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Temptation and Discernment

Segundo Galilea



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This book has brief reflections by noted Chilean priest and author, showing how to avoid activism, messianism, and other common pitfalls in ministry and prayer, based on the discernment principles of Ignatius of Loyola, John of the Cross, and Teresa of Avila.

As well intentioned people, we will hardly choose a recognized evil. Instead, the most subtle and dangerous temptations we face are those that come wearing the appearance of something good; fanaticism masquerading as Christian zeal, for example, or neglect of serious prayer justifying itself on the grounds of humility or pressing pastoral needs. More than ever, we must be able to distinguish authentic movements of the Holy Spirit from their counterfeits if we are to keep our balance in an often confusing world. In this work, Segundo Galilea describes the nature of Christian spiritual discernment, drawing upon the teachings of the Spanish saints and mystics Ignatius of Loyola, John of the Cross, and Teresa of Avila. He then applies their insights in a series of brief chapters on the major temptations we face today in the areas of ministry and prayer. In wise and practical terms, he discusses activism, entrenchment, pastoral envy, discouragement in prayer, misuse of prayer methods, and many similar problems, showing us throughout how to distinguish good spirits from evil. The author closes with a short reflection on the connection between Christian self-renunciation and our natural desire for happiness. For both individuals and groups, this small book offers indispensible guidance for a review of life and authentic spiritual discernment.

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