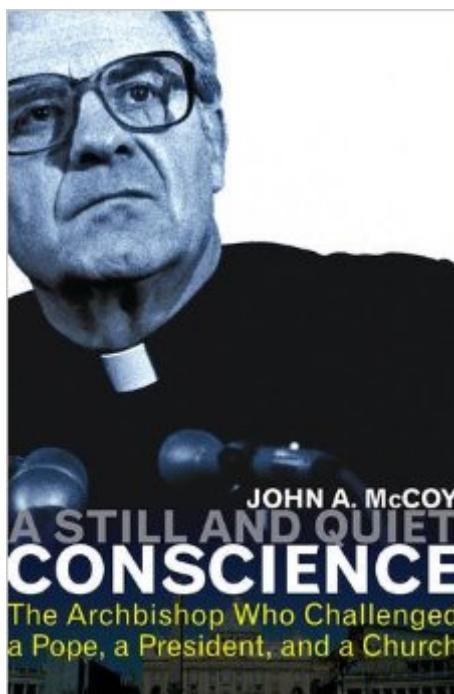


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A Still And Quiet Conscience: The Archbishop Who Challenged A Pope, A President, And A Church



Synopsis

Through the life of a courageous bishop, an absorbing look at the inner workings of the American Catholic Church, how we got here, and how it could be different. Pope Francis has spoken of his desire for pastoral bishops-shepherds who have "the smell of the sheep." The story of Raymond G. Hunthausen, archbishop of Seattle from 1975-1991, is about a bishop who epitomized this style-and the price he paid. The quintessential "Vatican II bishop," Hunthausen embraced the spirit of renewal, reaching out to the laity, women, and those on the margins. A courageous witness for peace, he earned national attention when he became the first American bishop to urge tax resistance as a protest against preparations for nuclear war. In doing so, he ran against the Cold War policies of the Reagan Administration. But he also came into conflict with Pope John Paul II's desire to reshape the American episcopacy. This fascinating biography not only recounts a critical turning point for the American Catholic church; it rekindles the vision of a more inclusive, prophetic, and compassionate church as "people of God."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a compelling book. It reveals the courage of a human being who lived a life that embodied the Holy Spirit in times of ease and joy and times of deep pain, doubt and suffering. Archbishop Hunthausen is a living example of deep embodiment of Jesus teaching. This book reveals the well known and well documented political dynamics of the power structure of the Roman Catholic Church; there is not a lot new here in that regard. What is revealed is how a man who deeply

loved/loves his church tried mightily to stay in relationship with those who worked tirelessly to marginalize him. I began reading the book wondering how the book would handle the sexual abuse crisis. I was surprised to read the open acknowledgement that the behavior of abusing priests when he was Bishop of Helena was misunderstood as an aspect of their problems with alcohol. I was more surprised to learn that Archbishop Hunthausen learned from the mistakes of that misunderstanding and asked a County Prosecutor to prosecute an offending priest in the mid 1980's. Remember the full weight of the sexual abuse scandal did not make national headlines until the 2000's. Archbishop Hunthausen deeply respected his people and lived/lives fully the truth of collegiality. As I read the final chapters of the book I was struck by the information that as Cardinal Ratzinger's dogma of a smaller church of 'true believers' obedient to Rome was driving the investigation of the Archbishop, the Western Washington Catholic Church under Raymond G. Hunthausen's leadership was growing in both by numbers of people and financial contributions. So interesting. There are many of us 'cradle Catholics' who outgrew the church that reactively rejected the wisdom of Vatican II. Pope Francis and Archbishop Hunthausen lead us back to some hopefulness that the Catholic Church can one day embody the Holy Spirit in the complexity of an ever changing world.

I just started reading this book and it's excellent. It should be read by every American Catholic and anyone interested in issues of faith and values in the public realm. Based on interviews and private Vatican files, this is the untold, insiders account of how Seattle Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen followed his conscience to oppose nuclear weapons and open the church to the gay community. In response, Hunthausen was targeted by right wingers encouraged by the Reagan Administration and led by a cardinal who later became Pope Benedict. Ironically, Hunthausen was punished for the same humane policies that Benedict's successor, Pope Francis, now embraces. McCoy is a fine historian and superb story teller.

McCoy has written a deeply moving and very readable biography of Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen. As someone who served on the Archdiocesan Womens Commission and on the board of Washington Association of Churches, I remember that painful period well. I highly recommend McCoy's book.

I was a relatively young priest when Rome's incredibly inept 'resolution' of the so called "Hunthausen Problem" was foisted on the Catholic Church in the United States. McCoy's thorough

analysis of this painful and embarrassing chapter in American Church history is an important and excellently written and researched chronicle of this comedy of errors. Raymond Hunthausen now seen through the rear view mirror of the present Pontificate of Pope Francis can now be lauded as a bishop who indeed 'had the smell of his sheep' and was unafraid to lead like Jesus. There is sadness, however, in knowing that the ecclesiastical careers of such sterling individuals such as Fr. Michael Ryan were forever dashed by their unwavering loyalty to this fine man. Fr. Michael Ryan could have become the Archbishop of a number of important sees in the United States - perhaps even San Francisco - thus saving it from the debacle that is presently unfolding there under its present 'shepherd.'

unlike others, I bear now in my hand a copy of this learned and saintly text, an analysis of the great significance of our last great anglo American Archbishop, who practiced poverty and incarnated the truest morality, compassion, peace and following of Jesus to the final consequences. Such as he we may never again see; yet we have this one work which informs our Faith in Jesus fully, which guides us still on the Way of Jesus, which even now serves as a pastoral exhortation not to go soft but courageously to live out the Word of Jesus in all of its fullness, to love the enemy, to receive the stranger at the gate and to grant sanctuary, even without all of the proper papers, to heal the sick, even through obamacare, to visit and to liberate those imprisoned in so many ways, to sell all that you have and give the money to the poor. We see now the beatification of the great saint of the Americas, the Reverend Monsenor Oscar Arnulfo Romero. We soon shall see the beatification of our own great and Blessed Dorothy Day. Within this pantheon of saints we must include as well in recognition of his sanctity and his living out our Faith Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen. It seems the best way to discern our truest saints are to check whoever was most persecuted and scorned by wojo and ratzoA sure sign of integrally living out our Faith truly. A certain sign of the courageous Archbishop Hunthausen, unique and courageously ever faithful to the Gospel. Even now he inspires us to live our Faith with love and strength. Read this holy chronicle of his holy life. For we may not see the likes of him again.

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