

# The Vatican's Women: Female Influence at the Holy See

Paul Hofmann

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Four hundred of the 3,800 people who permanently live or work in the State of Vatican City, the smallest sovereign and independent state on the globe, are women. They are nuns and members of the laity; some are housekeepers of churchmen; others are secretaries, translators, editors, lawyers, and middle-level officials of the papal administration.

Expansive in scope and enlightening in detail, The Vatican's Women recalls women who wielded power in the Vatican, including St. Catherine of Siena, Queen Christina of Sweden, Mother Pascalina (Pope Pius XII's longtime housekeeper and confidante), and Mother Teresa. With an unflinching eye, Paul Hofmann examines the papacy's reaction to Catholic women's (and nuns') liberation, and women's struggles, especially today, to fortify their positions within the Church. The Vatican's Women is a thorough and revealing exploration that will herald a new level of insight and dialogue amongst feminists, theologians, and laypeople alike.



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