



# 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, consultant to the Vatican's Secretariat for Communication, and author of numerous books, including the *New York Times* bestsellers *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*, *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything* and *My Life with the Saints*, which Publishers Weekly named one of the best books of 2006. Father Martin is a frequent commentator in the national and international media, having appeared on all the major networks, and in such diverse outlets as *The Colbert Report*, NPR's *Fresh Air*, the *New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Before entering the Jesuits in 1988 he graduated from the Wharton School of Business.

#### Users Review

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##### **Anthony Collins:**

This *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* tend to be reliable for you who want to become a successful person, why. The reason why of this *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* can be one of several great books you must have is definitely giving you more than just simple studying food but feed an individual with information that possibly will shock your prior knowledge. This book is actually handy, you can bring it almost everywhere and whenever your conditions both in e-book and printed ones. Beside that this *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* giving you an enormous of experience like rich vocabulary, giving you trial of critical thinking that could it useful in your day pastime. So , let's have it appreciate reading.

##### **Beth Johnson:**

Spent a free time to be fun activity to accomplish! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they accomplishing activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Do you wish to something different to fill your free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book could be option to fill your free of charge time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the guide untitled *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* can be excellent book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

##### **Douglas Ham:**

The book untitled *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* contain a lot of information on the idea. The writer explains your girlfriend idea with easy approach. The language is very clear to see all the people, so do definitely not worry, you can easy to read that. The book was compiled by famous author. The author provides you in the new period of literary works.

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**Miguel Sherman:**

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