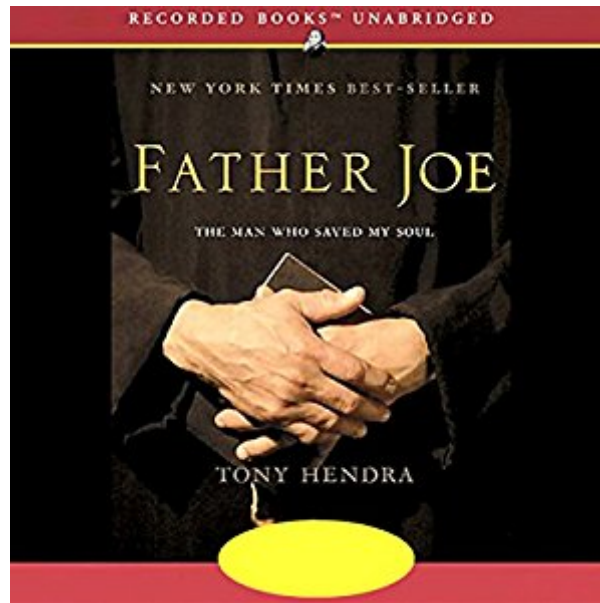




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# **Father Joe: The Man Who Saved My Soul**



## Synopsis

Like everything human, it started with sex. In 1955, fourteen-year-old Tony found himself entangled with a married Catholic woman. When the woman's husband learnt of their involvement, he whisked Tony off to see a priest and be saved. The priest was Father Joe, a gentle, stammering, ungainly Benedictine monk. And during the next forty years, as his life and career drastically ebbed and flowed, Tony discovered that his visits to Father Joe remained the one constant in his life the relationship that, in the most serious sense, saved it. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Loved reading this book and will read it again

It is well written and beautiful. A wonderful reminder of the power relationships and how God uses them for our benefit. Soli Deo Gloria.

Honest, well-written account of a young man's journey through adolescence, young manhood and adulthood. The part that makes this book is his relationship with Father Joe, whose steady, unwavering love and acceptance are always there...no matter how long the interval between their meetings, or what has happened in the interim.

In June, 2004 I panned this book and gave it one star. At the time I had read a bit of the book and

not connected at all. I thought it was a fluff job. Since then I revisited it. Have you ever read a book and then come back some time later and read it again and thought, " This can't be the same book," ? Of course, what changed was me, not the book. Now I can't say enough good about it. Why? It just went straight to my heart. Father Joe comes across as a human being who was there for Tony, the author. I am not a Catholic but it really doesn't matter. This is a story about a priest who is present as a true human being, a *mentsch* ( French for a real human in the best sense of the word). So, buy it, read it and then keep it around to read again whenever you need to be reminded what life is really about.

I am loving this book. I say this in the present tense because I am going to re-read it, possibly once a year. Actually I have been listening to the audio version and it is absolutely superb. I encourage any and everyone to listen to this book, read by the author himself. His rendition of Father Joe will never ever leave me and it's as if I've had my own personal Fr Joe right here with me. I love this book for all the above aforementioned 5 star review reasons. Instead I wanted to comment on some of the negative criticisms: One reviewer commented, "If you are looking for sage advice from Father Joe, you will find little of it in this book." ?????????? Wow. I am finding his sage advice through the ENTIRE book in relation to Tony's life experiences. Another commented that this is an "astoundingly self-aggrandizing book with copious namedropping....." EXACTLY! I think this is the whole point of Tony's story. I didn't get the feeling that Tony was very pleased with himself towards the end and it was pretty obvious that the trappings of the world didn't do it for Tony after all which Fr Joe had gently been trying to show and tell him all along. Another wrote, "Those looking for a soul saving moment can save their money, there isn't one." Well, as Father Joe might say, wouldn't soul saving possibly be a (life) PROCESS and not a one moment in life happening for all of us? I guess also I took the title figuratively. "This book contains little about Father Joe and even less about spirituality." My only reply to this is did we read the SAME book? Again I wonder if the audio version possibly affected me differently than if I read the book with just my eyes. One more and then I quit: "...I found the writer so unlikable that it was becoming painful to read." Again, this was kind of a 'duh' moment for me. He was totally unlikable! This is the point! God loves him (and each of us) anyway. Jesus did not just hang out with saints. In fact, wasn't he friends with sinners??? Had Tony been a beautifully spiritually together man, perhaps he wouldn't have had the relationship with Fr Joe that he did. You can see I absolutely am nuts over this book and am buying several copies ...for myself and for other kindred spirits out there.

Such a real life story of finding God with good responses to God and bad. Oh to be a father Joe for someone. Thank you to all the father Joes that Jesus uses to save us.

How does a wordly man, lost, pleasure loving, and self-centered find friendship with a Benedictine monk? The husband of a woman with whom Tony Hendra explores his sexuality as a teen ager, leads Tony to Fr. Joe, a Benedictine monk. The friendship between Fr. Joe lasts a lifetime and buoys up Tony in his darkest hours. The friendship and love is beautifully and movingly described. I'll long remember the moving scene when Tony presents his son, Bash, to a dying Fr. Joe. Bash kisses Fr. Joe whose left eye is deformed because of advanced brain cancer. Fr. Joe responds with the affection and warmth of a grandfather. How wonderful the faith of Father Joe, as he answers Tony's questions about fearing death and what if there is nothing after death. Father Joe's response that what he fears is opening an unopened door, and that what he's anxious about, is living eternally with a God who loves his endlessly. So much food for thought! So inspirational! So faith moving! The author does flit from scene to scene and there are huge time gaps. Sometimes Hendra's vocabulary is overwhelmingly huge and awesome. I have never read a book where there were so many words I did not know. The friendship between Tony Hendra and Fr. Joe is beautifully and movingly described. I shall long remember that friendship.

Interesting story. Not preachy, highly autobiographical, and an interesting book to give to someone who has lost their faith and doesn't want to be preached to. I will say, I found the moral character of the author shocking. I would never classify this book as a religious book, but rather one man's memoir, with hints of spirituality interwoven. The writing itself is excellent, however.

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