



Tremor Of Bliss: Contemporary Writers on the Saints

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Few stories are as cherished- and as contested-as the lives of the saints: the joyful St. Francis of Assisi, the steadfast St. Joseph, the mystical St. Therese of Lisieux. In this book twenty distinguished writers explore the deep and varying responses the saints inspire in us today. Richard Bausch recalls going with Walker Percy to a church named for St. Thomas Aquinas, where they, like the saint, sought to reconcile reason and faith; Tobias Wolff ponders St. Jean de Brebeuf, a Jesuit missionary whose faithful efforts to spread the Gospel placed him in opposition to Native Americans; Francine Prose celebrates St. Teresa of Avila as a woman whose sense of irony was a virtue as saintly as her prayerfulness. In these eloquent and moving essays, the saints emerge as fascinating paradoxes: like Eliot's St. Thomas a Becket, they have had a "tremor of bliss," but they must fight all-too-mortal battles with despair, social indifference, and hardness of heart. By turns historical and personal, contemplative and matter-of-fact, this provocative collection of contemporary writing poses spiritual questions with uncommon intelligence and grace.

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