tales from the Pentagon by Rosa Brooks (2016), Genre: Nonfiction
Rosa Brooks—a former top Pentagon official and daughter of two anti-war protesters—traces the massive shift in how America wages war. Today, America’s wars are constant; as war expands, so does the role of the U.S. military. This has set a precedent for unconstrained use of military power by states around the globe and has dire implications for our nation.

The Women in the Castle by Jessica Shattuck (2017)
Genre: Fiction
Marianne von Lingenfels, the widow of a murdered resistance fighter, returns to the castle of her husband’s ancestors. She plans to uphold the promise she made to her husband’s conspirators: to find and protect their wives. Marianne rescues other resistance widows and their children, forming a makeshift family, but the women must come to terms with the difficult choices that have defined their lives before, during, and after the war.
White Dog Fell from the Sky by Eleanor Morse (2013)
Genre: Fiction
This moving novel of love, friendship, and betrayal is set during apartheid South Africa in 1976. A young medical student named Isaac is forced to flee his country after witnessing a friend murdered by the South African Defense Force. He is smuggled across the border into Botswana and hired as a gardener by a young American ex-patriate, Alice. When Isaac goes missing and Alice goes searching for him, what she finds will change her life.

Baddawi by Leila Abdelrazaq (2015)
Genre: Graphic Novel, Biography
Based on her father’s childhood in the 1960s and 1970s, Abdelrazaq tells the story of a young boy, Ahmad, who is raised in a refugee camp called Baddawi in northern Lebanon. Ahmad is one of thousands of Palestinians who were forced to flee their homeland after the war in 1948 established the state of Israel.

Never Fall Down by Patricia McCormick (2012)
Genre: Young Adult, Fiction
Based on the true story of Arn Chorn-Pond and told from his point of view as a young boy, Never Fall Down is a historical novel about a child who defied the odds to survive the Cambodian genocide of 1975-1979 and the labor camps of the Khmer Rouge.

Genre: Fiction
Marra’s acclaimed novel takes place against the backdrop of the Chechen wars (1994-1996 and 1999-2009), a destructive series of conflicts between the army of post-Soviet Russia and Chechen guerrillas. A Constellation of Vital Phenomena tells the story of two doctors risking their lives to save a hunted child whose father has been taken; it is a powerful meditation on history, memory, survival, love, and loss during wartime.

My Brother’s Keeper by Rod Gragg (2016)
Genre: Biography, Nonfiction
My Brother’s Keeper provides thirty compelling profiles of Christians, from all walks of life and across multiple denominations, who risked their lives to protect their Jewish neighbors during the Holocaust. These believers included ordinary teenage girls, pastors, priests, a German army officer, a former Italian fascist, an international spy, and even a princess. These extraordinary and inspiring historical accounts remind us of how faith compels us to do the right thing, even at great personal cost.
To Hell and Back: The Last Train from Hiroshima by Charles Pellegrino (2015), Genre: Nonfiction
Pellegrino’s compelling narrative draws on the voices of survivors to describe the events and aftermath of the atomic bombs detonated over Japan. Pellegrino shares the story of thirty people who fled Hiroshima for Nagasaki, where they arrived just in time to survive the second bomb. This eye-opening account is an important historical work, and demonstrates how the devastating effects on both cities are still felt 70 years later.

A History of Violence: Living and Dying in Central America by Óscar Martínez (2016), Genre: Nonfiction
El Salvador and Honduras have had the highest homicide rates in the world for the past ten years, with Guatemala close behind. Martínez travels throughout Central America interviewing victims of human trafficking, gang members, police, narcos, and government officials. His harrowing account provides a comprehensive overview of one of the most violent regions in the world.

Other
Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town by Jon Krakauer (2015), Genre: Nonfiction
Between 2008 and 2012, hundreds of college students in Missoula, Montana reported sexual assaults and campus rapes to the local police. Few of the cases were properly handled by the university or local authorities. Krakauer documents the experience of five victims, whose stories highlight the failures of our justice system and the persistence of rape culture in the United States.

The Empathy Exams by Leslie Jamison (2014)
Genre: Essays, Memoir
Jamison’s revealing essays ask essential questions about our basic understanding of others. She draws from her own experiences of illness and injury to explore the meaning of feeling, empathy, and sharing pain, looking at all from poverty tourism to phantom diseases, street violence to reality television, and illness to incarceration.

The Mothers by Brit Bennett (2016)
Genre: Fiction
Nadia Turner and Luke Sheppard share a brief teen romance which results in Nadia’s pregnancy. Nadia chooses to get an abortion and hides her secret from everyone, including her God-fearing best friend, Aubrey. The years pass, and soon Nadia, Luke, and Aubrey are grown adults caught in a love triangle and weighed down with the constant question: What if they had chosen differently?
**Necessary Trouble: Americans in Revolt** by Sarah Jaffe (2016)
Genre: Nonfiction
Jaffe notes that we are witnessing a moment of unprecedented political turmoil and social activism, with the growth of the Tea Party, Black Lives Matter, Occupy Wallstreet, and grassroots networks defying traditional party elites. *Necessary Trouble* explores what has made ordinary Americans become activists, arguing that the financial crisis of 2008 was the spark for many of the successful fights we are seeing across the country.

**The Big Truck That Went By: How the World Came to Save Haiti and Left Behind a Disaster** by Jonathan M. Katz (2013), Genre: Nonfiction
Years after the devastating 2010 Haitian earthquake, relief efforts have floundered; the promises to build safer housing for the homeless and alleviate severe poverty remain unfulfilled. Katz follows what happened to the $16.3 billion of American aid, and presents a sharp critique of the prevailing model of international aid. He uncovers troubling truths about how good intentions go wrong, and discusses what can be done to make aid “smarter.”

**Fans of the Impossible Life** by Kate Scelsa (2015)
Genre: Young Adult, Fiction
This novel alternates among the perspectives of three friends at Saint Francis Prep—Mira, who is struggling with depression; Jeremy, a painfully shy art nerd who has experienced a traumatic incident; and Sebby, Mira’s gay best friend who lives in a foster home. Scelsa provides a compelling portrait of the realities and complexities of love, friendship, queerness, and mental health.

Mayer reveals how a network of exceedingly wealthy people have systematically altered the American political system, working to influence and control think tanks, academic institutions, the Courts, Congress, statehouses, and the Presidency. Mayer’s important work reveals why so meaningful reforms—around taxes, the economy, workers’ rights, and the environment—have been stymied, why America is living in an age of profound economic inequality, and who is behind the new American oligarchy.

**No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the U.S. Surveillance State** by Glenn Greenwald (2014), Genre: Nonfiction
Investigative reporter Glenn Greenwald, who first broke the NSA surveillance scandal, provides an in-depth look into the debate over national security and information privacy. With revelations from documents provided by Edward Snowden, the book explores the cooperation between private industry and the NSA, and the consequences of surveillance for our democracy.
**The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America** by Andrés Reséndez (2016), Genre: History, Nonfiction

Indian slavery was practiced for centuries in North America—tens of thousands of natives were forced to work in eighteenth-century silver mines or serve as domestic slaves. Reséndez makes the case that it was mass slavery, more than epidemics, that decimated Native populations across North America. In his myth-shattering book, Reséndez reveals a key, missing piece of American history and calls us to confront the devastating legacy of Indian enslavement.

**Brazil’s Dance With the Devil: The World Cup, the Olympics, and the Struggle for Democracy** by Dave Zirin (2014), Genre: Nonfiction

Zirin, a renowned political sportswriter, analyzes how sports, economics, and politics have collided in Brazil. The people of Brazil celebrated when it was announced that they were hosting the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics, but began protesting in unprecedented numbers. Brazilians took to the streets to try to reclaim the sports that they saw were being corrupted by powerful corporate interests, profiteering, and greed.

**Boy Erased: A Memoir** by Garrard Conley (2016)

Genre: Memoir

Conley was the son of a Baptist pastor, deeply embedded in church and community life in his small Arkansas hometown. When he was outed to his parents at nineteen, he was forced to attend a church-supported conversion therapy program that promised to “cure” him of his homosexuality. This powerful, heartbreaking memoir traces the complex relationships among family, faith, and community, and is a testament to a love that’s never broken.

**Night Sky With Exit Wounds** by Ocean Vuong (2016)

Genre: Poetry

Vuong, a Vietnamese American, explores war and cultural upheaval in his acclaimed debut collection of poems. Night Sky With Exit Wounds grapples with profound subjects such as love and loss, grief, memory, desire, and the many forms of violence inflicted on his family during the Vietnam War.

**Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living** by Krista Tippett (2016), Genre: Nonfiction

Tippett, award-winning broadcaster and host of the podcast On Being, distills the insights she has gleaned through interviews with scientists, theologians, poets, activists, and others. Becoming Wise offers a hopeful vision for humanity and community, with an emphasis on finding the strength to make the world a better and more beautiful place.
Recent Works by Education for Justice Creative Voices

Oscar Romero and the Communion of the Saints: A Biography by Scott Wright (2010), Genre: Biography
This illustrated biography tells the story of Óscar Romero, beginning with his humble origins and early life as a relatively conservative priest and bishop. Embracing the Church's “option for the poor,” Romero became a courageous voice for the voiceless.

Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God by Kelly Brown Douglas (2015), Genre: Theology and Spirituality
In this timely and compelling book, Reverend Kelly Brown Douglas reflects on the social and theological questions raised by the recent tragedies in Florida, Ferguson, Missouri, and New York. She also writes through the lens of a mother: “I do have a son and he does look like Trayvon.” Douglas writes powerfully about hope and the justice of God in the face of racialized violence and indifference.

Like a Hammer Shattering Rock: Hearing the Gospels Today by Megan McKenna (2013), Genre: Theology and Spirituality
Megan McKenna explores the messages of the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John, examining the context in which they were written and interpreting their meaning for the modern world.

“Say to This Mountain”: Mark’s Story of Discipleship by Chad Myers, Marie Dennis, Joseph Nangle, Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, and Stuart Taylor (2014)
Genre: Theology and Spirituality
The authors of “Say to This Mountain,” both Catholic and Protestant, have long been committed to the work of justice and peace, the renewal of the church, and Christian discipleship. They have designed a process for reading the Gospel of Mark that reflects on how Mark’s story intersects with our own lives and the broader story of the times in which we live.

The Nonviolent Life by John Dear (2013)
Genre: Theology and Spirituality
John Dear, Nobel Peace Prize nominee, explores the journey of nonviolence rooted in the Christian vision of love. He asks how, through nonviolence, we can disarm the world, relieve unjust human suffering, create a more just society, and protect all of creation. He focuses on three important aspects of becoming people of nonviolence—being nonviolent towards ourselves; being nonviolent to all others (including to creation); and joining the global grassroots movement of nonviolence. The book also offers discussion questions.