



Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture (Columbia Classics in Religion)

Edith Turner

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First published in 1978, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* is a classic work examining the theological doctrines, popular notions, and corresponding symbols and images promoting and sustaining Christian pilgrimage. The book examines two major aspects of pilgrimage practice: the significance of context, or the theological conditions giving rise to pilgrimage and the folk traditions enabling worshippers to absorb the meaning of the event; and the images and symbols embodying the experience of pilgrimage and transmitting its visions in varying ways.

Retelling its own tales of "mere mortals" confronted by potent visions, such as the man Juan Diego who found redemption with the Lady of Guadalupe and the poor French shepherdess Bernadette whose encounter with the Lady at Lourdes inspired Christians across the globe, this text treats religious visions as both paradox and empowering phenomena, tying them explicitly to the times in which they occurred. Offering vivid vignettes of social history, it extends their importance beyond the realm of the religious to our own conceptions of reality.

Extensively revised throughout, this edition includes a new introduction by the theologian Deborah Ross situating the book within the work of Victor and Edith Turner and among the movements of contemporary culture. She addresses the study's legacy within the discipline, especially its hermeneutical framework, which introduced a novel method of describing and interpreting pilgrimage. She also credits the Turners with cementing the link between mysticism, popular devotion, and Christian culture, as well as their recognition of the relationship between pilgrimage and the deep spiritual needs of human beings. She concludes with various critiques of the Turners' work and suggests future directions for research.

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