



After Asceticism: Sex, Prayer and Deviant Priests

Patrick Guinan (Guynan)

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After Asceticism provides a close up look at the clergy sex abuse crisis still rocking the Catholic Church. The first study of its kind, it shows how the infiltration of therapeutic psychology on the training and lifestyles of clergy spawned a cavalier attitude in many priests and bishops about sex and prayer, causing the collapse of ascetical discipline with its devastating effects in the sex abuse crisis. Chapters probe the findings of the John Jay Report on clerical sexual misconduct; that sexual misconduct by priests was rare in the first half of the twentieth century because of the dedication to ascetical discipline; why the volumes of past research on the psychology of priests failed to predict the sexual crisis; whether homosexual priests can remain chaste. After Asceticism moves beyond criticism to an eye-opening explanation on how self-denial, fasting, and religious devotion work together to bolster attitudes and behavior for complete sexual abstinence. After Asceticism draws the connection between the ancient ideas about sex, prayer, and spiritual friendship with modern scientific research on the biology of fasting and the psychology of hope. It warns, however, that as society becomes more deeply immersed in pagan sexuality, the Catholic Church will remain mired in sexual crisis absent a return to its ascetical tradition.

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