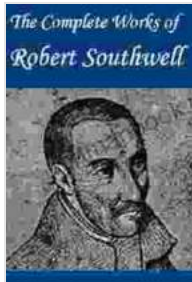


The Complete Works of Robert Southwell: A Treasury of Elizabethan Poetry and Prose



Complete Works of Robert Southwell by Stephen C. Kucko

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

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| Language | : English |
| File size | : 380 KB |
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| Screen Reader | : Supported |
| Enhanced typesetting | : Enabled |
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| Hardcover | : 164 pages |
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| Dimensions | : 5 x 0.44 x 8 inches |



Robert Southwell was an English Jesuit priest, poet, and writer who lived during the Elizabethan era. He is best known for his religious poetry, which often explored themes of love, loss, and redemption. His work is characterized by its lyrical beauty, its use of metaphor and imagery, and its deep spirituality.

Life and Career

Robert Southwell was born in Horsham St Faith, Norfolk, England, in 1561. He was the son of a wealthy Catholic family, and he received a classical education at the Jesuit College in Douai, France. In 1584, he was ordained a priest and sent to England to minister to the Catholic community.

Southwell's life in England was dangerous. The Elizabethan government was hostile to Catholics, and priests were often hunted down and executed. Southwell was arrested several times and tortured, but he never renounced his faith. He continued to write poetry and prose, and he became one of the most influential Catholic writers of his time.

In 1592, Southwell was arrested for the final time. He was tortured and executed at Tyburn on February 21, 1595. He was canonized a saint by the Catholic Church in 1970.

Poetry

Robert Southwell's poetry is known for its lyrical beauty, its use of metaphor and imagery, and its deep spirituality. His poems often explore themes of love, loss, and redemption. Some of his most famous poems include:

- "The Burning Babe"
- "The Lass of Richmond Hill"
- "A Valediction"
- "St. Peter's Complaint"
- "The Marygold"

Close Reading of "The Burning Babe"

"The Burning Babe" is one of Southwell's most famous poems. It is a meditation on the Incarnation of Christ, and it explores the themes of love, sacrifice, and redemption. The poem is written in a simple, yet lyrical style, and it uses vivid imagery to create a powerful and moving experience for the reader.

The poem begins with a description of the Christ child as a "babe" who is "burning" with love. This image suggests that Christ's love is both powerful and transformative. It is a love that can consume us and change us from within.

The poem then goes on to describe the Christ child's sacrifice. He is "born to die," and he willingly accepts his fate in order to redeem humanity from sin. This act of sacrifice is a powerful testament to the depth of Christ's love.

The poem concludes with a prayer to Christ. The speaker asks Christ to "help me to burn" with the same love that he does. This is a prayer for transformation, a prayer that we might be consumed by the love of God and become agents of his love in the world.

Prose

In addition to his poetry, Robert Southwell also wrote a number of prose works. These works include:

- *A Short Rule of Good Life*
- *A Hundred Meditations on the Love of God*
- *A Treatise on the Nature of Faith*
- *A Treatise on the Sacraments*
- *A Treatise on Prayer*

Southwell's prose works are characterized by their clarity, their logical rigor, and their deep spirituality. They offer valuable insights into the Catholic

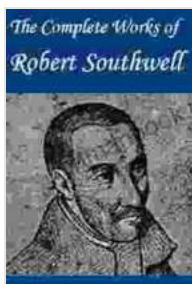
faith, and they provide a rich source of spiritual guidance for readers of all ages.

Legacy

Robert Southwell is one of the most important Catholic writers of the English language. His poetry and prose have inspired and comforted generations of readers. He is a powerful witness to the beauty of the Catholic faith, and his work continues to be read and studied today.

Further Reading

- [Robert Southwell on Britannica.com](#)
- [Robert Southwell on PoetryFoundation.org](#)
- [Robert Southwell on NewAdvent.org](#)



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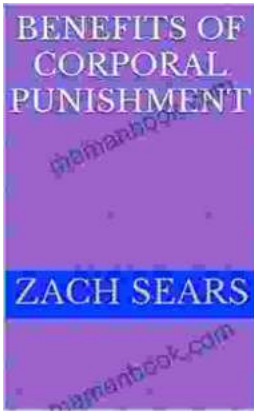
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