



The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist

By Matt Baglio

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The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist By Matt Baglio

The inspiration for the film starring Anthony Hopkins, journalist Matt Baglio uses the astonishing story of one American priest's training as an exorcist to reveal that the phenomena of possession, demons, the Devil, and exorcism are not merely a remnant of the archaic past, but remain a fearsome power in many people's lives even today.

Father Gary Thomas was working as a parish priest in California when he was asked by his bishop to travel to Rome for training in the rite of exorcism. Though initially surprised, and slightly reluctant, he accepted this call, and enrolled in a new exorcism course at a Vatican-affiliated university, which taught him, among other things, how to distinguish between a genuine possession and mental illness. Eventually he would go on to participate in more than eighty exorcisms as an apprentice to a veteran Italian exorcist. His experiences profoundly changed the way he viewed the spiritual world, and as he moved from rational skeptic to practicing exorcist he came to understand the battle between good and evil in a whole new light. Journalist Matt Baglio had full access to Father Gary over the course of his training, and much of what he learned defies explanation.

The Rite provides fascinating vignettes from the lives of exorcists and people possessed by demons, including firsthand accounts of exorcists at work casting out demons, culminating in Father Gary's own confrontations with the Devil. Baglio also traces the history of exorcism, revealing its rites and rituals, explaining what the Catholic Church really teaches about demonic possession, and delving into such related topics as the hierarchy of angels and demons, satanic cults, black masses, curses, and the various theories used by modern scientists and anthropologists who seek to quantify such phenomena.

Written with an investigative eye that will captivate both skeptics and believers alike, *The Rite* shows that the truth about demonic possession is not only stranger than fiction, but also far more chilling.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Journalist Baglio follows a Catholic priest through the latter's training to become an exorcist in this incisive look at the church's rite of exorcism and its use in contemporary life. Baglio began delving into the topic after hearing about a course at a Vatican-affiliated university, where he met and befriended the Rev. Gary Thomas, a priest in the diocese of San Jose, Calif. Thomas took the exorcism course at the request of his bishop and subsequently apprenticed himself to a seasoned exorcist. Keenly aware of the misunderstanding that abounds about exorcism through film images, Baglio sets about dispelling misconceptions and does so skillfully, separating the real from the imaginary in the mysterious and unsettling sphere of the demonic. Both Thomas and Baglio were changed by their exposure to the rite. Thomas grew spiritually during the process, which bolstered his desire to help his parishioners, and Baglio, previously a nominal Catholic, reconnected with his faith. For anyone seeking a serious and very human examination of this fascinating subject, one that surpasses the sensational, this is absorbing and enlightening reading. (Mar. 10)

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From School Library Journal

Chanting prayers and slinging holy water, the cinematic exorcist faces the forces of evil with strength and faith. But what of his real-life counterpart? In his first book, journalist Baglio follows Brother Gary, an American Roman Catholic priest, as he learns about exorcism firsthand during a sabbatical in Rome, first through a university class and later through an apprenticeship with an Italian exorcist. Spectacular exorcisms do occur, but most of the book focuses on other topics, from Father Gary's early life to the scientific controversies surrounding exorcism. *The Rite* provides more questions than answers: Why do some exorcists use methods not approved by the Church? Has the popularity of alternative religions led to a rise in possessions and exorcisms, as Baglio's interviewees maintain? If exorcism is a Christian ritual, why does it benefit Hindus and Muslims? More guidance as to how readers might explore these questions would be welcome, but this book is recommended for all public libraries as a place to begin the dialog.—Dan Harms, SUNY at Cortland Memorial Lib.

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Review

Praise for *The Rite*

“There are chilling descriptions of exorcists battling demons in *The Rite* ... Baglio has strong storytelling skills, and constructs a narrative that travels a long distance quickly.”

— *LA Times*

“Matt Baglio’s book is a wake-up call. It smashes the many myths created by Hollywood movies and other amateurs on the subject about exorcism and the role of the exorcist in the Catholic Church.”

— Father Basil Cole, O.P., professor of moral and spiritual theology of the Pontifical Faculty at the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D.C.

“Journalist Baglio follows a Catholic priest through the latter’s training to become an exorcist in this incisive look at the church’s rite of exorcism and its use in contemporary life. Baglio began delving into the topic after hearing about a course at a Vatican-affiliated university, where he met and befriended the Rev. Gary Thomas, a priest in the diocese of San Jose, Calif. Thomas took the exorcism course at the request of

his bishop and subsequently apprenticed himself to a seasoned exorcist. Keenly aware of the misunderstanding that abounds about exorcism through film images, Baglio sets about dispelling misconceptions and does so skillfully, separating the real from the imaginary in the mysterious and unsettling sphere of the demonic. Both Thomas and Baglio were changed by their exposure to the rite. Thomas grew spiritually during the process, which bolstered his desire to help his parishioners, and Baglio, previously a nominal Catholic, reconnected with his faith. For anyone seeking a serious and very human examination of this fascinating subject, one that surpasses the sensational, this is absorbing and enlightening reading."

— *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

"*The Rite* is in my opinion one of the best books ever written on the topic of exorcism. I have read very few books that give a description as appropriate, as precise, or as detailed, and the author's deep knowledge of the subject makes it a true instrument of knowledge useful for many people."

— Fr. José Antonio Fortea, author of *Interview With an Exorcist: An Insider's Look at the Devil, Demonic Possession, and the Path to Deliverance*

"Truth is stranger than fiction ... and far more terrifying. Forget what Hollywood tells you about demonic possession and exorcism; *The Rite* will open your eyes to the awesome truth about such things. I've been investigating paranormal events for some time, but this book taught me much that I didn't know about the timeless battle for the human soul waged between the forces of good and evil. Fascinating, inspiring, and scary, a great read."

— John Kachuba, author of *Ghosthunters: On the Trail of Mediums, Dowsers, Spirit Seekers, and Other Investigators of America's Paranormal World*

"What sets Baglio's book apart from many other contemporary works on the same subject is its sober, measured tone and steady refusal to sensationalize the subject."

— Amy Wellborn

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Debbie Siegel:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important behave, like looking for your favorite e-book and reading a guide. Beside you can solve your trouble; you can add your knowledge by the guide entitled *The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist*. Try to stumble through book *The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist* as your good friend. It means that it can being your friend when you feel alone and beside those of course make you smarter than ever. Yeah, it is very fortuned for you. The book makes you a lot more confidence because you can know anything by the book. So , let us make new experience and also knowledge with this book.

Sheri Reagan:

This *The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist* book is not ordinary book, you have after that it the world

is in your hands. The benefit you have by reading this book will be information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This specific The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist without we comprehend teach the one who looking at it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't always be worry The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist can bring any time you are and not make your bag space or bookshelves' turn into full because you can have it in your lovely laptop even cellphone. This The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist having fine arrangement in word in addition to layout, so you will not feel uninterested in reading.

Daniel Watkins:

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