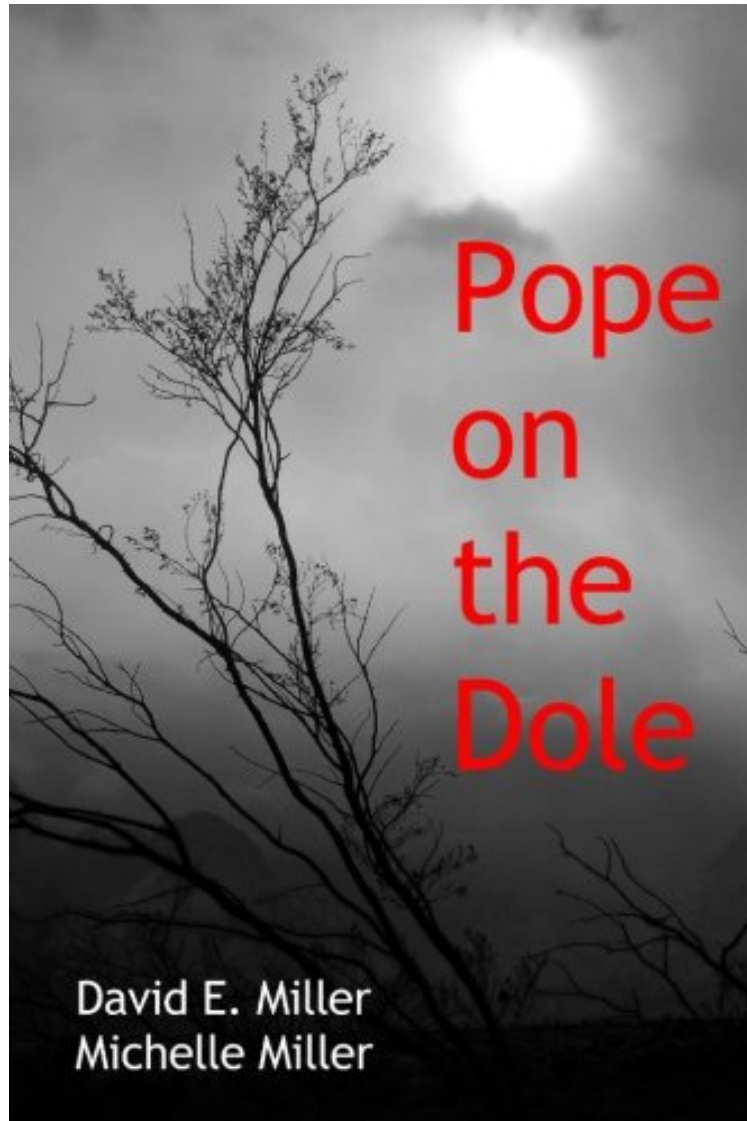


[Library ebook] Pope on the Dole

## Pope on the Dole

*Mr. David E. Miller*

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#5344300 in Books 2013-11-07Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .69 x 6.00l, .79 #File Name: 1490324593302 pages | File size: 69.Mb

**Mr. David E. Miller : Pope on the Dole** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pope on the Dole:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Truly Enjoyable BookBy TonyFirst, I guess I should mention that I am 73 (and a half ;-), a retired physician, love satire, and a lifelong Roman Catholic.I mention the latter in particular since, based on the title and subject of the book, some people might think it is anti-Catholic. It is not, nor is it pro-Catholic. It is a satire which transcends any particular religious belief... or disbelief.In short, it is witty, iconoclastic, satirical AND, at the appropriate moments, serious and thoughtful.The characters, many of whom as in Catch 22 are

“wacky”, are well developed. Some are likable... some are not. The treatment of the main character, the Pope, is at times reverent and at other times irreverent. But it is never nasty or derogatory. And it paints a picture of a human being, with all that implies, who is truly devoted to his church and to his God..... but.... (and I'll say no more... no real spoilers from ME!) I enjoyed this book immensely and pondered over its many ambiguities, often going back to earlier sections to try to answer the question “now, what did he mean by that?”. This is a book which can just be read superficially for fun, or, if one is inclined, as I am, to delve deeper into what the author is saying, it can be read that way. Or both ways. It is a book that will often make you laugh, and possibly make you cry at times. Either way an enjoyable read and well worth the time spent. And it is a book which, like some of my other favorites, I will read again to see what gems I might have missed.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you want to laugh out loud this book is a must buy. By Felicity Harley I've just finished reading *Pope on the Dole* by David E. Miller. It's not often that I read a book that makes me laugh out loud as this book did. It's a very skillfully executed farcical comedy which aims at entertaining its readers through situations that are highly exaggerated, and even though they are highly improbable, they are right on the edge of being believable. The Catholic Church, threatened by scandals and secularism, has shut down operations, and Pope Ignatius I is forced to forge a new life. He leaves Rome via Paris to join a small community of Catholic worshipers in Venice, California who belong to an organization called the Chapel Veneti, a church alternatively known as the Venetian Blinds. Once the Pope arrives in Venice and is accepted as a member of this Church, which is very near the beginning of the book, Miller introduces us to the stream of extraordinary characters who make up its congregation. These individuals nickname him “Poppy,” never believing that he is, in fact, the real Pope—Niccolò di Montachiesa. This motley crew of Catholics, whom Miller leads us to believe is all that is left of the Catholic Church's world-wide congregation, engages in any number of absurd activities including seeking the Prophet Tree, an Easter Egg hunt, and a Palm Sunday celebration. To give his very witty farce a particularly cynical edge, a gentle form of prostitution and nudity are readily absorbed into this community of fervent believers. And on top of that eccentricity, Miller has the Pope make his living by hearing confessions in the back of a rundown van with S.O.S painted on its side. Throughout the book, Miller's narrative observations are detailed and precise, without indulging in an overuse of simile or metaphor. This sparse style is particularly well suited to the content. Niccolò pays a visit to the Auberge Ginette. He follows a loud whiny-crunchy noise coming from the dining area, and finds who he believes to be the proprietor, leaning against a lavender kitchen counter, which goes nicely with the eggplant painted walls. The noise is coming from a blender, which is set on pulse. Readers of this book should make no mistake, however, that Miller has something serious to say, and it is about why humans need religion, and how it can and often does bring out the best in all of us. For those of you who want a deep belly laugh about the peculiarities and foibles of human nature, this is most surely the book for you. The following excerpt takes place at an auction of the Pope's slippers: “The next day, a messenger comes to see Niccolò. “Adriano sent a car.” Niccolò turns to Lucy. “I'm closed for the day. I'll see you back at the apartment.” Lucy formulates a question, but Niccolò dismisses it with a wave of the hand. He then follows the messenger to a black Nissan Altima, which is parked around the corner on Speedway. Niccolò's eyes brighten. “My favorite car!” “I know. Get in, please.” The messenger opens the back door. Niccolò slips inside. The messenger walks briskly around the back of the car, opens the opposite door, and takes a seat beside Niccolò. “Drive,” he says. The driver doesn't say a word, but occasionally looks at Niccolò in his rearview mirror. Niccolò doesn't ask any questions. He peers out of the tinted window and watches as the car makes its way to South Venice Boulevard, where the driver makes a left turn.... An hour later, Niccolò is seated on the main floor of the auction house. It is located in a nondescript building behind a popular Italian restaurant called Pasta Donati. Niccolò waits patiently while the auctioneer introduces one item after another. Finally, Adriano enters the building. He spots Niccolò, and sits down beside him. He looks at his watch. “Antonio will send for me,” he informs Niccolò. “When he does, I'll have your slippers put on the auction block. That's our man up there.” Adriano glances at the auctioneer. “He knows you're here. He knows what you want. And he's waiting for the signal. Before long, a young lady approaches them. Adriano lowers his voice. “Tea Barbieri.... One of the bridesmaids at the wedding. She's an assistant to the auctioneer. She and I have dallied a bit. But nothing worthy of a confession.” Tea leans down and whispers something in Adriano's ear. Adriano nods, and Tea departs. “Wish me luck,” he says. As Adriano heads towards a side door, he flashes a signal to the auctioneer, who very discreetly acknowledges it. After the current item is removed from the auction block, a male assistant brings out a large four-legged box decorated in golden arabesque. The box is set upon a table, tilted back a bit, and its lid opened. Inside, nestled in red velvet, are two slippers. “And now we have the slippers of Pope Ignatius I. This is all that we have left of the papal accoutrements. Inside the lid of the box is a sleeve in which we have slipped the certificate of authenticity.” The male assistant opens the lid a bit further, and indicates the sleeve with his finger. “These slippers are handmade. The vamp is composed of red satin, red silk, and gold thread. It is decorated in gold braid, and features an embroidered gold cross decorated with rubies. The soles are made of the finest Moroccan leather. We are opening the bid at five thousand dollars.” “Plus tax!” thinks Niccolò aloud, imitating Kimberly's accent. A few heads turn his way. He shrinks in his seat, quiets himself, and waits patiently while a handful of bidders enthusiastically pit their wallets against each other. Tea reappears and sits down beside Niccolò. “Are you bidding?” She rests a hand on Niccolò's knee. “I'm waiting to see where it goes. Do you

know who is bidding?" "I know the name and background of every bidder in the house." "And who am I?" He wiggles his knee, but Tea's hand just rides it. "You're the Pope." "Does that surprise you?" "Should it?" Niccolò shrugs. "Who is the man over there? The one who just bid eight thousand five?" "That's Ulrich Cholubski. He's with the Church of Scientology. He's in a bidding war with the man in the blue suit. That's Edward Dunham. He's from the LDS Church. Both are well funded. Adriano said not to worry about placing a bid. The sky's the limit." "That is very generous. But I am going to impose a limit on myself. I know what these slippers are worth." "It's hard to put a price on sentimental value," says Tea. "I never wore the slippers," replies Niccolò. "And even if I had, I would not bid one dollar more than the cost of their manufacture. The slippers are rightfully mine. But I know how much the Vatican paid for them. And that price will be my final bid." The bidding war continues. Niccolò enters the fray at eleven thousand dollars, but eventually drops out. "Sold for fifteen thousand dollars to the gentleman in the white suit." A dispute arises. Edward Dunham hails the auctioneer, and claims that his last gesture was overlooked. Ulrich Cholubski challenges his Mormon adversary, and the auctioneer dismisses the complaint. As a result, Dunham storms out of the auction house. "Bye, Edward!" shouts Cholubski, the Scientologist. The auctioneer motions for his assistant to whisk the box away to the claims desk. As the next item is placed on the auction block, Tea pats Niccolò on the knee, and then departs. A half an hour later, Adriano returns. "You let them go?" questions Adriano, referring to the papal slippers. "Sometimes, you have to let go," replies Niccolò. "Material things most of all." "And the past?" asks Adriano. "We cannot abandon the past," admits Niccolò.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. and given it both a twist and spin guaranteed to delight fans of distinctive By Dyrk Ashton With Pope on the Dole, Authors David E. and Michelle Miller have tackled what could be considered a controversial subject, the state of the Catholic Church, and given it both a twist and spin guaranteed to delight fans of distinctive, crisp prose, witty humor, and quirky subject matter. Pope is a sharply written, fearless satire that strikes a perfectly ambiguous balance. I was unable throughout, or in the end, to firmly claim it as pro-Church hoopla or anti-Church diatribe - in fact it may be neither. All I know is I enjoyed the heck out of it. I laughed out loud more times than I can count - even at many of the plentiful (and sometimes purposefully bad) puns. In a not too distant but slightly technically advanced future, we follow the last Pope, Niccolò di Montachiesa (Nic, aka Poppy), as he travels from Rome to Venice (Beach, California), on a quest to find the final remaining Catholic Church in the world and revive faith - in God and the Church, as well his own faith in himself. It's a quick, light-hearted read with delightful style, and I very much look forward to the next book from the obviously talented Millers.

What if the Catholic Church, already threatened by scandals and secularism, had to shut down operations? What if the Vatican became an adult-themed casino resort, and the Pope suddenly found himself without a job? Pope on the Dole is the story of a journey taken by the last Pope. After a brief stop in Paris, he travels to Venice, California in an attempt to infiltrate a "band of rebels" whose mission is to salvage what remains of the Church, and, if possible, rebuild it. Along the way, the Pope will rediscover the humility of his past, and once again fall prey to the sinful pleasures of the ordinary man.