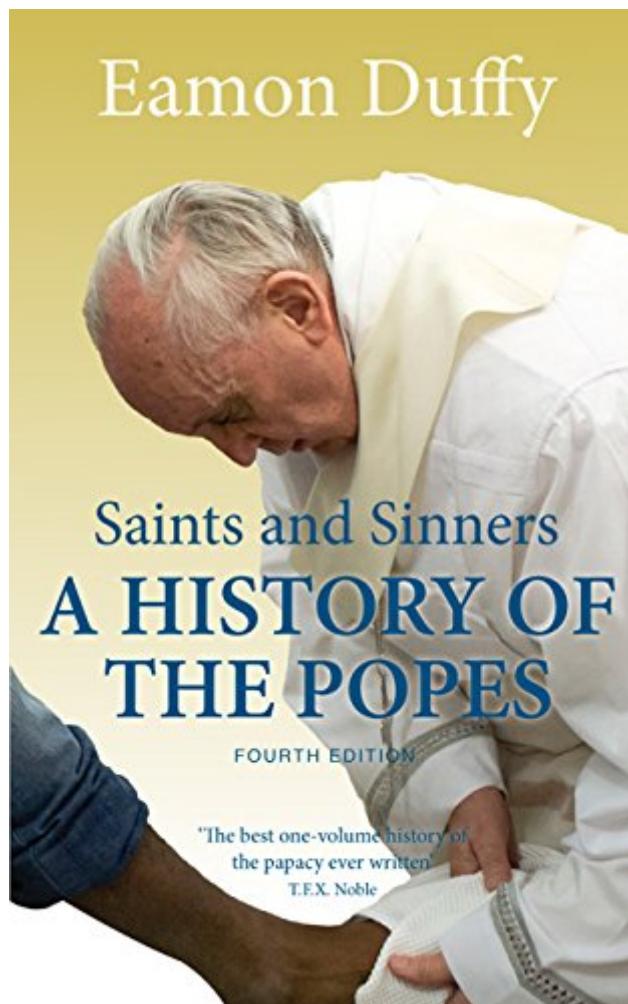


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Saints And Sinners: A History Of The Popes; Fourth Edition



Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

It has been said that the Church thinks in terms of centuries and that we may still be in its early days even though that Friday afternoon when the world turned on its Savior seems so long ago. In those

2000 years, 266 (sometimes very) flawed men have been pope. It's a lot to cover in 500 pages, but Eamon Duffy does so masterfully in his fourth edition of his history of the papacy, *Saints and Sinners*. A book review, at minimum, should tell whether a book is worth reading. So often a reviewer spends time making common cause with or combatting the the author's arguments that no mention is made of whether the book is well written, well organized, enjoyable, and worth a share of a reader's limited time. *Saints and Sinners* is all of those. While the author and this reviewer are Catholic, one need not be a Catholic to enjoy this book. An interest in Western history will suffice as there is certainly no single office which has had such a consistent role in its shaping for so long a time. And the papacy, as an office, and the men who have held it, is what this book is about. Church doctrine and general Church history are not its subjects unless directly affecting the office. One example: the Crusades are barely mentioned other than how only a strong papacy could have willed them into existence in a fractious Europe. For 2000 years, the men to whom Jesus gave the keys to the kingdom, have striven to perpetuate his Church from age to age. From its earliest days they believed a unity was required - a unity rooted in a successor to Peter at the head of Christ's one Church. A cynic might see in this simply a desire for power. Power against deviants from orthodoxy. And temporal power while awaiting Christ's return. And there is no doubt truth in both of those assertions.

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