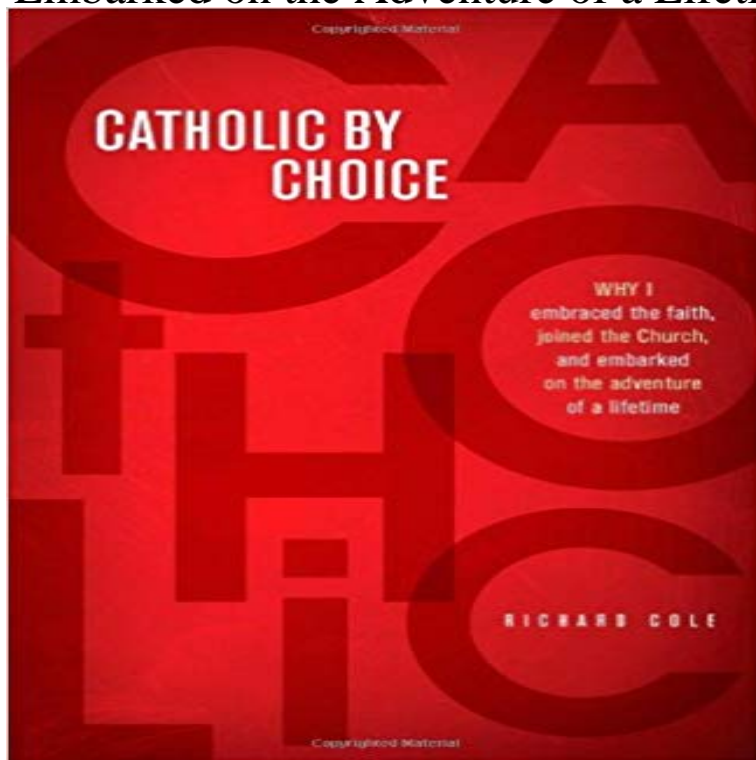


## Catholic by Choice: Why I Embraced the Faith, Joined the Church, and Embarked on the Adventure of a Lifetime



I look around the church as we sing. I was expecting the Hollywood version of a monastery, something European looking, with vineyards and massive stone buildings and ivy-covered cloisters. I wanted sturdy monks singing with deep, vibrant voices, like the Gregorian chant CDs that I play at home when I take a hot bath and light candles and sticks of incense. Why am I here? To get a bit of rest. Read a few books. That's what I thought, anyway. Now, I'm not sure. Richard Cole initially saw his trip to a monastery in western Texas as a retreat to check out for a few days, maybe a chance to catch up on his reading. Instead, Cole embarks on a zigzagging roller coaster of emotion and examination as he discerns, dissects, and discovers the incredible vibrancy of the Catholic community. Catholic by Choice provides a funny and joyous look at adult Catholic conversion from the point of view of a modern convert, telling a deeply personal yet relatable story of discovery, doubt, and finding a place at God's table.

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