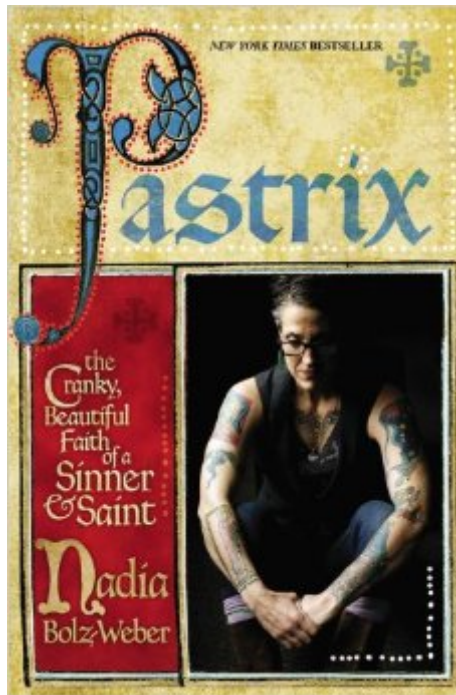


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Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith Of A Sinner & Saint



Synopsis

Now a New York Times bestseller, Nadia Bolz-Weber takes no prisoners as she reclaims the term "pastrix" (pronounced "pas-triks," a term used by some Christians who refuse to recognize female pastors) in her messy, beautiful, prayer-and-profanity laden narrative about an unconventional life of faith. Heavily tattooed and loud-mouthed, Nadia, a former stand-up comic, sure as hell didn't consider herself to be religious leader material-until the day she ended up leading a friend's funeral in a smoky downtown comedy club. Surrounded by fellow alcoholics, depressives, and cynics, she realized: These were her people. Maybe she was meant to be their pastor. Using life stories-from living in a hopeful-but-haggard commune of slackers to surviving the wobbly chairs and war stories of a group for recovering alcoholics, from her unusual but undeniable spiritual calling to pastoring a notorious con artist-Nadia uses stunning narrative and poignant honesty to portray a woman who is both deeply faithful and deeply flawed, giving hope to the rest of us along the way. Wildly entertaining and deeply resonant, this is the book for people who hunger for a bit of hope that doesn't come from vapid consumerism or navel-gazing; for women who talk too loud, and guys who love chick flicks; for the gay man who loves Jesus, and won't allow himself to be shunned by the church. In short, this book is for every thinking misfit suspicious of institutionalized religion, but who is still seeking transcendence and mystery.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I secretly took a peek at an advanced copy of Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber's forthcoming memoir Pastrix:

the Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint. The illicit peek (I'm not cool enough to have actually received a copy of my own for review) turned into a complete sleep-robbing read-through, so I figured I might as well write a review since, as anti-piracy awareness ads have informed me, I basically stole money straight out of Bolz-Weber's pocket. I don't love memoir. Everyone thinks their own lives are super-interesting just like everyone thinks they're a better than average driver - at least half of us are wrong. There is also a tendency in Christian memoir especially to extract forced lessons from every story as if life was just a series of Aesop's fables and we were all gurus draining experience of the last drop of wisdom. I call bull. This Lutheran rock-star from Denver completely avoids the boredom trap, and mostly avoids the sappy life-lessons trap and turns out a memoir that is really fun to read. It helps that she has led a genuinely unusual life and she spills her guts ruthlessly throughout. Lots of reviewers will caution that she indulges adult language, but I commend it to you for that reason. Here is raw and beautiful humanity. You don't fall in love with Bolz-Weber in spite of her volatile personality, you fall in love with her because of it. The abiding theme of the book is defiance. Her defiance matures over the course of the story, wisely told in thematic rather than chronological order. At the beginning she is all tooth and nail. At the end she is folded arms and a "bring it on" stare. Her journey is about accepting that she does indeed have the right to inhabit her calling, not (again) in spite of who she is, but because of who she is.

Wednesday September 11th I walked in to church for our evening youth event, and one of the adult leaders already had a copy of *Pastrix* in her hand. She had pre-ordered it via so she could start reading it right away. I had a copy of it myself in my saddle bag. I had already read the first chapter, and knew it was going to be even better than I had anticipated. Here's what Nadia excels at, and why our church (the ELCA) simply adores her: She breaks down law-gospel proclamation, a fancy title for the kind of preaching Lutherans of the ELCA variety hope to excel at, and turns it into language that makes sense to pretty much everybody. And she does so with the timing of a comedian. She's gratingly funny. She does law-gospel preaching through a memoir. She lets her life speak. That sounds more saccharine than I intend it. But Nadia is never saccharine. If she ever is, she smells it right away, and drops another expletive and deprecates herself. Even when she gets in the way she doesn't get in the way, because her whole story in here is about the grace extended to her in Christ in spite of the failings of the church, in spite of her own failings as a person and pastor. There's a lot in this book that is deeply emotional. I broke into sobs on page 18, reading how her father very humbly pulled out scripture and spoke words of grace that confirmed her call to become a "pastor to her people." I have to admit: I wish this were a book I had written. People like to

say: I could have written a book like that. Usually that's not true. You don't have a book in you just waiting to be written down. To write a book, you have to write a book.

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