



# Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life

By James Martin

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“*Between Heaven and Mirth* will make any reader smile. . . . Father Martin reminds us that happiness is the good God’s own goal for us.” —Timothy M. Dolan, Archbishop of New York

From *The Colbert Report*’s “official chaplain” James Martin, SJ, author of the *New York Times* bestselling *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*, comes a revolutionary look at how joy, humor, and laughter can change our lives and save our spirits. A Jesuit priest with a busy media ministry, Martin understands the intersections between spirituality and daily life. In *Between Heaven and Mirth*, he uses scriptural passages, the lives of the saints, the spiritual teachings of other traditions, and his own personal reflections to show us why joy is the inevitable result of faith, because a healthy spirituality and a healthy sense of humor go hand-in-hand with God’s great plan for humankind.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“Winsome and comical but also provocative and thoughtful, Martin’s book is a breath of fresh air for those who would take religion—and themselves—too seriously.” (Publishers Weekly (starred review))

“Martin’s book suggests numerous ways to foster the strength of gracious good humor and makes a wonderful case for replacing suffering and sadness with an abundance of levity and joy.” (Booklist)

“Between Heaven and Mirth couldn’t come at a better time since both individuals and religious institutions are feeling the pressure of hard times. Joy and a playful sense of humor are great antidotes to hopelessness and helplessness.” (Spirituality & Practice)

“*Between Heaven and Mirth* is delicious, well-crafted and well-paced. Martin draws on his own experience as a priest and demonstrates both a light touch and an impressive command of his subject.” (Harvey Cox, *the Washington Post Book World*)

“Between Heaven and Mirth uses biblical passages, personal anecdotes and saints’ stories to show the importance of humor to the spiritual life.” (Catholic News Service)

“Holy people are joyful people, Martin says. The author suggests ways that humor and laughter can be incorporated into prayer. This is a book that will make you laugh. Sprinkled throughout are many funny stories and jokes.” (Christian Century)

“If you ever got in trouble as a child for laughing in church, prepare to be vindicated.” (Scott Alessi, *U.S. Catholic*)

#### From the Back Cover

In *Between Heaven and Mirth*, James Martin, SJ, assures us that God wants us to experience joy, to cultivate a sense of holy humor, and to laugh at life’s absurdities—not to mention our own humanity. Father Martin invites believers to rediscover the importance of humor and laughter in our daily lives and to embrace an essential truth: faith leads to joy.

Holy people are joyful people, says Father Martin, offering countless examples of healthy humor and purposeful levity in the stories of biblical heroes and heroines, and in the lives of the saints and the world’s great spiritual masters. He shows us how the parables are often the stuff of comedy, and how the gospels reveal Jesus to be a man with a palpable sense of joy and even playfulness. In fact, Father Martin argues compellingly, thinking about a Jesus *without* a sense of humor may be close to heretical.

Drawing on Scripture, sharing anecdotes from his experiences as a lifelong Catholic, a Jesuit for over twenty years, and a priest for more than ten, and including amusing and insightful sidebars, footnotes, and jokes, Father Martin illustrates how joy, humor, and laughter help us to live more spiritual lives, understand ourselves and others better, and more fully appreciate God’s presence among us. Practical how-to advice helps us use humor to show our faith, embrace our humanity, put things into perspective, open our minds, speak truth, demonstrate courage, challenge power, learn hospitality, foster effective human relations, deepen

our relationship with God, and ... enjoy ourselves. Inviting God to lighten our hearts, we can enjoy a little heaven on earth.

## About the Author

REV. JAMES MARTIN, SJ, is a Jesuit priest, editor at large of *America* magazine, and bestselling author of *The Abbey, Jesus: A Pilgrimage, The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*, and *Between Heaven and Mirth*. Father Martin has written for many publications, including the *New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and he is a regular commentator in the national and international media. He has appeared on all the major radio and television networks and in venues as diverse as National Public Radio, FOX TV, Comedy Central, the BBC, the History channel, and Vatican Radio. Follow the author on Facebook (FrJamesMartin) and Twitter (@JamesMartinSJ).

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### **Barbara Jones:**

The feeling that you get from *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* is a more deep you rooting the information that hide into the words the more you get interested in reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to recognise but *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* giving you enjoyment feeling of reading. The writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by means of anyone who read this because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This particular book also makes your personal vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We suggest you for having this particular *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* instantly.

#### **Clifford Ranger:**

The book *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* will bring someone to the new experience of reading any book. The author style to elucidate the idea is very unique. Should you try to find new book to see, this book very ideal to you. The book *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* is much recommended to you you just read. You can also get the e-book from your official web site, so you can more easily to read the book.

#### **Ida Hamilton:**

Reading a guide tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. With book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Books can also inspire a lot of people. Lots of author can inspire their particular reader with their story or maybe their experience. Not only situation that share in the textbooks. But also they write about the information about something that you need example of this. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your kids, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors in this world always try to improve their

skill in writing, they also doing some research before they write to their book. One of them is this Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life.

**Lucy Fletcher:**

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them friends and family or their friend. Were you aware? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a e-book. The book Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life it is rather good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space to bring this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore simply to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not very costly but this book possesses high quality.

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