

# [PDF] Flunking Sainthood: A Year Of Breaking The Sabbath, Forgetting To Pray, And Still Loving My Neighbor

**Jana Riess - pdf download free book**

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**Books Details:**

Title: Flunking Sainthood: A Year of

Author: Jana Riess

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## **Description:**

## **Review**

It's clear from the start of this sparkling and very funny memoir that Riess means well. But as she readily admits, she's a spiritual failure. She intended to devote an entire year ("a year-long experiment") to mastering 12 different spiritual challenges, including praying at fixed times during the day, exhibiting gratitude, observing the Sabbath, practicing hospitality according to the rules set by St. Benedict, abstaining from eating meat, and amply demonstrating her generosity. But nothing

turned out as planned. Rather than being moved by Therese of Lisieux's *The Story of a Soul*, she instead dismisses the saint as a "drama queen." And Riess is unregenerately practical. The best month to fast, she reasons, is February, at the height of winter; conveniently, it's also the shortest month of the year. Furthermore, at best, she's a "lukewarm vegetarian." Although her spiritual quest falls far short, she can still proffer spiritual lessons. Anyone who has failed to live up to expectations, which means most everyone, will love this book.

**Booklist**, September 15, 2011

STARRED REVIEW - *Publishers Weekly* - Punchy humor and unpretentious inquisitiveness combine in this absorbing memoir in which former *PW* editor Riess (*What Would Buffy Do?*) commits to both adopting and studying a new religious practice each month for a year, while simultaneously reflecting on her spiritual progress. Choosing such diverse disciplines as fasting "like a Muslim during Ramadan," exploring *lectio divina*, observing an Orthodox Jewish Sabbath, practicing Benedictine hospitality, and engaging in the Liturgy of the Hours, the author shares frustrations and insights in a manner likely to amuse and comfort readers, especially those who have attempted such exercises and also found them challenging. For example, Riess's description of her internal dialogue during Centering Prayer, concludes, " 'Shut the hell up!' yells Spiritual Mind," while her experience of practicing mindfulness, with annoying help from the never sainted Brother Lawrence, leads to a sympathetic observation that he's "an underappreciated housewife." Supporting quotes from saints and writers (St. John Chrysostom, Dorothy Day, Thornton Wilder) pepper the text. The author's declared "failures" make her a sympathetic witness, while such "successes" as her description of how "[g]ratitude practically tackles me," prove genuinely moving. A witty, inspiring read. (Nov.)

### **About the Author**

Jana Riess is the author or editor of nine books, including *What Would Buffy Do?* Although she is a spiritual failure and was never able to climb the rope in gym class, she has a doctorate from Columbia University and teaches religion at Miami University. She blogs at <http://blog.beliefnet.com/flunkingsainthood/>.

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