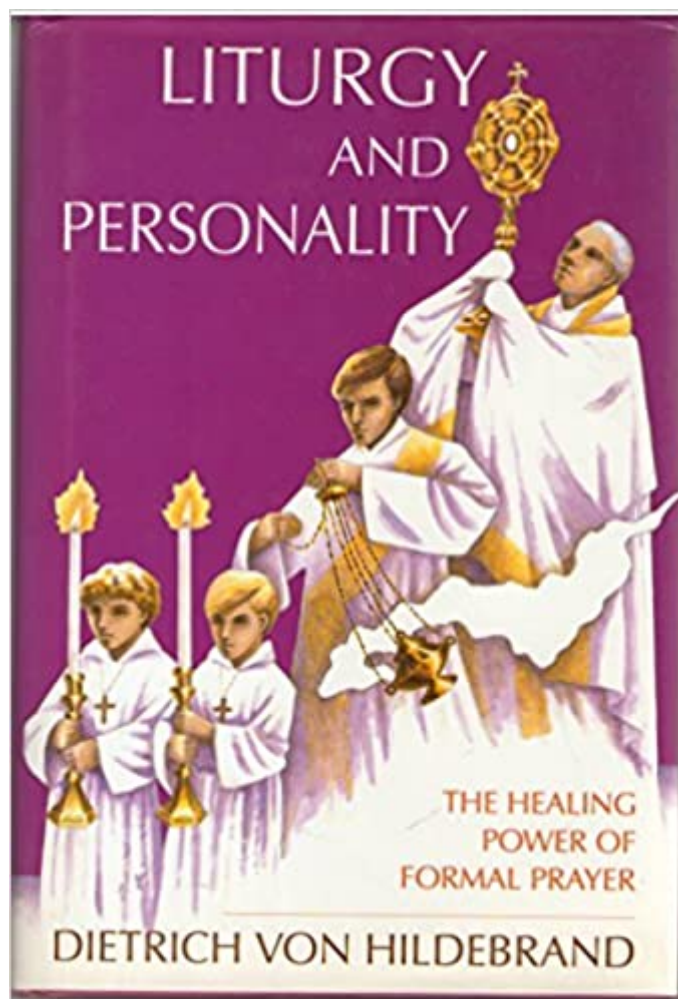


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Liturgy And Personality: The Healing Power Of Formal Prayer



Synopsis

1992 Copyright: by Dietrich Von Hildebrand - 165 pages.

Book Information

Hardcover: 165 pages

Publisher: Sophia Inst Pr (February 1993)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0918477131

ISBN-13: 978-0918477132

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 6 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,066,678 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #99 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Psychology & Christianity #2362 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Church Institutions & Organizations #7882 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Worship & Devotion > Devotionals

Customer Reviews

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I am still reading through this book. It is one that will continue to offer new insights with each reading. I am very pleased with the material. Am hoping to recognize myself described somewhat in the descriptions.

Professor von Hildebrand argues that certain virtues will be absorbed by those who attend mass regularly, virtues that are indispensable for any individual who wishes to realize his or her full potential as a human being. First comes the sense of being part of a community rather than an isolated self. Attending mass also imprints upon the person a spirit of reverence, develops one's ability to respond to value, and inspires in the soul a quality of awakedness not found in the "average" person. Mass imbues the mind with a specific sense for the structure and dramatic rhythm of being (of preparation, ascension fulfillment, and decline), which von Hildebrand calls *discretio*. Above all, it fosters in the individual what von Hildebrand considers "one of the deepest and essential marks of man as a spiritual person"--a sense of the continuity of life. The explorations and analyses of these aspects of the human personality are richly rewarding to read. Liturgy and

Personality asserts that the mass will develop these qualities and values in the person who attends to it with sensitivity. The book should be read with another book on the mass that serendipitously illustrates that what von Hildebrand states in theory is true in fact--Rosemary Lunardini's *The Mass in My Life: Cries of the Heart in the Prayers of the Mass*. Lunardini's book tells the story of a Catholic laywoman's lifelong experience of the mass (she recaptures the child's sense of awe at her first communion, traces out in her reflections what the mass has meant to her as a teenager, as a new bride, as a mother and grandmother, while simultaneously illuminating the transforming power of the prayers of the mass and how they affected her at various stages of her life). The author's personal commentary on the mass manifests within it in a personal way all of the virtues that Von Hildebrand describes in the abstract. The two books should be sold as a set.

It might seem that "formal" prayer would result in a stifling intellectualism that could not really bring about a radical healing and wholeness to the human person, or would neglect the dimension of the healing of emotions. Hildebrand, philosopher-theologian extraordinaire, author of *Transformation in Christ*, *The New Tower of Babel*, *The Art of Living*, *In Defense of Purity*, *The Heart: Source of Christian Affectivity*, etcetera, leads the reader into the art of ancient worship in the Liturgy, and into the Heart of God where He can transform one's heart unto a willingness and conformity to the will of God, unto a knowing of oneself via relationship with God, and toward a joy linked to the Beatific vision. The man whose prayer life is "formal" is drawn by God through the prayer of the Church, and could only come to be softened and changed at his center, to desire the Gospel life, to gain a new personalized compassion for all the people of God, whose transformed heart makes him a new creation in Christ; the worshipper unfamiliar with "formal" prayer, through learning to be in conformity with the Church, will enter and experience the deepest awe and reverence of the Sacrifice of the Mass as the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and come to experience the very holiness of God.

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