

RICH  
CHURCH  
POOR  
CHURCH

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MALACHI  
MARTIN

Author of THE FINAL CONCLAVE

# RICH CHURCH POOR CHURCH

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# MALACHI MARTIN

Three hundred billion dollars. Gold deposits that exceed those of many industrial nations. Real estate holdings larger than the total area of many countries. These are but some of the riches of the Roman Catholic Church. Yet millions are starving daily.

Malachi Martin, Church historian and its public conscience, here takes a critical look at one of the most controversial, complex aspects of the Roman Catholic Church: its vast wealth and the proposals for its divestiture.

When Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John spread the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, they never could have envisioned that the institution entrusted with the perpetuation of the Christian ideals of love and charity and contempt for material things would become one of the richest single entities in the world.

Nor, in their wildest imaginings, could those apostles have foreseen the source of much of these riches: Some exist because of the desire of the wealthy for luxury; still more, throughout history,

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came to the Church through war, terrorism, and the destruction of human liberty.

Instead of helping the Third World's starving, disease-ridden masses—over 250 million of whom are Catholics—the Church, like any capitalist, seeks to increase its profit-making.

Since World War II, and most especially since the 1960s, there has been a movement to divest the Church of its holdings so that no cleric would have power over the management of its assets. An international trust fund, managed by lay people, has been proposed. It would be publicly audited and have a system of checks and balances guaranteed to ensure its proper functioning.

In his renowned hard-hitting and rigorously honest investigative style, Malachi Martin exposes the Church's involvement with forces destructive of human peace and dignity. This is a shocking book, but it is a book that must be reckoned with by all who care about justice and the condition of mankind.

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