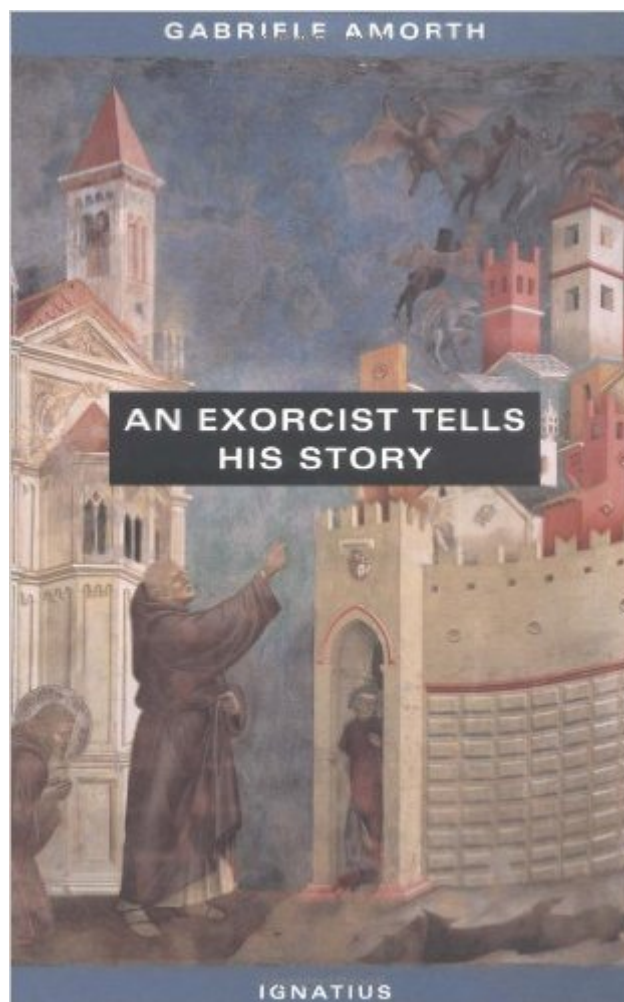


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An Exorcist Tells His Story



Synopsis

In this powerful book, the renowned exorcist of Rome tells of his many experiences in his ministry as an exorcist doing battle with Satan to relieve the great suffering of people in the grip of evil. The importance of the ministry to "expel demons" is clearly seen in the Gospels, from the actions of the Apostles, and from Church history. Fr. Amorth allows the reader to witness the activities of the exorcist, to experience what an exorcist sees and does. He also reveals how little modern science, psychology, and medicine can do to help those under Satan's influence, and that only the power of Christ can release them from this kind of mental, spiritual or physical suffering. An Exorcist Tells His Story has been a European best-seller that has gone through numerous printings and editions. No other book today so thoroughly and concisely discusses the topic of exorcism.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Fr. Gabriele Amorth's revealing portrait of demonic possession and exorcism casts detailed, spiritual light on this dark area of inquiry which is fraught--more often than not--with controversy and misunderstanding. It also supplements other pertinent texts such as Father Malachi Martin's classic study *HOSTAGE TO THE DEVIL*, and Bob Larson's *IN THE NAME OF SATAN*. Fr. Amorth covers critical ground by exposing the dangers of magic and sorcery (namely spells, hexes, incantations and curses) and their ability to adversely effect a recipient individual psychologically, physically, and spiritually, even to the point of inducing demonic possession. Conversely, he details the various remedies that the Church offers to the afflicted--in the form of Sacramentals--such as blessed oil,

water, and salt, that can supplement the solemn rite of exorcism, ensuring an easier liberation from the fetters of and shackles to the Devil. He also examines those tell-tale, mental and physical signs (he calls them 'negativities') that often confirm the presence of a possessing demon. Attention is also paid to the numerous forms of bizarre behaviour that the unfortunate victims of possession exhibit--both prior to and during an exorcism--and how these capital signs authenticate the source of their existential torment as evil spirit, and not merely psychophysical malady as the genesis. The author effectively concludes the book with a look at the new attitude (pastoral directives) of Vatican II toward possession, demons and--as the good Father says--'...the influence that they can exert on single individuals, on communities, on entire societies, or on events...(as)...very important...In the final analysis, Fr. Amorth's objective, straight-forward presentation of the complexities of demonic possession and exorcism facilitates a terra firma of understanding--partially unravelling the ageless mystery of good versus evil--thereby, providing a solid addition to anyone's private library on the topic.

C.S. Lewis said there are two mistakes people usually make when it comes to the devil: one is not to believe in him at all; the other is to believe in him too much. According to Father Amorth, only priests have the gift of exorcism. The problem, he points out, is that there are virtually no priests left in the Catholic Church who believe in demons or exorcisms. That's the first danger pointed out by C.S. Lewis. Even Ignatius Press, a Catholic publisher, apparently could not find a Catholic priest who believed in exorcisms because the foreword is written (reluctantly) by a priest who can only say, "I have difficulties with Fr. Amorth's [sic.] approach." He then closes his foreword with the warning, "This book needs to be read with care but with an open mind." Not much of a recommendation as forewords go. It may be that the priest writing the foreword believes in the devil, but just believes there are better ways of dealing with the devil. He doesn't say what it is about Fr. Amorth's approach that bothers him. He does say, however, "I recognize in this book the account of an intelligent and dedicated pastor who has had the courage to go where most of us fear to tread." Perhaps some caution in reading the book is wise--not that you will go wrong by reading it, but because the other peril with the devil is believing in him too much. The more some people read about demons, the more they see them . . . in everything that goes wrong. They start to live in fear, and if the devil has one great power over us, I suspect fear is his greatest weapon. If you're the type of person who reads a family medical guide and says, "Oh, I have that. I've felt that," and then reads about the next illness and says, "Oh, I might have that, too," then this isn't the book for you. Though Father Amorth doesn't describe the rites of exorcism--since they can only be performed by

priests--he does offer some efficacious prayers for deliverance in an appendix and says that "Jesus gave the power to expel demons to all those who believe in him and act in his name." I'm not sure what the distinction is between exorcism and expelling, and Father Amorth doesn't clarify the matter. What Fr. Amorth does provide is numerous first-hand encounters with demonic possession. These provide examples that can help one understand the symptoms of possession in order to differentiate it from things that might simply be mental illness. And, as the foreword indicates, Fr. Amorth gives an intelligent account. This is not the account of some faith healer who sees demons under every doily. He's careful to point out that most people need psychologists, not exorcists, and that, even after an exorcism, many people still need a psychologist to deal with the trauma of their lives. Therefore, he usually works as a team member with a psychologist. He's careful not to overstep his area of expertise. He's not the type who goes around casting out "demons of drunkenness," "demons of homosexuality," and "demons of deafness" every time he runs up against someone with a problem. Some of the events he describes, however, go clearly beyond anything psychology can explain or deal with. Behavior can always be explained psychologically, but Fr. Amorth describes physical events that go beyond behavior or physical illness. What do you make of someone, for example, who vomits up a talisman in the middle of an exorcism? You could speculate that he wasn't careful enough when he was eating his Cracker Jacks the night before. But that wouldn't explain the levitation that occurred during the exorcism . . . just before the talisman came up.

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