



# The Priestly Sins: A Novel

*Andrew M. Greeley*

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Not since his runaway bestseller, *The Cardinal Sins*, has Father Andrew M. Greeley written such a searing and topical novel about the state of the Catholic Church.

*The Priestly Sins* tells the story of Father Herman Hoffman, a gifted and innocent young man from the distant prairies of the Great Plains. In the first summer of his first parish appointment, Hoffman is swept up in The Crisis after witnessing child abuse in the parish rectory. He tells the pastor, the father of the victim, and the local police but is rebuffed by the archbishop. Soon he is vilified for denouncing a priest who has been "cleared" by the police and learns the harsh fate of the whistle-blower in the contemporary Catholic church: He is locked up in a mental-health center and then sent into exile to do graduate study.

In Chicago to study immigrant history, he encounters the local "Vicar for Extern Priests," the legendary Monsignor Blackie Ryan, who helps him regain his confidence. Hoffman returns home to demand a parish of his own from the archbishop. Reluctantly, the church hierarchy assigns him to a dying parish, but by his zeal and charm Hoffman revives the local church. His brief idyll is shattered by a subpoena to testify in a court hearing. If he speaks, he will have to take on the "downtown" establishment that is determined to destroy him and many of his fellow priests who want to be rid of this painful reminder of a sinful past. Hoffman faces exile not only from his parish, but from the priesthood itself.

Writing from the author's fifty years of experience as a priest, *The Priestly Sins* will be criticized by some but embraced by most as an all-too-candid story of all-too-human priests. *The Priestly Sins* is Father Greeley's most electrifying novel in three decades, a novel sure to rise up the bestseller lists.

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