



Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture

By Jaroslav Pelikan

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The Virgin Mary has been an inspiration to more people than any other woman who ever lived. For Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and Muslims, for artists, musicians, and writers, and for women and men everywhere she has shown many faces and personified a variety of virtues. In this important book, a world-renowned scholar who is the author of numerous books—including the best-selling *Jesus Through the Centuries*—tells how Mary has been depicted and venerated through the ages.

Jaroslav Pelikan examines the biblical portrait of Mary, analyzing both the New and Old Testaments to see how the bits of information provided about her were expanded into a full-blown doctrine. He explores the view of Mary in late antiquity, where the differences between Mary, the mother of Christ, and Eve, the "mother of all living," provided positive and negative symbols of women. He discusses how the Eastern church commemorated Mary and how she was portrayed in the Holy Qur'an of Islam. He explains how the paradox of Mary as Virgin Mother shaped the paradoxical Catholic view of sexuality and how Reformation rejection of the worship of Mary allowed her to be a model of faith for Protestants. He considers also her role in political and social history. He analyzes the place of Mary in literature—from Dante, Spenser, and Milton to Wordsworth, George Eliot, and Goethe—as well as in music and art, and he describes the miraculous apparitions of Mary that have been experienced by the common people.

Was Mary human or divine? Should she be revered for her humility or her strength? What is her place in heaven? Whatever our answers to these questions, Mary remains a symbol of hope and solace, a woman, says Pelikan, for all seasons and all reasons.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

A sequel to *Jesus Through the Centuries*, this scholarly study of Christ's mother Mary by Jaroslav Pelikan, a Yale historian of Christian theology, is thoroughly grounded in formal theology yet still explores the many manifestations of Marian devotion that have emerged in the wider culture. These manifestations include images from art, music, and literature, from Mary's Immaculate Conception to her bodily Assumption into Heaven. Pelikan minutely researches the universal appeal of Mary in the Old Testament, New Testament, and even the Koran, finding clues to her identity everywhere from the Bride in the Song of Solomon to the Mexican image of The Virgin of Guadeloupe.

From Publishers Weekly

In his bibliographic note, Pelikan admits to spending more than four decades of impassioned authorship and scholarship on Marian studies. "It is," Pelikan notes, "impossible to understand the history of western spirituality and devotion without paying attention to the place of the Virgin Mary." Accordingly, he explores the persona of the Virgin Mary and her place in society, tracing the legends, scriptures (including the Koran), the early church fathers' writings and the evolving doctrines concerning her. Pelikan also includes views of Mary that have been expressed through poetry, hymns and the visual arts. This inclusive work covers it all, and in doing so helps explain the importance and attraction Mary has had over the centuries for various cultures and religions.

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From Library Journal

As the distinguished Yale theologian and church historian observes, "The Virgin Mary has been more of an inspiration to more people than any other woman who ever lived" and "has been the subject of more thought and discussion of what it means to be a woman than any other woman in western history." Here, Pelikan traces what Mary has meant in different times and places.

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Christine Clute:

Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture can be one of your basic books that are good idea. Most of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to set every word into joy arrangement in writing Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture nevertheless doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource info that maybe you can be one among it. This great information could drawn you into new stage of crucial pondering.

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