

reader Views

11900 Jollyville Rd. #201673 ♦ Austin ♦ TX ♦ 78759
www.readerviews.com

The Saint Nicholas Society

Benjamin Bongers

En Route Books & Media (2022)

ISBN: 9781956715422

Reviewed by Lily Andrews for Reader Views (06/2022)

5*A remarkable story of devotion

In this newest offering by Benjamin Bongers, a man loses it all, only to gain much more through faith, hope, and his acts of selflessness.

"The Saint Nicholas Society" is a powerful and inspiring story that weaves two narratives into one fine embroidery. Fred was used to having all the good things that life has to offer, but when he loses it all and is diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, Fred has little hope for the future. A television news broadcast changes his mindset and fills him with the urge to make the world a better place. With a group of eccentric characters viewed by society as misfits, Fred's life is juxtaposed with that of Saint Nicholas of Myra, an early Christian bishop of Greek descent. With the two narratives playing hand in hand, the result is a powerful tapestry that will stir your heart.

Benjamin Bongers is a deft storyteller. He skillfully blends contemporary San Franciscan life with medieval Rome with apex ability. With accurate historical events, he articulately writes about St Nicholas, his childhood, adventures, travels, acts of charity, and his Christian life. Fred's life, on the other hand, is a story told with pitch-perfect clarity as it gives a glimpse of societal problems that are relatable in modern times. Taken together, "The St Nicholas Society" is a text that opens readers to the true meaning of the Christian faith and that human sympathy is the flower of practical life.

The feather in the cap of this book is the character development and the author's brilliant historical research. The characters are memorable and well fleshed out despite the book's many pages. The research is well done, and the author leaves no stone unturned while describing Nicholas' altruistic lifestyle. This book deserves 5 stars as its storyline is original, fresh, and well written.

Among the values of the Christian faith is the selfless concern for the well-being of others. The purpose of human life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others. Benjamin Bongers delivers a story that encourages us to emulate the characters in this story. Indeed, "The Saint Nicholas Society" is bound to leave a mark in a reader's heart and the literary world as well.