



The Innocence of Father Brown

G. K. Chesterton (1874 - 1936)

Read by:	Brian Roberg	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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Genre:	Mystery & Detective Fiction		

The Innocence of Father Brown is a collection of twelve short stories by G. K. Chesterton featuring the character of Father Brown, a short, stocky Roman Catholic priest who spends much of his time sleuthing about and solving crimes and mysteries using his intuition and understanding of human nature and especially evil. The character of Father Brown was loosely based on a parish priest in Bradford, Father John O'Connor, and is portrayed in shapeless clothes with a large umbrella and a bicycle. In a way, he is a counterpoint to the eccentric and super rational Sherlock Holmes character of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

The stories in the *Innocence of Father Brown* were originally published by *The Story-Teller* in England and the *Saturday Evening Post* in America before release in book form in 1911. Chesterton produced four additional Father Brown collections: *The Wisdom of Father Brown* (1914), *The Incredulity of Father Brown* (1926), *The Secret of Father Brown* (1927) and *The Scandal of Father Brown* (1935). The stories have often been adapted for film, radio and television, most notably in *Father Brown, Detective* (1934) starring Walter Connolly, *Father Brown* (1954) starring Alec Guinness, and most recently the popular Father Brown series of ten episodes on BBC starring Mark Williams.

Gilbert Keith “G. K.” Chesterton (May 29, 1874 – June 14, 1936) was an English writer who addressed a wide array of subjects. His non-fiction work includes philosophy, biography, journalism, history, literary and art criticism, and Christian apologetics. His creative work includes poetry, plays, and fiction. He is best known for his Father Brown series of detective stories, his novel *The Man Who was Thursday*, his biographies of Charles Dickens and Thomas Aquinas, and his Christian apologetics *Orthodoxy* and *The Everlasting Man*. His style is characterized by frequent use of adages, proverbs, and allegory, and a penchant for paradox. His prodigious output includes 80 books, 200 short stories, several hundred poems, several plays and 4,000 essays. In the 1930's he gave a series of about 40 talks on BBC Radio which were immensely popular.

He was born in London, educated at St. Paul's School and attended the Slade School of Art and University College but did not complete a degree. He worked in publishing and became a freelance journalist and critic, and was fond of engaging in public debates with friends such as H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell, and especially George Bernard Shaw, with whom he had a congenial friendship in spite of their differences, and who remembered him as “a colossal genius”. Baptized an Anglican and raised Unitarian, he converted to Catholicism in 1922. His influence was well described in the homily given at his funeral: “All of this generation has grown up under Chesterton's influence so completely that we do not even know when we are thinking Chesterton”.