

Desire and Denial: Celibacy and the Church



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Here is a book that confronts the fundamentals of Christian history, not only movingly capturing the powerful interplay between culture and religion, but dealing fully and frankly with the most challenging of all issues -- the permissible limits of sexuality within the Roman Catholic priesthood and sisterhood. For the first time, the question of whether celibacy is compatible

with human intimacy and sexual fulfillment is faced honestly and without embarrassment. Is celibacy rooted in an antisexual asceticism that can be emotionally repressive? How far can Pope John Paul II justifiably claim that celibacy represents the highest form of Christian perfection?

Above all, is the dichotomy between sexuality and spirituality not only wrong but destructive?

Desire and Denial is a compassionate account of the mystical forces that draw men and women to religious life and of the equally powerful human forces that make them ultimately doubt their calling. Here, through the lives of Father Breslin, Father Philippe, and Andrew, the seminarian, we penetrate the seminary walls to be caught up in rituals rooted in medieval lore and moments of profound spirituality that are not of this world. Through the eyes of Sister Victoria and Sister Clare the fears, dreams, and troubled longings of convent life assume a mesmeric power.

Desire and Denial is a story of choice, the product of three full years of methodical research. Gordon Thomas presents the feelings and thoughts of his nuns and priests with immediacy, emotional depth, and a true understanding of their sensitivity that is shattering in its impact. Through their intimately portrayed lives comes

a vivid portrait of a church battling to preserve its past yet trying to guarantee its future.

While its social significance will provoke wide controversy, *Desire and Denial* is at the same time an unforgettable and deeply affecting love story.

作者介绍:

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