

Something other than an ordinary read

Before I started reading *Something Other Than God: How I Passionately Sought Happiness and Accidentally Found It*, I wasn't sure what to expect. I am a regular reader of Jennifer Fulwiler's blog, *Conversion Diary*, so I knew the author was an excellent writer with six children and an intense fear of scorpions.

I also knew she had made the journey from atheism to Catholicism.

✖ As Jennifer raised questions about Christianity and then Catholicism, sometimes I found myself arguing with her. Other times I realized she was asking a question I couldn't easily answer myself. Why does God answer some people's prayers and not others? Why do people commit evil acts? Why don't I ask myself these questions more often?

I knew Jennifer would end up becoming Catholic, but there were many pages when that conversion seemed unlikely, if not impossible. Then bit by bit, determined as she seemed to be not to become Christian—and then Catholic—she would inch a little bit closer. She'd find an answer to another question, or she'd open herself just a bit more to the possibilities she was being offered. Suddenly I'd realize she was a step closer to finding her faith home.

As a cradle Catholic, I can't point to many specific "aha" faith moments in my life when I knew that God existed, when I fell in love with Jesus for the first time, or when I realized the Catholic Church was where I belonged. As much as my faith has deepened and grown over time, I have always felt certain that the Catholic Church is my home. I never hid in bathroom stalls to read a Bible or tossed faith questions into the blogosphere waiting and hoping for answers.

I can describe the awe I experienced—and still do—receiving the sacraments. And I can point to moments when God reached out to me in specific ways, sometimes subtly, sometimes repeatedly and persistently until I got the message. My faith journey hasn't always been easy, but it has been full of beautiful, enriching moments, times when I truly felt I was growing closer to God. But it wouldn't make for a page turner.

Reading Jennifer's story of intellectual and spiritual conversion also made me consider how grateful I am to my parents for raising me with my faith. I know there is no guarantee that raising a child in a particular faith means your child will continue in that belief when he or she is older—Jennifer is certainly proof of that herself. And I assume most faith journeys are life-long.



But *Something Other Than God* reminded me that I can always push myself to become more deeply grounded in my faith, that I can always, always be closer to Jesus. In fact, I have to make that effort to become the wife and mother God expects me to be.

A week after I finished reading it, many segments of the book are still resonating with me. But one I have been thinking a lot about is a line Jennifer references from *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis:

“He shows much more of Himself to some people than to others—not because He has favorites, but because it is impossible for Him to show Himself to a man whose whole mind and character are in the wrong condition. Just as sunlight, though it has no favorites, cannot be reflected in a dusty mirror as clearly as in a clean one.” I really need to work on getting that dust off of my mirror.

The book itself takes its name from a Lewis quote included in the beginning: “All that we call human history ... [is] the long, terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.”

Something other than God.



If you do read Jennifer’s book, you might be able to do something other than read nonstop until you reach the last page.

You might be able to do something other than stopping to read a passage out loud to your spouse every few minutes.

You might even be able to do something other than cry and laugh while reading. Maybe.

But I’m betting you won’t be able to do something other than consider why you believe what you believe, and the depth of those beliefs. And for that reason I do encourage you to get your hands on a copy. I feel confident that the journey will be well worth it.



You can find Something Other Than God [here](#). And if you’ve read it, I’d love to hear your thoughts!