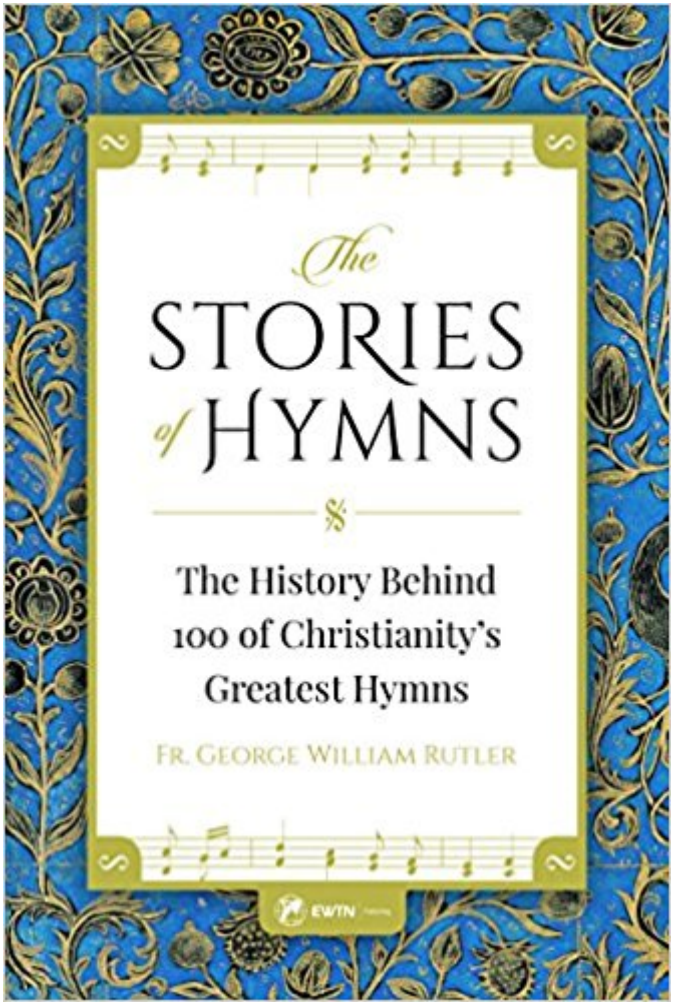
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The Stories Of Hymns



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Synopsis

Hymns are more than beautiful musical compositions; they provide us with a heightened language for praising and speaking to God, all while teaching us theology that reflects both the depth and complexity of Our Lord. Sacred hymns in our day have given way to fifth-rate poetry set to fourth-rate music, as C.S. Lewis once remarked. At times, the music used in worship can make us feel as though the culture is usurping the Church rather than being transfigured by it. There is a clear and present need to resurrect those distinctively different songs with a distinctively different vocabulary for people who want to live distinctive lives as followers of Christ. In these pages, Fr. George William Rutler introduces and reflects upon dozens of the greatest hymns written from the earliest years of the Church through the Twentieth Century. The text and composition of each hymn is included, as well as inspiring accounts of their authors and composers, fascinating stories and historical events connected with them, and notes on the significant contributions each one made to theology and music. Fr. Rutler has recovered here a rich musical legacy that will help us to give glory to our God who is Lord of all.

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Customer Reviews

Father Rutler here considers nearly 100 hymns of fine artistic and theological quality, giving interesting information about the texts, the music, and the composers. With hymns assuming so large a role in today s worship, Fr. Rutler proposes to enrich both the selection and the understanding of an ancient form that still has a great deal of life in it. Msgr. Richard SchulerFormer

Editor, Sacred Music Father Rutler s ecumenical selection of hymns and his illuminating comments on the history of each are a great restorative to the liturgical devastation of the past decades. As usual, Father Rutler not only entertains, but instructs. Robert ReillyMusic Critic This is a classy book with the hymns and the marvelous scholarly annotations by the inimitable Father Rutler. Indispensable to every library. William F. Buckley, Jr. --Personal Endorsements

Hymns are more than beautiful musical compositions; they provide us with a heightened language for praising and speaking to God, all while teaching us theology that reflects both the depth and complexity of Our Lord. Sacred hymns in our day have given way to "fifth-rate poetry set to fourth-rate music," as C.S. Lewis once remarked. At times, the music used in worship can make us feel as though the culture is usurping the Church rather than being transfigured by it. There is a clear and present need to resurrect those distinctively different songs with a distinctively different vocabulary for people who want to live distinctive lives as followers of Christ. In these pages, Fr. George William Rutler introduces and reflects upon dozens of the greatest hymns written from the earliest years of the Church through the Twentieth Century. The text and composition of each hymn is included, as well as inspiring accounts of their authors and composers, fascinating stories and historical events connected with them, and notes on the significant contributions each one made to theology and music. Fr. Rutler has recovered here a rich musical legacy that will help us to give glory to our God who is Lord of all.

I have sung most of these hymns for years. Sometimes noticing the names, years, composers, but never thought about their history. This book by Fr. Rutler gives a lot of detail and history. I am enjoying reading, especially my favorites!

Bought this for a clergy friend who loves traditional hymns. He loved it. The descriptions of each hymn are brief and concise, but very interesting.

In a world where most hymns used at Mass are banal to say the least, this is good read. The Mass should be treated with dignity and reverence. Stop the guitar and piano and sing the great hymns that give glory to God.

Because I am interested in music and particularly hymns I found this book very interesting, especially since it contains (English-language) hymns I had never heard. Entries include not only a

history of a given hymn but also its musical notes (treble clef, melody only). The author -- who hosts on EWTN a program about hymns -- certainly knows his subject. Books on the stories behind hymns are rare, and this book is a welcome one in the study of hymnody.

Excellent book by an erudite author, interesting stories and so well-written. Church musicians will love this.

A fabulous read for anyone who loves the world's best hymns. Fr. Rutler provides context for the composition and his dry sense of humor makes the histories come alive. Bought a copy for a friend who also loves it.

Rutler is a temendous gift to the faithful at large and especially to the Church of St Michael.

Nice stories for each hymn. Really enjoyed this book and highly recommend it to those who are hymn lovers.

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