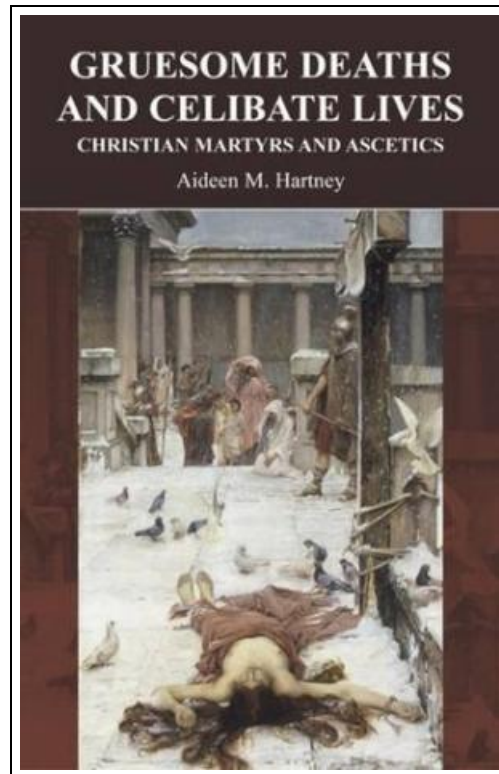


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Liverpool University Press, United Kingdom, 2005. Paperback. Condition: New. New. Language: English . Brand New Book. From the ranks of the early Christian faithful emerged colourful personalities who seized the imagination and held the attention of the rest of their community. This they achieved either by their readiness in times of persecution to die for their faith as martyrs or by their sometimes extravagant efforts to subsume their physical desires and needs to spiritual ends as ascetics. Their actions not only inspired contemporaries; they played a key role in the development of the Christian faith and the organisation of the Church. Intriguing in themselves because of their often extreme behaviour, they remain venerated figures in the Christian tradition. This book provides a short introduction to these remarkable figures and the thinking behind their actions. It places them in their historical and cultural context, making them accessible to all readers, whether they approach the subject from a sociological, historical or theological standpoint. At the same time it offers a clear portrait of the period and its impact on subsequent Roman society and on the Church. By avoiding both the triumphalist approach of Christian commentators and the negative position of those who disapprove of the way in which the Church developed, Hartney's account offers a rounded picture, adding depth by reference to some of the theological complexities involved.



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