



The Last Catholic in America

John R. Powers, Amy Welborn (Editor), Andrew M. Greeley (Introduction)

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“It is fast-moving and often downright funny.”—*New York Times*

“He has recaptured childish innocence and presented it with adult enlightenment—plus a touch of cynicism—yet never with irreverence.”

—*Book-of-the-Month Club News*

First confession and its terrors. Eighty-four first graders in a classroom ruled by just one nun. The agony and the ecstasy of Lent. The dubious honor of being declared the worst altar server ever. Dinah Shore and the Blessed Virgin haunting your dreams. This is Eddie Ryan’s world as he grows up in the intensely Catholic world of South-Side Chicago’s St. Bastion’s parish in the 1950s. In this classic coming-of-age novel, John Powers draws readers into Eddie Ryan’s world with deep affection and bittersweet humor.

The Last Catholic in America Details

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Author : John R. Powers , Amy Welborn (Editor) , Andrew M. Greeley (Introduction)

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Download and Read Free Online The Last Catholic in America John R. Powers , Amy Welborn (Editor) , Andrew M. Greeley (Introduction)

From Reader Review The Last Catholic in America for online ebook

Janis says

Powers' fictionalized account of growing up -- as I did -- as a baby-boomer south-side Chicago Catholic certainly captures some moments (the "Confession" chapter nails it!) but misses something in overall cohesiveness.

Marlyn says

My son just turned 39 and I read this book when he was 13 years old and in a hospital bed in another room, he had perthes disease and had to stay immobile. I was reading this book which took me back to my traumatic childhood catholic education and I laughed so hard that my son was calling to me to ask what was going on! What was going on was memories in vivid detail.

Bonnie says

I grew up a Catholic and went to Catholic schools in the Chicago suburbs. My boyfriend also grew up Catholic and raved about how funny this book was and said I just had to read it.

Like another reader, "I couldn't wait to finish this book, hoping it would get better.....it didn't. It is an ok book but not great".

The nuns when I grew up were Stalinists to put it mildly. I laughed sometimes but not that often. I think a boy and the "dirty book" thing, etc. would relate more to a boy than a girl.

It did bring back some memories---the Baltimore Catechism, practicing for First Holy Communion, mission fund raising, etc. but I think boys that went to Catholic school would relate more.

Cassandra says

So sweetly sadly nostalgic, I didn't want it to end and the sadness I would have to feel with it. Such a funny relatable story of the Catholic school experience.

Sandy Rovas says

If you went to Catholic School or even Catechism in the 50s & 60s, perhaps int the early 70's - you'll be laughing. If you're younger, you'll get to see your parent's experience of school. I've read this a couple of

times

booklady says

This is the first in the ten or more books I've read from the Loyola Classics series which I have **not** enjoyed. Ironically, this novel is supposed to be a comedy. Although fiction, Powers' book is based on the South-Side Chicago Catholic environment in which the author grew up. Each chapter is a short story unto itself complete with a clever title and deadpan recall of 1950's boyhood. The parish priests and nuns are mostly brutal, only vying each other in terms of their capacity for cruelty. But then most of the adults in Powers' world are at best indifferent to children. I've tried but failed to see the humor in this book. Oh well...

The trouble I'm having with this book is I *know* it's supposed to be funny and yet I'm not laughing. Mostly I just feel maternal toward the author; I wish the young John Powers could have known compassion and adult affection/attention. I do see shades of my own childhood in the book but I also wonder how I missed becoming so cynical. And yet, if the stories are to be believed as accurate without exaggeration or embellishment, then perhaps I too might have taken that path.

Mary! says

A hysterically funny memoir of growing up Catholic in Chicago, this is one of my mother's absolute favorite novels. Even though I wasn't raised Catholic, it was still a warm-hearted, bittersweet recollection of being young and being sure that the world was indeed black and white.

Catie says

If you're Catholic or went to Catholic school, this is worth reading.

Jim says

Funny book about the Catholic Church in Chicago. It reads well, and a lot of the stories are fun, but you get the feeling you are in the hands of a lapsed Catholic who holds a grudge against the church. There always seems a bitter edge to the humor. I recommend the book, but only as an enjoyable read. It's not a fair or accurate description of what it's like to grow up Catholic.

Dave Mevis says

As a public school kid from the suburbs of Chicago in the 70's, this book gave me a peek at what life was like in the Catholic elementary schools of Chicago. I think those who went to Catholic school would laugh

along with the author's recollections. A humorous, light read. Not exactly sure what the title has to do with the novel, nor am I sure why the last chapter was included at all. Other than that, an enjoyable, quick read.

Mary Kelly says

Great for the whole family but especially for those of us of a "certain age".

Cynthia says

I had read this book many years ago and had forgotten how funny it was. I related to many of the stories(having been raised Catholic), but I'm sure that others would enjoy it, too.

Greg says

My dad gave me a copy of this book almost 35 years ago, I lost that copy, but now I have 3 others. I re read these every few years.

Pete Dematteo says

i thought this book was hysterical. stifled creativity, oppressive regimentation, nasty nuns and priests, this was written before the church was in real trouble. perhaps readers should have taken this more seriously back in the '70's. Unreal!

Sue says

Pretty funny - especially if you went to Catholic schools in the 50's and 60's and actually knew some of those nuns!
