



Pierced by a Sword

Bud Macfarlane Jr.

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Vintage paperback

Pierced by a Sword Details

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From Reader Review Pierced by a Sword for online ebook

Catherine says

This book was noble attempt at fending off the Left Behind hysteria. Not all of the Marian Apparitions in the book were approved. I did enjoy the story line and the author's ability to weave in Catholic perspective was interesting. However, I thought there were many instances of unfavorable stereotyping. I would not encourage someone to read this book unless they were a devout Catholic and could see around these tricky nuances...between the True Faith and fear.

Sally Sarko says

I've read this book 4 or so times and it is a treat each time I read it. It's one of the few books I remember both my parents reading (on vacay) and being really excited about and I couldn't wait until I was old enough to read it

Bonnie says

Horrible.

Kerry says

I can't even give this book one star. It was just that bad. The author attempts to demonstrate the superiority of self-righteousness, giving the impression immoral behavior (taking a life) is okay if you do it for Jesus. The entire story centers around superstition and prophecy that is believed as fact by a small segment of the population. There is better religious fiction out there. Avoid this one. Unless you need kindling.

Walter says

I have to be frank here. This is a thoroughly awful novel. It is poorly written. The dialogue was completely unbelievable, using 1950s slang in a 1990s context. There is no character development in this novel. The main characters of this novel were drug abusers, materialists and womanizers who miraculously are converted to perfect Christians overnight. One of the great features of religious fiction is the believer's struggle with their own sinfulness as well as society's rejection of Christian values. This novel has none of that. The characters are instant Saints who never struggle again.

For Catholics who read "Pierced by a Sword" and are confused, let me clarify something. The Catholicism in "Pierced by a Sword" is not the same Catholicism that you probably practice personally. McFarlane was an advocate of the "Marian Movement" in US Catholicism in the 1990s. This school emphasizes the role of

Mary almost exclusively, largely ignoring the role of the Saints, the Church or even the Trinity. McFarlane discusses Mary in this novel as though she were a goddess, actually performing miracles and personally answering prayers without God. This is not orthodox Catholic teaching, although it is presented as such in this novel.

The plot of this book is a struggle between the Marian Catholics as represented by McFarlane, against the enemies of religion as personified by Mormons, liberal Catholics and a bizarre cast of Russian Generals typecast from the old 1950s Cold War novels. He has a naive view of the world in which the good guys hang out on the campus of Notre Dame, eat at McFarlane's favorite campus pizza joint, drink his favorite brand of whiskey (Maker's Mark) and smoke his favorite brand of cigarettes (Marlboro). Does anyone else find it bizarre that a work of Catholic religious fiction should advocate the drinking of hard liquor and smoking?

There are much better works of Christian religious fiction out there. Consider a novel in which a director of a large Catholic non-profit organization, a man who makes hundreds of thousands of dollars per year, should violate Church teaching by divorcing his wife and the mother of his four sons for another woman. The man then uses his large salary to hire divorce attorneys who remove her sons from her and force the divorce settlement against his wife who wants to preserve their marriage despite her husband's adultery. This scenario is actually an episode from the life of the author, Bud McFarlane Jr. It is far more compelling than anything you will read in "Pierced by a Sword."

Karina says

This was an ok book, not great, but ok. What I liked about it was the way the communion of saints is represented, how the prayers affect stuff in ways most people are not aware of. It made me pray more, so the fruits of the book were good in that way. I liked the way Catholic families were presented thinking to myself, "so is this what it's like? awesome".

One section made me laugh. It was one sentence, three simple words: "Sacraments were consummated." after the marriage of two couples. It was just different...

The story is kind of hard to get into, but picks up around chapter 5. There are way too many characters, and a lot of time not much is going on (at one time it seemed like every character went on a tour of Notre Dame right one after another! what was up with that?) I didn't like the supernatural stuff in this book - made it very hard for me to suspend disbelief; it's just that no one really knows what heaven and hell would be like, and this particular vision of the author didn't ring true.

For instance, Lanning's experience of hell really strikes me as far-fetched -- his sin for which he is condemned is "contraception", which he didn't know was wrong. (For a sin to be mortal, you must have *knowledge that it's wrong and serious matter* and full consent of the will.) Based on previous story of Lanning's life, I would think it would be "lies", intentionally misrepresenting the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in order to attract more people to it, leading people astray. By the way, I had an issue with the Mormon religion or its leaders presented as evil. Hmm...

I'm also not satisfied by the supernatural conversions, by the Warning in which people are shown their sins and the goodness of the Lord. It kind of takes away the virtue of believing in something you don't have direct experience of. I thought at least Nathan should have gained faith the hard way *shrug* Lee Washington's conversion was ok, though.

Mark says

I don't read many novels, but I read this within a week; I couldn't put it down. I am looking forward to reading the next two by Macfarlane: *Conceived Without Sin* and *House of Gold*. I read this one as a young teenager well over a decade ago but it was over my head at the time and I only remembered a few scant details. Now, however, this story has helped me better visualize Mary's role through the grace of God in the Communion of Saints for the greater glory of her Son. It has inspired me to look more seriously into making a consecration to Jesus through Mary; I just ordered the book *33 Days to Morning Glory* as a result and am looking forward to it.

Book Bite Reviews says

This book helps you understand and experience what Divine providence is like. It can help fallen away catholics or even protestants come back to the Church even if your faith is as small as a mustard seed. In fact the book is used by the Mary Foundation and St. Jude Media to evangelize. They are offered free to anyone interested at catholicity.com.

If you are into Marian Apparitions and the Catholic Faith you'll want to read the next in the series: *Conceived Without Sin*. It is purely fiction as one of Bud MacFarlanes character is an Irish Pope; Pope Patrick.

For someone who is only beginning to read more , I greatly enjoyed this book. I rated it amazing only because if Mary had anything to do with , it is.

Soren Chargois says

Few books have changed my life and this is one of them. I have lent it to friend after friend, but I can't get myself to give it away for good. There's too much richness and knowledge! I mean, I have found myself going to Mary more and more since this book, and the book actually started me on a journey to become consecrated to Mary! So I'm looking forward to joining Mary's Militia on March 25, 2018. I believe every practicing Catholic who is serious about death and conversion and salvation needs this in their library. It's a quick read and impossible to put down once started, so carve out a weekend and just grab a kettle of tea and read! 10/10.

Judine says

This is one of the few books that actually makes me want to take action in changing the world. It's excellent Catholic fiction that clearly depicts the power of prayer and the influence of God in the world. It's a powerful tale with engaging characters (there are few more real people in fiction than Fr. Chet) and clearly illustrates the heroic courage they have in professing faith and doing what is necessary to "save mankind for eternity."

Laine Bodin says

Incredible book! I could not put it down. The characters are so real. You feel like you know them and they are your friends. Full of action and suspense. It is also a love story that goes with the plot (guys - don't be scared). A great book for guys and girls! After reading it, it jumped to number 1 on my favorite book list! Read it. You will love it!

Carlos says

This book is fascinating as a uniquely Catholic apocalypse novel. No "left behind" rapture theories here, just good ol' Marian apparitions, incredible insights into the power of prayer and plenty of amazing references to Catholicism that will have all you papists proud to be part of the original Christian tradition.

Bonnie says

I picked up this book for free from the local Catholic church and I guess the price was about right! Let me just start by saying that the theological positions the writer of this book apparently takes are horrible. He appears to have very little knowledge of the historic Catholic faith and oversimplifies a very complex and rich faith tradition.

I would venture to say that the superstitiousness of Macfarlane is almost laughable. I fail to see how it is genuinely spiritual to believe that God and the Saints intervene to such a drastically large degree in the events of all of our lives. Within this framework it is as though God is bribing people to have devotion. Very icky. Characters in the book even make deals with God and Mary, insulting His sovereignty. Devotion to God and the Saints should be for its own sake.

From a strictly literary standpoint, this book is very poorly written. The characters are unbelievable and conversations are unrealistic. When the characters try to make jokes, the humor is forced and it's not funny! These don't seem like real people to me.

Another big problem is that this book is sexist. The only female character that is not sexually chaste is portrayed as a stereotypical beautiful victim. Furthermore, she is only a mouthpiece for the author's anti-abortion views. (Also- most normal people think it is a little crazy to portray someone as going to hell for using a condom with their wife!) Also, it is irresponsible to promote families with 9 children! That is not good for women, and it is certainly not good for the environment or the children in the third world who are starving to death.

One thing that I liked about this book is that it is quick paced and is divided into many small chunks. It shifts between plot threads and characters a lot. I also found the beatific vision interesting.

Katiejculotta says

i want to make a movie of this book. it is outstanding

booklady says

This comes from the page just before the book's Prologue and is the source of the book's title: 'And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted and you yourself *a sword will pierce* so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." (Luke 2:34-35)

Although it is a work of fiction, *Pierced By a Sword* is a thought-provoking read. An Irish Pope, a playboy, an unmarried pregnant woman, a professor, a multimillionaire, a fast-talking priest, a druggie: in the beginning their lives seem to have little in common, but as the story progresses, they are being drawn together by Providence, prayer and perhaps so . . . 'that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed'?

I would give this book an additional 1/2 star rating if goodreads had that capability. It's a noble 'First Novel' effort by the author and it reflects his belief in his chosen ministry which is to provide free tapes and other Catholic materials for evangelization. I wish I shared his belief that a warning or even a Warning would sufficiently change the human heart so much that the world he envisioned could come to pass. Nevertheless, it is a thought-provoking book and I'm very glad I read it, especially in conjunction with *Mary: The Church At Its Source*.
