



In No Strange Land: The Embodied Mysticism of Saint Philip Neri

By Jonathan Robinson

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In No Strange Land illuminates the richness of mysticism--in the life of Philip Neri--as an "experience of the activity of God." The life of the Apostle of Rome demonstrates that it is primarily people, not arguments, that reveal the mysteries of God. Philip's experience of God, his mysticism, was given him for the sake of others. Furthermore, that experience itself was embodied; that is to say awakened, nourished, and brought to fruition within the religious tradition into which he was born, and from which he lived--in particular the Church of Renaissance Florence and Rome, with its own particular appropriation of Christianity. It is this sacramental life that places mysticism beyond the merely private and esoteric, and allows for the mystic, in Newman's phrase, "to use this world well."

With great deftness, Fr. Robinson traverses biographical, historical, and theological domains as he examines the nature of experience, the roles of knowledge and love in prayer, and the primacy of grace in the accomplishment of salvation. Informative and engaging, *In No Strange Land* is an outstanding contribution to Renaissance biography, historical theology, and the study of mysticism.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

"Anyone interested in St. Philip Neri will surely find something of great value here. In a way, it is a study of 'mysticism' in which Philip is the case-study. A wide-ranging and wise book."--**JOHN RIST**, author of *Real Ethics* and *Plato's Moral Realism*

"In this lucidly argued and very readable book, Fr. Jonathan Robinson interweaves an attractive portrait of the great sixteenth-century reformer St. Philip Neri with an equally persuasive reworking of themes in classical Catholic doctrine of the spiritual life, thus inviting readers to reflect on our own hopes for sanctity in the midst of an indifferent and even deeply hostile cultural environment."--**FERGUS KERR, O.P.**, author of *Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians* and *After Aquinas*

"A resident of Rome cannot avoid walking streets where even after more than four centuries the memory of St. Philip Neri remains alive. Turning a corner on some narrow Roman lane, as it were, in Jonathan Robinson's new book we encounter this remarkable saint--one of the great mystics of the Church, a living witness to us, as much as to his contemporaries, of the reality and mercy of God. Father Robinson breaks new ground in this highly original study of St. Philip Neri, presenting a new perspective on the character and mission of the saint."--**ARCHBISHOP J. AUGUSTINE DI NOIA, O.P.**, Assistant Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; author of *The Diversity of Religions: A Christian Perspective*

"Jonathan Robinson offers an intensely thoughtful and impressively well-informed investigation of Filippo Neri and his age--subtly nuanced but clearly and cogently expressed, imbued with deft humor and wry understatement. An intriguing account of a remarkable individual's life and faith, this book also figures as a major achievement in the field of contextual history--illuminating the human realities of sixteenth-century Florence and Rome."--**EDWARD GOLDBERG**, author of *After Vasari* and *Jews and Magic in Medici Florence*

About the Author

FATHER JONATHAN ROBINSON is the founder and Superior of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in Toronto. He was educated in Montreal, Edinburgh, and Rome. He was a member of the Philosophy Department at McGill University, and for three years chairman of the department. Fr. Robinson has also lectured at Fordham, Oxford, and Edinburgh, where he was a member of the Department of Logic and Metaphysics. His books include *On the Lord's Appearing*, *Spiritual Combat Revisited*, and *The Mass and Modernity*.

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