

# [PDF] The Catholic Church: A Short History (Modern Library Chronicles)

**Hans Kung - pdf download free book**

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**Books Details:**

Title: The Catholic Church: A Short  
Author: Hans Kung  
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**Description:**

Hans Kung's *The Catholic Church: A Short History* is a small masterpiece of historical and theological writing. Kung fairly and comprehensively presents almost 2,000 years of Church history in a mere 207 pages. He begins with Jesus, who "radiated a democratic spirit in the best sense of the word" and "did not proclaim a church, nor did he proclaim himself, but the kingdom of God." Throughout, in his analysis of every phase of Church history, Kung builds a case for a populist

church, challenging the idea of a hierarchical Roman Catholic Church led by an infallible pope. The book concludes with a harsh analysis of the Church's betrayal of Vatican II. Kung, the primary writer of Vatican II, was censured by the Vatican in 1979 for questioning Church doctrine and banned from teaching as a Catholic theologian. Here, Kung levels particular criticism toward Pope John Paul II, whose primary accomplishment, he argues, has been to revive a "conservative and authoritarian" spirit in the Church. The pope's conservative views on the ordination of women, sexual morality, mixed marriages, and ecumenism draw Kung's fire. He calls for nothing less than a new Vatican council in order to bring the Church hierarchy back in line with the Church faithful. The view of the papacy held by the Catholic Church fellowship, oriented on the New Testament, is different from that of the Roman church bureaucracy. It is the view of a pope who is not *over* the church and the world in place of God, but *in* the church as a member (instead of the head) of the people of God. *The Catholic Church* is the best history of the Church in many years. Unlike many such books, it is written clearly enough to be understood by lay readers, regardless of their knowledge of Christian history; and it is short enough that it can be read in a day or two. Furthermore, Kung's controversial views are not presented as mere polemic. They are grounded in objective historical facts. Thus, he succeeds in providing a history that is both committed and objective. Readers who share those commitments will find a trove of knowledge to support their beliefs; readers who disagree will be moved to consider carefully the question of whether and how the Church should be further reformed. --*Michael Joseph Gross* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**From Publishers Weekly** The latest volume in the Modern Library Chronicles series looks at the history of the world's largest Christian body through the eyes of a theologian whom most Catholics regard as either a beloved reformer or an annoying dissident. King, a Swiss priest, was disciplined by the church in 1979 and prohibited from teaching as a Catholic theologian. Through a 1980 agreement with the Vatican, he is now permitted to teach, but only under secular auspices. In his compressed history of the church that traces its roots to Jesus Christ and the Apostle Peter, King continues to ply his trade in controversy. Woven through his mostly readable account is a consistent call for the abolition of the doctrine of papal infallibility, one of the stances that got him into trouble with church authorities two decades ago. King also uses his book to criticize the church's present efforts to safeguard its teachings through the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. His 1979 censure, he says, was a "personal experience of the Inquisition," yet he claims to remain faithful to the church in what he calls "critical loyalty." In concluding statements about the future, King says the church must open all ministries to women (although the current pope has quashed discussion of women's ordination) and be more open ecumenically. Church progressives will warmly embrace King's version of Catholic history, which is sure to be dismissed by loyalists.

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