



The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality

By Ronald Rolheiser

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Channeling the deep, mysterious desires of our hearts, Ronald Rolheiser leads readers from restlessness to peace, showing a contemporary path to authentic and healthy spiritual life.

In *The Holy Longing*, Ronald Rolheiser probes the question “What is spirituality?”, cutting through the misunderstanding and confusion that can often surround this subject with his trademark clarity. Using examples and stories relevant for today, and with great sensitivity to modern challenges to religious faith, he explains the essentials of spiritual life, including the importance of community worship, the imperatives surrounding social action, and the centrality of the Incarnation, to outline a Christian spirituality that reflects the yearning and search for meaning at the core of the human experience.

Essential reading for anyone seeking to understand what Christian spirituality means and how to apply it to their own lives, *The Holy Longing* translates the universal struggle for love and integration of spirit into a language accessible to all, explaining God and the Church for a world that more often than not doubts the credibility of both.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"Long before we do anything explicitly religious at all, we have to do something about the fire that burns within us," writes Ronald Rolheiser. "What we do with that fire, how we channel it, is our spirituality." From the opening chapter, where Rolheiser eloquently compares the burning spiritual fire of Mother Teresa, Janice Joplin, and Princess Diana, readers will be fully engaged in a unique and altogether fascinating discussion of Christian spirituality.

As a regular columnist for the *Catholic Herald*, Rolheiser has clearly honed his writing skills. Like an eloquent marriage counselor, he deftly tries to reconcile the rift between contemporary spirituality and Christianity. For example, he points to the four pillars that support a healthy marriage of Christianity and spirituality, which are "Private prayer and private morality. Social justice. Mellow ness of heart and spirit. Community as a constitutive element of true worship." Building upon these pillars, Rolheiser delves into the more challenging marital tensions with chapters such as "Christ as the Basis for Christian Spirituality" and a "Spirituality of Sexuality." This is an excellent book for any Christian who has longs to create a more holy and lasting spiritual union. --Gail Hudson

From Publishers Weekly

"Spirituality is about what we do with our unrest... [it] is about what we do with that incurable desire, the madness that comes from the gods, within us." Rolheiser (*Restless Heart*) contends that the late 20th century is marked by a kind of spiritual restlessness, even though the spiritual landscape is littered with a variety of "spiritualities." He argues that there is richness in such spiritual diversity and plurality, but that many seekers lack direction in their spiritual search. Rolheiser develops a Christian spirituality that he believes offers some definite direction for seekers. At the heart of a healthy Christian spiritual life, he says, there must be four essentials: "private prayer and private morality; social justice; mellow ness of heart and spirit; and community as a constitutive element of true worship." At the base of Christian spirituality, he notes, is the Incarnation of God in human flesh. If Christians can focus on the embodied character of their theology, then the four essentials of Christian spirituality become easier to embrace. In the latter half of the book, Rolheiser develops sketches of a spirituality of community (ecclesiology), a spirituality of sexuality and a spirituality of justice and peacemaking. We can sustain ourselves in the spiritual life, he notes, by being a mystic, sinning bravely, gathering ritually around the Word and breaking the bread, and worshipping and serving the right God. Rolheiser's program for Christian spirituality is reminiscent of the best work of Henri Nouwen and Daniel Berrigan. (July)

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From Library Journal

This book tries to be a guidebook of sorts for those who have found Christianity less than palatable. Rolheiser, a popular columnist for the *Catholic Herald* and author of several books (e.g., *Against an Infinite Horizon*, Crossroad, 1996), teaches the meaning of Christian spirituality and how to apply it. He tackles belief in the Incarnation, community worship, social action, and sustaining spirituality in daily life, using formidable substance, good sense, and compelling anecdotes to reach the everyday person. Though aimed at Christians, Rolheiser's spiritual lessons are stripped to their essentials with sensitivity to various traditions. Public libraries staying current in contemporary spirituality will want to add this title, as will those aiming to keep their shelves stocked with popular religious dialog. ALeroy Hommerding, Citrus Cty. Lib. Syst., Inverness, FL

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