# St Thomas of Aquin’s SLRC May 2017

# S4-S6 GENERAL READING LIST

**Anonymous**: Read Without Prejudice

The book has a black and white cover with no picture, no title, no author’s name on it. Instead, there is quote on the front cover: “There are two points in life when we are all equal: At the moment of birth. And at the moment of death. It is how we live in between that defines us”. Do you want to find out more? Read on ...

**Catherine Alliott:** Wish You Were Here

When Flora, James and their two teenage daughters are offered a holiday in the south of France, big secrets are revealed and relationships are pushed to breaking point.

**Pat Barker:** Toby’s Room

Elinor is very close to her older brother Toby who is "Missing, Believed Killed" at the front during First World War. She becomes obsessed with finding out what happened to him and seeks the help of various old friends including Kit Neville who was with her brother at the end. Kit is at a specialist hospital for facial reconstruction in Kent but for some unknown reason is refusing to help. Elinor starts working as a surgical artist to get closer to Kit and to try to persuade him to divulge the information about her brother. This book combines dark, family secrets with the horrors of the war and the intimacy of love and loss.

**M. R. Carey:** The Girl With All The Gifts

Dystopian novel about Melanie, a girl in an institution who escapes with her teacher and captors. Although it deals with the consequences of a zombie outbreak, it’s essentially about relationships.

**Felice Benuzzi:** No Picnic on Mount Kenya

Three Italian prisoners of war are tired of their confinement but do not believe they could escape to a neutral or friendly country. Instead, they decide to escape and climb Mount Kenya, which is close to their camp. They just want to spend some time in freedom and to accomplish something. A wonderful adventure story about the power of the human spirit.

**Ally Carter:** I’d Tell You I Love You, But Then I’dHave To Kill You

Suspenseful novel told from a diary perspective of a young girl named Cameron Morgan. She attends a prestigious and snobby private school for rich girls called The Gallagher Academy. Lots of suspense, mystery and romance.

**Bernard** **Cornwell:** Rebel

The Starbuck Chronicles are a series of novels set during the American Civil War. They follow the exploits of a young Boston-born Confederate officer, Nathaniel Starbuck. This is book one and it is based on real facts, wrapped in a wonderful story with compelling characters. Copperheard is the second book of the series.

**Michel Faber:** The Hundred and Ninety-Nine Steps

Sian joins an archaeological dig at Whitby and becomes involved in a mystery and long-hidden murder. Part historical thriller, part gothic romance, part ghost story, this is a unique novel and a quick, interesting read

**Nathan Filer:** Shock of the Fall

Matthew is 19 years old and a schizophrenic. He is struggling to cope with the death of his brother in childhood. This is his story - a tale of grief, madness and loss, told perceptively and, at times, with humour.

**Karen Fortunati**: Weight of Zero

This is a beautiful story of love and loss. The protagonist, Catherine Pulaski, is a 17-year-old girl who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder shortly after the devastating death of her beloved grandmother. Her first suicide attempt has left her mother traumatised. Zero is Cath's name for the depression that overwhelmed her. She has a plan to collect enough pills to defeat Zero if it comes for her again…

**Karen Joy Fowler**: We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves

Interesting narrative in this book about Rosemary, a college girl with family secrets.

**Nina George:** The Little Paris Bookshop

Monsieur Perdu calls himself a literary apothecary. From his floating bookstore in a barge on the Seine, he prescribes novels for the hardships of life. By finding the exact book a reader needs, Perdu mends broken hearts and souls. The only person he can't seem to heal through literature is himself…

**Heide Goody and Iain Grant:** Clovenhoof

The book begins as a satirical and funny series of misadventures. Based on the premise that Heaven and Hell are run like an office and that Satan isn't hitting his targets of torment, Satan is made redundant, banished and forced to live on earth …

**Robert Galbraith**: The Cuckoo’s Calling

Cormoran Strike is a private investigator, solving crimes with the help of his sidekick, Robin. His adventures continue in The Silkworm and Career of Evil. For a female detective, read Lynda La Plante’sPrime Suspect**,** which features

DCI Jane Tennison , a woman working in a male- dominated police force

**Helen Grant:** Silent Saturday (Forbidden Spaces trilogy: Book 1)

Seventeen-year-old Veerle is frustrated with life in suburban Brussels. A chance encounter with a hidden society, whose members illegally break into unoccupied buildings around the city, soon opens up a whole new world of excitement and danger. When one of the society's founding members disappears, Veerle suspects foul play.

**Philippa Gregory:** White Queen

A historical tale, thrilling and fast moving. about Elizabeth Woodville, the White Queen. First in a series about the Wars of the Roses.

**Sara Gruen:** Water for Elephants

Jacob Jankowski, just days from his final exams at Cornell University, has his world forever altered when his parents are killed in a car accident. Alone, frightened and penniless, he “runs away with the circus…True story .

**Harper Lee**: Go Set A Watchman

Maycomb, Alabama. Twenty-six-year-old Jean Louise Finch - 'Scout' - returns home from New York City to visit her ageing father, Atticus. Memories from her childhood came back, and her values and assumptions are thrown into doubt. Written in the mid-1950s, this is an unforgettable novel of wisdom, humanity, passion and humour. It is set against the backdrop of political and civil rights tensions. The book features many of the iconic characters from To Kill a Mockingbird, a beautiful book by the same author.

**Emma Healey**: Elizabeth Is Missing

The story of Maud, an old lady suffering from dementia, who is determined to find out what has happened to her missing friend, Elizabeth and her sister, Sukey, who disappeared years ago. A story which many can relate to, told with warmth and humour.

**Claire Hennessy:** Nothing Tastes As Good

A powerful and heart-breaking story set in Ireland, about two girls: Annabel and Julia. Julia is in high school, she is the editor of the school newspaper, and she dreams of becoming a journalist. Annabel died three weeks ago, despite receiving treatment for long term anorexia. Annabel discovered there is an afterlife. Her job is to watch over Julia and help her out. It is an honest, realistic, and confronting book looking at eating disorders, social pressure and friendship.

**Takashi Hiraide:** The Guest Cat

Typically Japanese with lovely lyrical descriptions, this tells how a little cat brought meaning to the lives of a young couple in Tokyo.

**A. M. Homes:** May We Be Forgiven

A satirical look at life in C21st America, told through the relationship of brothers, George and Harold.

**P.D. James: Death Comes to Pemberley**

A sequel to Pride and Prejudice set in 1803 when Darcy and Elizabeth have been married for six years and murder invades the family …

**Liz Kessler**: Read Me Like A Book

For the first time in her life, Ashleigh Walker is in love. It is taking her mind off all of her other problems, to the point where her heart races every time she looks at the person she has fallen for. But it is not her boyfriend that makes her feel this way,it is the young female English teacher who has just started teaching her class at college…

**Ian McEwan:** Sweet Tooth

Serena Frome is in her final year at Cambridge and is sent on a secret mission, Operation Sweet Tooth. It is 1972; the Cold War is far from over…

Solar tells the story of Michael Beard, a once-renowned physicist now down on his luck both professionally and in his personal life; The Child In Time deals with the devastation felt by Stephen and Julie Lewis whose daughter, Kate, disappears suddenly and without trace during a routine shopping trip; in Amsterdam the relationship of two lifelong friends will change forever after momentous decisions which both have to make; Atonement, a beautifully-written and haunting novel nominated for the 2001 Booker prize , tells how a brother’s return changes the lives of two girls forever; Enduring Love is a tale of obsession and madness; Saturday, reports a day in the life of a doctor as protests against the war in Iraq take place outside his London home; McEwan’s books are all hard to put down. His attention to detail is remarkable and his novels are very powerful. Highly recommended.

**Shirley-Anne McMillan:** Good Hiding

This is a thoughtful and beautifully written story of teenage pregnancy, bullying and prejudice set in Belfast. The story switches between the viewpoints of the 3 main characters...

**Michael Shaara:** Killer Angels

Fictional story of the Civil War Battle of Gettysburg in 1863. Soldiers torn by the emotions of decision -making in the pandemonium of battle and fear…

**Louise O’Neill** : Only Ever Yours

Dystopian novel about girls who are valued for their looks and bodies alone; could be likened to Scott Westerfield’s Uglies and Margaret Atwood’s Handmaid’s Tale

**Frank Portman:** Kink Dork

Tom Henderson, or King Dork, is an unpopular high school student. He discovers a book that belonged to his deceased father with some kind of code in it. He tries to solve the mystery. A book with a lot of humour in it.

**Christopher Priest:** Prestige

A suspenseful and gripping story of British stage magicians. A young man unexpectedly finds out that he is a descendant of one of the magicians, and the reader follows his journey of reading their old diaries, learning of their lives, secrets and how it directly affects him.

**Aron Ralston** : 127 Hours : Between A Rock and a Hard Place

In 2003, Aron Ralston had a climbing accident whilst hiking alone in Utah. To save his life he had to amputate his own arm and wrist. This is the true story of his accident and rehabilitation. Also read Joe Simpson : Touching the Void

**Lucy Ribchester** : The Hourglass Factory

Set in 1912, a young journalist, Frankie, gets mixed up in the worlds of circuses and suffragettes when she tries to uncover the disappearance of acrobat Ebony Diamond. A good adventure story, full of twists, murder and mayhem.

**Curtis Sittenfeld :** Sisterland

It tells of identical twins, Kate and Violet, who share a hidden gift but whose lives are set on diverging paths. One day Violet ignites a media storm by predicting a major earthquake in the St Louis area where they live…

**Tom Rob Smith:** Farm

Thriller in which a man is torn between different stories told to him by his parents. Daniel's father claims his mother is mentally ill, while she insists she has uncovered a terrible conspiracy surrounding their new home, an isolated farm in Sweden. Daniel take matters into his own hands, travelling to Sweden in the hope of establishing the truth.

**Alexander Solzhenitsyn**: One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch

Based on the author’s own experiences, this tells of an ordinary day in the life of a prisoner in Stalin's Gulag.

**Muriel Spark:** The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

The story of the relationships between an unconventional teacher and her pupils at a girls-only school in Edinburgh in the 1930s.

**Deirdre Sullivan:** Needlework

A powerful and heartbreaking story of a young woman trying to make sense of life and her place in it after she and her mother leave their abusive family home.

**Louise Welsh:** Tamburlaine Must Die

##### The story begins in May 1593 when playwright and poet Christopher Marlowe is summoned to appear before the Privy Council, accused of being an atheist and recruiting others to his cause.

##### **Carlos Ruis Zafon:** Shadow of the Wind

When a young lad, Daniel, selects ‘Shadow of the Wind’ from the Cemetery of Forgotten Books, he becomes obsessed by its author, Julian Carax. Someone seems to be burning Carax’s books and as Daniel tries to find out why, he puts himself in danger. Set in Barcelona after the Spanish Civil War, this is a memorable and complex book.

**Markus Zusak**: The Book Thief

A book about death, told from the viewpoint of Leisel and set in Germany in the late 1930s. -------------------------------------------------

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS:**

**Classics :** Chinua Achebe- **Home and Exile;** Charles Dickens; Hermann Melville – **Moby Dick; Stephen King – Misery** and **Bag of Bones;** Erich Maria Remarque **– All Quiet on the Western Front**

**Scottish interest** (author / setting): Kate Atkinson, Iain Banks, Allan Bisset, Anne Donovan, Peter May, Maggie O’Farrell, Ian Rankin, James Robertson

**General interest**: Jay Asher, Margaret Atwood, William Boyd, Kevin Brooks, Sebastian Faulks, John Fowles, Daniel Handler, Robert Harris, Khaled Hosseini, Kazuo Ishiguro, Claire Kendal, Stieg Larsson, Andrea Levy, Cormac McCarthy, James Meek, James Patterson, Marcus Sedwick, Bernard Schlink, Sarah Waters

**Short Stories**: Sarah Hall, Shirley Jackson, Kelly Link, Alice Munro, Edgar Allan Poe, E. Annie Proulx

**TV/Film tie-in:** Yann Martel - **Life of Pi;** Lionel Shriver - **We Need To Talk About Kevin;** James Dashner - **The Maze Runne**r**;** Veronica Roth – **Insurgent** ; **Divergent** and **Allegiant ;** John Green – **Paper Towns;** Mary Shelley – **Frankenstein;** Emma Donoghue – **Room**; M.L. Stedman - **The Light Between Oceans;** M.R. Carey- **The Girl With All the Gifts**