What are three takeaways after reading it?

First of all, I feel it’s important to understand why the Church teaches what she does, and reading the Catechism has helped me to being understanding. One of the appeals of Catholicism to me over the years has been the logical consistency behind and through the teachings of the Church. Reading the Catechism has reinforced that sense of reasoned significance for me.

Another takeaway was the unexpected depth of the teachings of the Catechism. So, for example, Faith, Hope and Charity are aspects of the first of the Ten Commandments. With regard to Faith, St. Paul taught the obedience of faith as our first obligation and the Catechism teaches that we need to nourish and protect our faith with prudence and vigilance. Thus, “You shall worship the Lord your God.”

A third takeaway would be an appreciation of how sacramental prayer is at the heart of our relationship with Jesus Christ. For instance, the conversion of heart exemplified by prophets like Elijah in the Hebraic Covenant, a foreshadowing of the Incarnate and Resurrected Word of God. Paragraph 2583 of the Catechism reads, “After Elijah had learned mercy during his retreat at Wadi Cherith, he teaches the widow of Zarephath to believe in the Word of God and confirms her faith by his urgent prayer – God brings the widow’s child back to life.”

Did reading it give you a better insight into the Church’s teachings? If so, in what ways? Would you recommend it for reading?

Yes. At the center of the Gospel, at the core of the Catechism of Holy Mother Church, is Christ’s redeeming Mercy and Love. St. John of the Cross, cited frequently in the Catechism, likens a person’s soul to a window. God’s presence and grace is likened to the ray of sunlight that may or may not shine through that window, or soul. “The extent of illumination is not dependent on the ray of sunlight, but the window,” writes St. John. He continues, “If the window is clean and pure, the sunlight will so transform and illuminate it that to all appearances the window will be identical to the ray of sunlight and shine just as the sun’s ray.” St. John concludes, “A soul makes room for God by wiping away all the smudges and smears…by uniting it’s will to God’s will.” The Catechism helps us purify our souls and reflect God’s loving and merciful grace so that others may reflect God’s brilliance too.