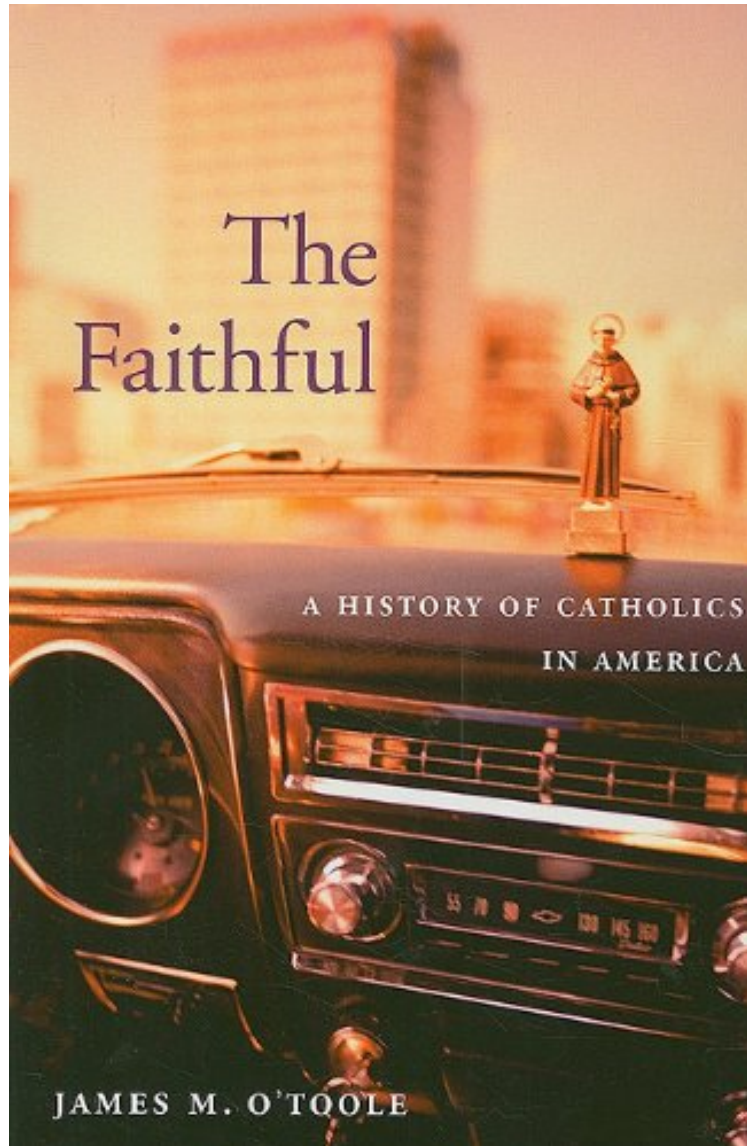


The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America

James M. O'Toole

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James M. O'Toole : The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Both insightful and limited By K. Crawford As a convert to Catholicism going on 20 years, having a history of the American Church laid out before me filled in a lot of blanks for me and some of the odd vestiges of the Church now make more sense. That said, from my other research I know that much was left out and I'm left wondering how much of that was bias in trying to tell a narrative to the author's liking

or just the difficulties of trying to write a popular book without getting bogged down in the minutia.³ of 3 people found the following review helpful. Mostly engaging history of Catholic laity By Susan C. Clopton O'Toole is mostly clear and engaging, but the way he strings together anecdotes, correspondence, and statistics sometimes feel random. Some glaring omissions: People of color hardly warrant more than a paragraph mention, until the final chapter, which condescendingly explains that the future Catholic of the US is "a woman named Maria". There is proportionately much more information about the northeast than the south or west. The book is statistics heavy, which readers might see as either a feature or a bug. Despite these hesitations, I would say O'Toole's book draws attention to interesting trends in US-ian Catholicism: the changing relationship of the priests and the laity, the decline in popularity of Confession and the rise in popularity of receiving the Eucharist, the Church's beginnings in the colonies as largely priestless and led by the laity, to the height of clerical power, to the reality at the beginning of this century--fewer and fewer priests and sisters are present to minister to US Catholics, so once again, the laity are assuming many important responsibilities in the parish. Good discussion also of Catholic social action, and movements like Voice of the Faithful, Call to Action, and Catholic Worker. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Francisco Penela Great book.

Shaken by the ongoing clergy sexual abuse scandal, and challenged from within by social and theological division, Catholics in America are at a crossroads. But is today's situation unique? And where will Catholicism go from here? With the belief that we understand our present by studying our past, James O'Toole offers a bold and panoramic history of the American Catholic laity. O'Toole tells the story of this ancient church from the perspective of ordinary Americans, the lay believers who have kept their faith despite persecution from without and clergy abuse from within. It is an epic tale, from the first settlements of Catholics in the colonies to the turmoil of the scandal-ridden present, and through the church's many American incarnations in between. We see Catholics' complex relationship to Rome and to their own American nation. O'Toole brings to life both the grand sweep of institutional change and the daily practice that sustained believers. The Faithful pays particular attention to the intricacies of prayer and ritual the ways men and women have found to express their faith as Catholics over the centuries. With an intimate knowledge of the dilemmas and hopes of today's church, O'Toole presents a new vision and offers a glimpse into the possible future of the church and its parishioners. Moving past the pulpit and into the pews, The Faithful is an unmatched look at the American Catholic laity. Today's Catholics will find much to educate and inspire them in these pages, and non-Catholics will gain a newfound understanding of their religious brethren.

From Publishers Weekly Recent studies of the Roman Catholic Church in America have brought into focus the emergence of Catholics into mainstream culture and the colorful particularities of the faith in various parish neighborhoods. O'Toole, a historian at Boston College, follows this trend of telling the story from below, but begins his narrative from the birth of the nation in the 1770s. For many, the biggest revelation in the book will be O'Toole's designation of the colonial church as priestless. While that was not entirely the case a handful of priests did serve the small number of Catholics who had settled here many did not see a priest more than once a year. As Catholics today are aware, the church currently faces a similar priest shortage. For readers who are familiar with the church, the primary joy of this book will be found in checking their own experiences against those described by O'Toole. Still, the genial style of writing together with a plentiful amount of fascinating tidbits will keep all but the most jaded expert going. (Apr.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. The Faithful is a truly original and mature work that gives us a rich history of American Catholics. There is simply no comparable book. (David O'Brien, Holy Cross) An ambitious narrative history of American Catholicism, written with great historical range and attention to lived experience. It has profound contemporary resonance. This courageous book, unafraid to explore the story's darker moments, is destined to become the new standard text on American Catholicism. (Robert Orsi, Northwestern University) Solidly researched, engagingly told and insightfully interpreted, The Faithful is the first comprehensive history of lay Catholic prayer, politics and creative fidelity to church teaching, even in times of crisis such as the present. It could not come at a better time, as American Catholics struggle to reclaim a legacy of moral leadership and stalwart service to the nation. (R. Scott Appleby, University of Notre Dame) O'Toole surveys the lay Catholic experience in America with remarkable breadth and mastery. Lively and accessible, this book provides a valuable introduction to American Catholic history. (Leslie Tentler, Catholic University of America) O'Toole's history, focusing especially on personal narratives, makes for captivating reading... A history worth reading. (Kirkus s 2008-02-15) For readers who are familiar with the church, the primary joy of this book will be found in checking their own experiences against those described by O'Toole. Still, the genial style of writing together with a plentiful amount of fascinating tidbits will keep all but the most jaded expert going. (Publishers Weekly 2008-02-11) O'Toole deftly tells the history of lay Catholics in America. Beginning with the priestless church of the Colonial period, he goes on to explore the church in the democratic republic, the immigrant church, the church of Catholic Action, the church of Vatican II, and the church in the 21st century. (Augustine J. Curley Library Journal 2008-03-15) Especially timely... This is not so much a history as, in this case, a penetrating, deftly worked summary of organizational and

liturgical developments, formal and informal, in the American Catholic Church with emphasis on the role and influence of the laity. (Katherine A. Powers Boston Globe 2008-04-20)O'Toole crams an array of stories, profiles and statistics into his book that will make it a welcome addition to the shelf of anyone interested in the country's religious culture. His focus is on how the relationship between rank-and-file Catholics and the church has changed since the country's colonial era...O'Toole's prodigious research and engaging writing ensure that *The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America* will be the authoritative work on this subject for quite some time. (Claude R. Marx St. Petersburg Times 2008-04-25)An intriguing book, brimming with wisdom. It studies the evolution of U.S. Catholicism by dividing it into a half-dozen historic segments, from the Colonial "priestless church" to the muscular, immigrant-fed church a century ago, to the reformist, post-Vatican II church and beyond. (Rich Barlow Boston Globe 2008-05-07)[O'Toole] relies on a wide range of source material, writes in vivid detail and, above all, pays a great deal of attention to religious practice and ritual. It is this last that distinguishes *The Faithful* from previously published histories of American Catholicism...He is certainly not the first to write Catholic history from the perspective of the people in the pews. But it is true that his narrative eschews, to a much greater extent than other surveys, expositions of ideological or political conflict among the church hierarchy. Instead, he frames his book in a manner designed to capture the myriad ways in which ordinary American Catholics have lived, prayed and practiced their faith...It is the Catholic faithful more broadly who stand to gain the most insight from reading this book...[It] deserves a wide readership. (Kathleen Cummings America 2008-09-15)[A] splendid new history of Catholics in the United States. (Rodger Van Allen Commonweal 2008-09-12)About the AuthorJames M. O'Toole is Clough Millennium Professor of History, Boston College.