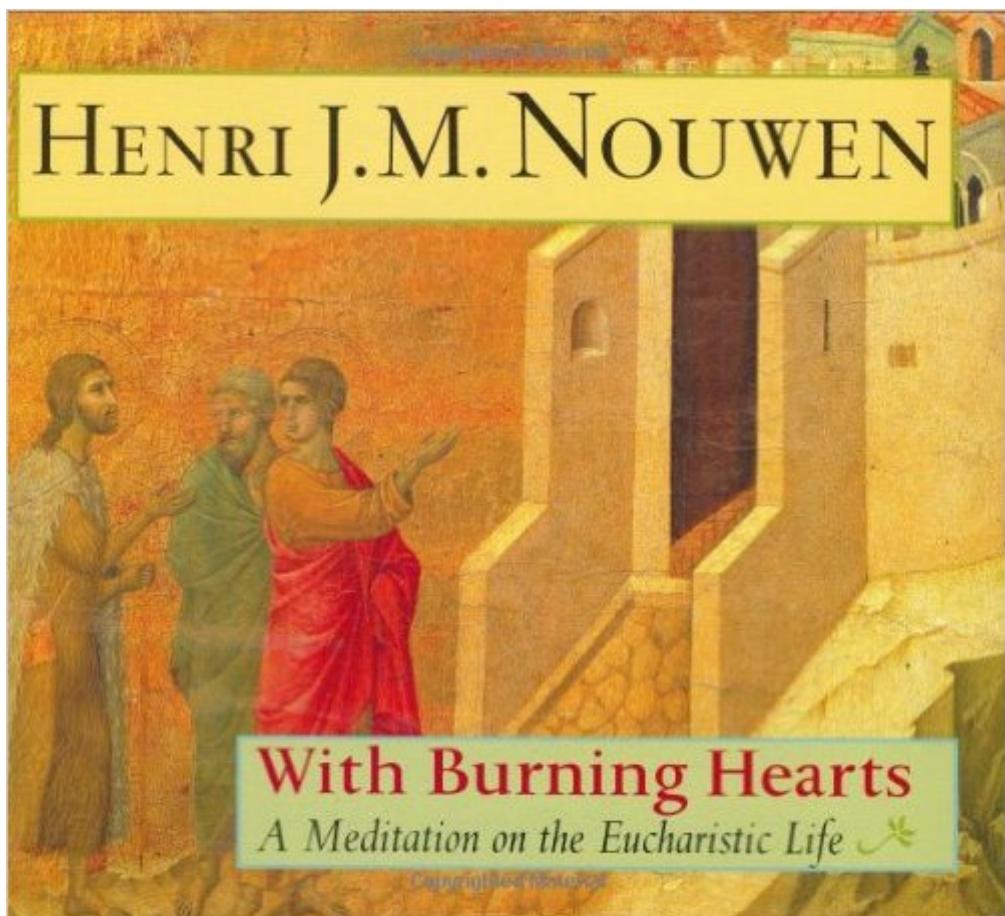


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With Burning Hearts: A Meditation On The Eucharistic Life



Synopsis

Among Henri Nouwen's enduring gifts was this beautiful reflection on the meaning of the Eucharist, now available in a gift edition with art by Byzantine artist Duccio di Buoninsegna.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Recently I heard a priest from Opus Dei state that Henri Nouwen's books are not spiritual writing, that all of Nouwen's books are about Nouwen. After finishing this volume I would have to disagree lately, but not completely, this book like many of Nouwen's draws from Henri's personal experience, but all writers write from the lense that filters all we see and do. How could our life experience not affect how we see the world. Nouwen states in the introduction: "Every day I celebrate the Eucharist. Sometimes in my parish church with hundreds of people present, sometimes in the Daybreak chapel with members of my community, sometimes in my father's living room with just him and me. Very few days pass without my saying, 'Lord, have Mercy,' without the daily readings and a few reflections." p.9 The rest of the book is a series of reflections on the Christian life through the filter of the Eucharist and through the eyes of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. The five sections in the book are: 1. Mourning Our Losses: "Lord Have Mercy" 2. Discerning the Presence: "This is the Word of God" 3. Inviting the Stranger: "I Believe" 4. Entering into Communion: "Take and Eat" 5. Going on a Mission: "Go and Tell" Each section draws us into a deeper understanding of our life, and our life as a people of the word and of the Eucharist. The first section focuses on loss, our loss of what we believe in, what we hope for and what we sometimes dream of. After loss the disciples

questioned their following Jesus, and if we are honest sometimes we doubt as well. "We remember the time that Jesus was so real for us that we had no question about his presence in our lives. He was our most intimate friend our counselor and guide.

Henri Nouwen introduces a new and life-changing idea: living losses Eucharistically. He starts by acknowledging that life is full of "dark" and "agonizing" losses: "It is a world of endless losses, and many, if not most, of our fellow human beings walk with faces downcast on the surface of this planet." We go through life mourning...just like the two disciples walking to Emmaus, ruminating on their loss of Jesus. Nouwen says that we must mourn for our losses. We must "shed tears over them and allow ourselves to grieve deeply," acknowledge "the painful truth of our brokenness," and "experience the abyss of our own life" where "everything is constantly shifting and changing." In doing this, we realize that we are not the only ones with losses: in fact, all of humanity is "moaning and groaning" with the pain of losses. Then Nouwen reveals that "there is a blessing hidden in our grief" - a gift is hidden in our tears. He says that suffering can actually lead us to gratitude. But what is the gift, and how do we recognize it? Nouwen says that "through mourning our losses we come to know life as a gift." We need to gain a contrite heart, by realizing that our losses are connected with evil, and that there is evil in our own hearts - and so, "we are willing to take responsibility, even for the pain we didn't cause directly: blaming is converted into an acknowledgment of our own role in human brokenness." We begin to cry: "Lord have mercy". We cry out for the "healing of our cynical hearts", and we "dare to believe" that there may be a gift hidden in our pain. We come to the Eucharistic celebration. We meet Jesus in the sacred Scriptures, through which he speaks to us.

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