

Summer Reading & Catholic Social Teaching

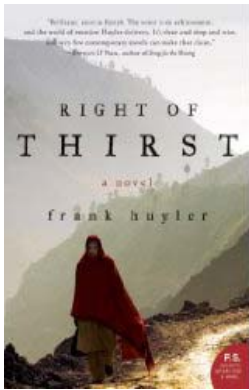
You don't need to leave home to travel to some remarkable places. The books in this list are all connected to Global Solidarity. The books suggested below come highly recommended and leave you with an expanded world view, a more expansive heart, and greater sense of solidarity. Add these to your summer reading list or Book Club line up.

Summer Reading & Catholic Social Teaching

Do you have a great book with to suggest? Send us your suggestions and we will continue to update this list.

Send your suggestions to: efj@coc.org

The Right of Thirst



Details:

by Frank Huyler
Harper Collins, 2009
384 pages

Genre: Literary Fiction

Where you will travel to:
Pakistan

CST Themes and connections:

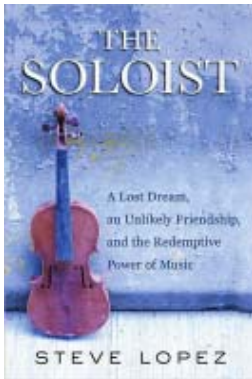
Wealth and poverty
Ethics of intervention
Human bonds & responsibilities

Book Description:

Shattered by his wife's death, and by his own role in it, successful cardiologist Charles Anderson volunteers to assist with earthquake relief in an impoverished Islamic country in a constant state of conflict with its neighbor. But when the refugees he's come to help do not appear and artillery begins to fall in the distance along the border, the story takes an unexpected turn.

This haunting, resonant tour de force about one man's desire to live a moral life offers a moving exploration of the tensions between poverty and wealth, the ethics of intervention, the deep cultural differences that divide the world, and the essential human similarities that unite it.

The Soloist



Details:

by Steve Lopez
Harper Collins, 2008
288 pages
Genre: Non-Fiction

Where you will travel to:
San Francisco

CST Themes and connections:

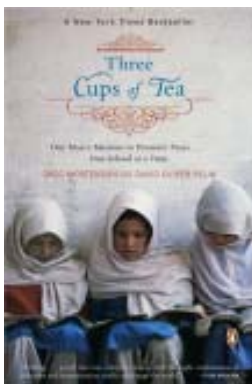
Dignity of the human person
Homelessness & mental illness

Book Description:

When Steve Lopez saw Nathaniel Ayers playing his heart out on a two-string violin on Los Angeles' skid row, he found it impossible to walk away. More than thirty years earlier, Ayers had been a promising classical bass student at Juilliard—ambitious, charming, and also one of the few African-Americans—until he gradually lost his ability to function, overcome by schizophrenia. When Lopez finds him, Ayers is homeless, paranoid, and deeply troubled, but glimmers of that brilliance are still there.

In the process of trying to save Ayers, Lopez finds that his own life is changing, and his sense of what one man can accomplish in the lives of others begins to expand in new ways.

Three Cups of Tea



Details:

by Greg Mortenson
Penguin Books, 2007
368 pages
Genre: Non-Fiction

Where you will travel to:
Pakistan and Afghanistan

CST Themes and connections:

Solidarity & commitment
Peace-building
Rights of the girl child; education

Book Description:

The war-torn mountains of Pakistan and Afghanistan appear in the news as the breeding grounds of terrorist training camps, Al Qaeda hide-outs, and fierce religious extremism. In Three Cups of Tea, Mortenson and Relin take readers behind the headlines to reveal the true heart and soul of this explosive region and to show how one man's promise might be enough to change the world.

The Book Thief



Details:
by Markus Zusak
Knopf Books, 2007
576 pages
Genre: Literary Fiction

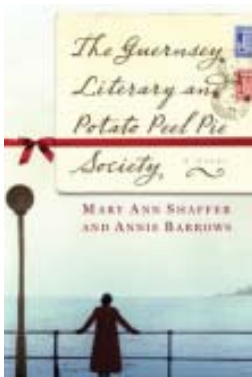
Where you will travel to:
Germany

CST Themes and connections:
Sanctity of human life
Nonviolent resistance
Fully human in community

Book Description:

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak is a novel of cruelty, poverty, and hope. Liesel Meminger is a young girl who has been placed in foster care by her mother. Liesel's brother dies en route to their new home and this leaves Liesel traumatized, causing her to have terrible nightmares in the middle of the night. Liesel's foster father begins teaching her to read on these nights to distract her from her pain. Liesel learns to turn to books for comfort. When the war begins, comfort becomes a rare state of mind, so Liesel finds ways to seek it out. Liesel begins to steal books in her efforts to deal with the cruelty of the world around her. The Book Thief is a complicated story of survival that will encourage its readers to think and to.....

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society



Details:
by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows
Random House, 2008
288 pages
Genre: Literary Fiction

Where you will travel to:
England

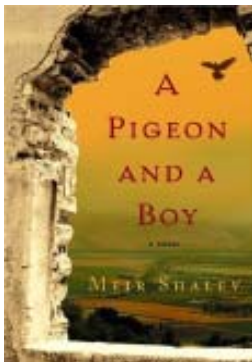
CST Themes and connections:
Sanctity of human life
Hope in the midst of war
Fully human in community
Nonviolent resistance

Book Description:

In London, in 1946, author Juliet Ashton is looking for her next project after the war. Her letters to her publisher and her best friend describe her life, and her search for an idea. When she receives a charming letter from a resident of Guernsey, she's intrigued.

This marvelous epistolary novel reveals the horrors of the occupation, but also the kindnesses during the war. The shadow of Elizabeth McKenna hangs over the book, the wise young woman who is missing from the island, and whose story haunts the residents and Juliet. Readers will care deeply about the islanders and their stories, just as Juliet does.

A Pigeon and a Boy



Details:
by Meir Shalev
Schocken Books, 2007
311 pages
Genre: Novel

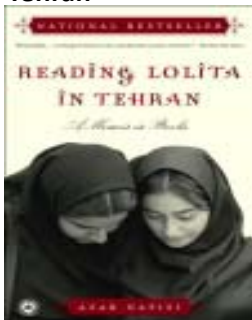
Where you will travel to:
Israel

CST Themes and connections:
The power of love
Enduring values
Integrity, love and loss

Book Description:

A mesmerizing novel of two love stories, separated by half a century but connected by one enchanting act of devotion. During the 1948 War of Independence—a time when pigeons are still used to deliver battlefield messages—a gifted young pigeon handler is mortally wounded. In the moments before his death, he dispatches one last pigeon. Unforgettable in both its particulars and its sweep, *A Pigeon and a Boy* is a tale of lovers then and now—of how deeply we love, of what home is, and why we, like pigeons trained to fly in one direction only, must eventually return to it. In a voice that is at once playful, wise, and altogether beguiling, Meir Shalev tells a story as universal as war and as intimate as a winged declaration of love.

Reading Lolita in Tehran



Details:
by Azar Nafisi
Random House, 2003
384 pages
Genre: Memoir

Where you will travel to:
Iran

CST Themes and connections:
Religious Freedom
Human flourishing and survival
Finding one's voice

Book Description:

Azar Nafisi's luminous tale offers a fascinating portrait of the Iran-Iraq war viewed from Tehran and gives us a rare glimpse, from the inside, of women's lives in revolutionary Iran. It is a work of great passion and poetic beauty, written with a startlingly original voice. For two years before she left Iran in 1997, Nafisi gathered seven young women at her house every Thursday morning to read and discuss forbidden works of Western literature.

