

[Free] Encyclopedia of the Early Church: 2-volume set

## Encyclopedia of the Early Church: 2-volume set

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The Encyclopedia of the Early Church is a two-volume reference work providing concise and precise information on all topics concerning the first eight centuries of Christianity. Valuable to historians, archaeologists, philosophers, and philologists as well as theologians, this work extends the knowledge of how Christianity evolved to become the most important influence in the history of Western civilization. Tracing the growth of the church from its tiny beginnings in an upper room to its dominance of Europe, western Asia, and northern Africa in the eighth century, scholars from many disciplines produced articles ranging from a few sentences to ten thousand words on all the major and most of the minor people, works, ideas, and issues of the formative period of Christianity. The first major encyclopedia to cover the life, thought, and growth of Christianity, this work offers full treatment of doctrines, creeds, and heresies, of iconography and art history, of archaeology and geography, and of monasticism and asceticism.

From Library Journal This comprehensive source on the first eight centuries of Christianity (through approximately 753 C.E.) is translated from the *Dizionario Patristico e di Antichita Cristiane* (1983-88). There are some 2300 entries contributed by an international team of 167 scholars affiliated with the *Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum* in Rome. Among the topics covered are archaeology, art and architecture, biography, culture, doctrine, ecclesiology, geography, history, philosophy, and theology. Following the alphabetical section is a parallel chronology (secular, ecclesiastical, and cultural and doctrinal matters), over 40 maps, and 320 illustrations. Coverage is, within the scope of the work, thorough. For example, prominent figures such as Augustine and Origen are covered in appropriate depth. More obscure persons are given briefer entries. Although the encyclopedia is advertised as a resource for scholars, students, and general readers, the latter may labor through many of the articles. First, the style of some of the articles borders on pedantic. Second, a number of the authors use untranslated Latin and Greek terminology and occasionally cite primary sources by their Greek and Latin titles even when English translations are available. For these reasons, general readers and lower-level undergraduates may be better served by the *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, edited by Everett Ferguson (LJ 5/1/90). However, graduate students and scholars will turn to these volumes time after time. Recommended for seminary, academic, and large public libraries.-Craig W. Beard, Univ. of Alabama at Birmingham Lib. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. Language Notes Text: English (translation) Original Language: Italian