



Bless Me, Father

Neil Boyd

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The inspiration for the hit London Weekend Television series of the same name, this is one confessional you'll want to make a point of visiting

Young Neil Boyd has just finished divinity school and has been newly ordained as a priest. His first post? St. Jude's parish, a corner of London with a raucous congregation full of Irish immigrants. The flock is an odd pairing with the gentle Father Boyd, but he just might be both mad enough and tender enough to get through to them.

Later adapted into a beloved British sitcom, *Bless Me, Father* is a humorous and sweet-natured look at Catholicism in the 1950s. Joining Boyd is the cantankerous, scheming, and brilliant Father Duddleswell, a man who is willing to do anything to make sure the Lord's will be done, and Mrs. Pring, the sharp-tongued housekeeper who both coddles and cajoles her priestly family of two. If the church needs money, Duddleswell will place a bet to get it. If a Catholic wants to marry a Protestant . . . well, maybe he won't go that far.

Father Neil's adventures with his parishioners are sure to delight readers of all creeds.

Bless Me, Father Details

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Author : Neil Boyd

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Ryan Barretto says

A very entertaining read. I love how the author creates the scene and then makes you smile with the antics he puts his characters into.

The parish priest is the standout character throughout, but the other characters are no less enticing.

Nicole Overmoyer says

I have always loved British comedy television shows dating earlier than 2000 and there is apparently a show based on Neil Boyd's **Bless Me, Father** but I haven't seen it. I want to, having read the book.

The story of Father Neil Boyd, the author's name is a pen name, who is recently graduated from the seminary and assigned to Father Duddleswell's parish. Father Neil becomes the sort of watcher of events. He isn't the most interesting character in the book - Father Duddleswell is, especially when he spars with Mrs. Pring. Father Duddleswell is everything I always thought a Catholic priest would be behind closed doors; funny, ironic, sarcastic, and not nearly as somber as the black of his clothes.

Bless Me, Father reads almost like a collection of short stories in that the three main characters remain the same but each chapter deals with a different set of supporting characters who represent the parish with humor, charm, and truth as they deal with an entirely different set of problems that Father Duddleswell and Father Neil need to solve.

It's easy to see how it became a television show and I want to watch the show now.

*I received a copy of **Bless Me, Father** from NetGalley and Open Road Integrated Media in exchange for an honest and original review.*

Aunt Edie says

I thought Neil Boyd's humorous stories about a young curate and his priestly mentor were just what I needed to counter some of the deeper, darker stuff I've been reading. But I didn't find it as entertaining or funny as many others have. While I'm very "eh" about this one, please keep in mind that the Father Boyd series has been keeping people in stitches for decades and was made into a BBC sitcom. There is a very good chance that I'm the anomaly and this is exactly what the doctor ordered if you are looking for some lighthearted fun.

Angie Rhodes says

Father Duddleswell, is a priest, who is a plump mischievous little man, with a glint in his eye, and Father Boyd his new Parish Priest, along with house keeper Mrs Pring, Bless me Father will have you laughing out loud. If you enjoyed James Herriot's Vet books, you will love these. They did make a TV series based on them, with Arthur Lowe as Father Duddleswell, well worth watching, and just as funny as the books.

Sara J. (kefuwa) says

A (fictional) humorous look at the priestly ministry in the 50's through the eyes of newly ordained Fr. Neil and for his first posting is sent to St. Jude's parish in London. There he meets the parish priest Fr. Duddleswell, a 'crafty & cantankerous' personality full of witticisms that cause me no end of chuckles. Together they minister to the mostly Irish congregation and along with their housekeeper Mrs. Pring (who is always at odds with Fr. Duddleswell to comic effect) paints a light hearted book. It is full of the British humour that I find so endearing, with 11 short stories in this first book and I was not surprised to find out that it was made into a television series (it certainly read like one).

Disclaimer: Received from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Kathy says

This is the story of a young curate in his first posting. Father Neil is in his first assignment as a new priest, serving with the church pastor, and old and cantankerous but lovable Father Duddleswell. The book highlights those events/episodes the young Father Neil encounters during his early years as a priest. I realize, based on the book blurb, that this was a popular book and became the basis for a popular sitcom series in Britain, but I am not sure how this will be received in the US. The continuous banter between old Father Duddleswell and the rectory cook is funny at the beginning but gets old quickly. The culture and actions/procedures in the Catholic Church are also funny, but are somewhat dated. Still, the book is humorous, poking fun at much of the old time Catholicism of the 1950's. Having grown up as a Catholic in that era, I found it humorous. I am just not sure readers today will also find it humorous or even all that interesting. There is a definite audience for this book, though that too is shrinking as the population ages. If you are interested in a picture of how the church was and how a young curate wound his way through the ins and outs of life in a parish, this book will be of interest to you. The book is divided into chapters, each of which covers a particular episode or event, but also is long enough to overwork the idea/concept and become increasingly boring to the reader. I received this from NetGalley to read and provide an honest review.

Janka H. says

Shenanigans in the clerical's robe.

Fr Neil Boyd, a young priest in his first parish of St Jude's, needs to have all his wits next to him when put under the wings of eccentric older priest Fr Duddleswell and their housekeeper Mrs. Pring.

A cheek-in-tongue kind of stories. Sometimes witty, sometimes naughty. Being Catholic myself, I laughed a lot, the British deadpan humour is catchy. But I can't help myself to think that the book intends more to be witty for the sake of the witty.

I laughed, but also I've shaken my head once or twice. And once I was quite disturbed (the story 'Crums') as

I think that some respect would be nice for things considered sacred.

Ruth says

Sometimes a little hard to understand due to British phrases....

Sometimes hilarious!

Carole says

This book was marginally entertaining for me. A young priest at his first posting under the tutelage of an age I would aging priest. Not sure what was missing for me. Maybe simply an expectation of hilarity.

Ro says

Jolly journey with two catholic priests. Amusing, but interesting that the author, himself a priest, left the ministry eventually.

James Frederick says

This was a thoroughly delightful book and one of the funniest books I have ever read. It is full of British humour, which I find myself partial to. The amusement is not diminished in the least by the fact that the setting is in the 1950s. I understand there are several sequels and I will be anxiously adding those to my reading list.

Diane says

This is a re-release of a book that inspired a hit BBC comedy in Great Britain. I adore that part of the world and have been known to enjoy various BBC sitcoms. So, reading this book, I expected hilarity to ensue with dry, British humor, and I was not disappointed. I laughed out loud and I don't think I stopped smiling from the first page!

The book played out like a television series, so it is not surprising that it later was made into one. Each chapter was very episodic, introducing a new conflict which was overcome through the hilarious antics of the scheming Father Duddleswell. The story was told mainly through witty dialogue between the characters. The conversations flowed well and were punctuated with humorous remarks and sarcastic commentary. British humor is very dry and sharp and at times the comedy was made through remarks which would be profane to some; which I would refer to as British profanity. The shock factor of "hearing" a Catholic priest curse at unlikely times was not lost on me, and I found it very funny, but I could see where some may find it offensive.

The story was told through the point of view of the young and much more conservative, Father Boyd. This

served to highlight the quirky Father Duddleswell and Mrs. Pring who proved to be more than just secondary characters, but instead, moved the story along with their antagonistic yet loving relationship with one another. They truly bickered like a long married couple which again added to the humor of the relationship in fact being that of a celibate Catholic priest and his housekeeper. For me, it made the characters very human, representing them in this light rather than the stoic, serious light Catholic Priests are usually cast in. It made them all very endearing to me and showed that everyone has their imperfections, even a “Man of God.”

The story flowed with a good pace and, like I stated before, was very episodic, making it a book that I didn’t feel like I had to rush through, but I could instead put it down and come back to it. The hilarious antics of the priests and their housekeeper left me laughing throughout the entire book. The “conflict” in the book revolved around problems the churchgoers needed help with, trying to raise money for the church, and trying to uphold the word of God despite secular mishaps. While the story revolved around this small Catholic church and their congregation, the book never fell into preaching or conveying any spiritual messages, which I did not expect as it is not labeled as Christian Fiction.

The humor in this book comes from the fact that Father Duddleswell does not act as a conventional Catholic priest is expected to act, and, along with the British profanity peppered throughout the book from the many colorful characters, I could see how this book maybe offensive to some extremely conservative readers. However, this book brings a hilarious inside look into the life of a priest who does not take himself too seriously. So, I think this book absolutely would appeal to Christians and Non-Christians alike who aren’t afraid to laugh out loud at the quirky imperfections of a supposedly perfect man.

This was an absolutely delightful, fun read. It kept me laughing and kept me wanting more. There, luckily, are more books in this series, so I may find myself tangled up in this comical world again.

patricia says

Father Neil Boyd has just been ordained and is assigned as a curate for St. Jude's Parish. St. Jude's is a parish full of characters and Irish immigrants. The pastor himself, Father Duddleswell is among those characters. But he knows how to deal with his fellow Irishmen et al. Neil Boyd will have you laughing as you get a glimpse of the church pre Vatican II. Bless Me Father will tickle your funny bone and make you realize how far we've come.

Bryan says

Hilarious British humor-laced story.

John says

I remember really enjoying the British series based on these stories. Came across this and thought it would be fun. It was. Story of a young curate and the crusty but living old pastor in the 50s.
