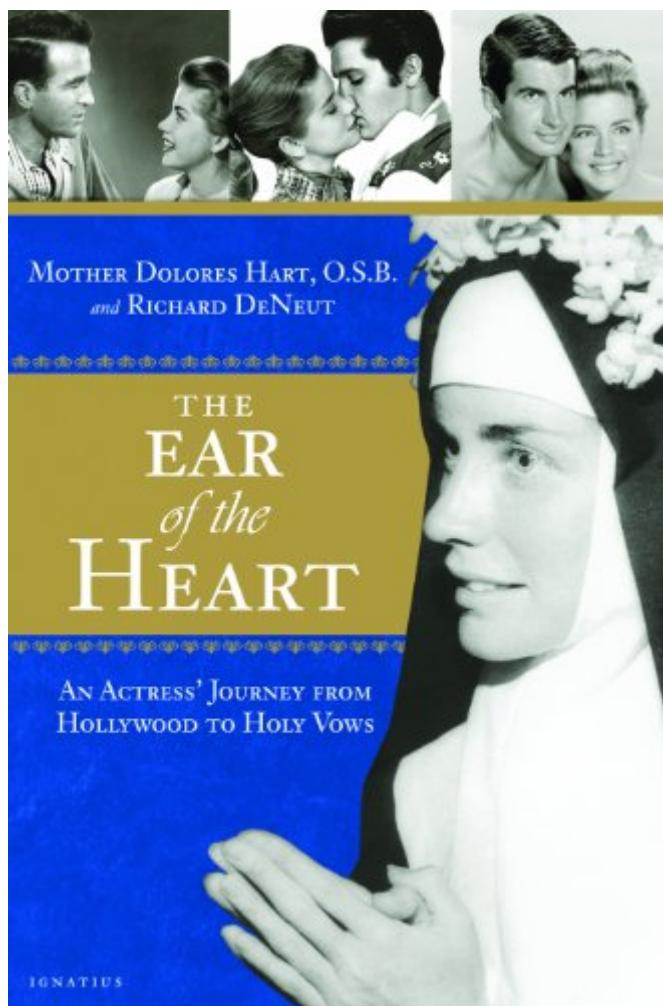


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The Ear Of The Heart: An Actress' Journey From Hollywood To Holy Vows



Synopsis

"Listen and attend with the ear of your heart." - Saint Benedict Dolores Hart stunned Hollywood in 1963, when after ten highly successful feature films, she chose to enter a contemplative monastery. Now, fifty years later, Mother Dolores gives this fascinating account of her life, with co-author and life-long friend, Richard DeNeut. Dolores was a bright and beautiful college student when she made her film debut with Elvis Presley in Paramount's 1957 *Loving You*. She acted in nine more movies with other big stars such as Montgomery Clift, Anthony Quinn and Myrna Loy. She also gave a Tony-nominated performance in the Broadway play *The Pleasure of His Company* and appeared in television shows, including *The Virginian* and *Playhouse 90*. An important chapter in her life occurred while playing Saint Clare in the movie *Francis of Assisi*, which was filmed on location in Italy. Born Dolores Hicks to a complicated and colorful Chicago family, Mother Dolores has travelled a charmed yet challenging road in her journey toward God, serenity and, yes, love. She entered the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut, at the peak of her career, not in order to leave the glamorous world of acting she had dreamed of since childhood, but in order to answer a mysterious call she heard with the "ear of the heart". While contracted for another film and engaged to be married, she abandoned everything to become a bride of Christ.

Book Information

File Size: 6917 KB

Print Length: 539 pages

Publisher: Ignatius Press; 1st edition (May 7, 2013)

Publication Date: May 10, 2013

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00CQ8ATP0

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #101,264 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #26

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Religious

Customer Reviews

This page-turner, beautifully written by its subject, Mother Dolores and her long-time friend, Richard DeNeut, will arouse your every emotion. Without the prompting of Richard, it may never have seen the light of day. Dolores Hicks was born to a teenage couple and her early life vacillated between the homes of her parents and grandparents depending on the degree of alcohol-fuelled misery that mother and father generated. At 10 years of age she embraced Catholicism, more by circumstance than desire, but found that she could communicate directly with God. This shielded her from the interminable family squabbles and it became paramount in her every-day life. Dolores (Hart), now a gifted 19 year-old Hollywood actress was paired with Elvis Pressley in *Loving you*. It was her first, and his second film. She met him again in *King Creole*. At 20 she branched into theatre and starred in *The Pleasure of his Company* which ran for over a year in New York. The rigors of this left her exhausted, and she spent several days recuperating at a nearby Benedictine monastery, Regina Laudis. She never forgot this experience, and would visit the site whenever she was on the East Coast. Her career and beauty continued to skyrocket and she was considered to be the future Grace Kelly. Being a good listener many of the mature movie stars like Gary Cooper and Anthony Quinn confided in her and she dined with, and was courted by the Hollywood high and mighty. She relates many amusing episodes like a time when she found Peter Sellars stark naked in her bed. He was promptly dispatched home! At 24, and engaged to be married to businessman, Don Robinson, she still had serious doubts that Hollywood and marriage were able to further her longing to be closer to God. To the chagrin of family, husband-to-be and close friends, she abandoned her career and became a postulant nun at the cloistered Regina Laudis. For three years she cried herself to sleep as she felt abandoned, lost and humiliated from senseless obedience rules. Her refusal to give up was a sure indication that she had not run away from Hollywood but was desperately seeking something Bigger. Was this attainable? You will find the answer and more in *The Ear of the Heart*. A must read.

I have waited many years for this autobiography of Reverend Mother Dolores Hart and knew it would be one of those marvelous tomes that, once you picked it up, you would have a difficult time

putting it down, and re-reading certain passages over and over again. The life story of this extraordinary woman, who gave up so much for so little, yet so much more, is not told as a remarkable tale of a person who was struck by lightning and immediately converted to religion, but it is a warm, at times funny, at times heartbreaking, life story of a young girl who came from a broken home but achieved fame and fortune in her late teens and early twenties as a film and stage actress of renown who eventually found that certain something that had been missing in her life, and decided to attempt a career switch that still has people scratching their heads and asking that all-important question, WHY? Reverend Mother Dolores, along with longtime friend Richard DeNeut, details her decision that was anything but overnight, and draws us into her search, meeting some truly marvelous people along the way. Her struggles with life as a young actress and later, her life as a young novice are poured out for us as she bares her soul for all to see. She talks of the tears she shed at night wondering if she did indeed make the right decision to enter the religious life, or if she made a terrible mistake, and how, after many years, realized that she's in the right place. After 39 years of correspondence with this special lady, I was anxious to find the answers to questions I never asked her in my many letters to her. My letters were written to a young nun who was a former actress, and I dwelt on her current career, not the one from which she retreated, although I wanted to know, "What was it like working with this person or that person?" Nor have I ever once, in all those years, sent her an item to sign, although I had several as I began collecting memorabilia from her movie career in the mid 1970's. I was rewarded with that discretion by having my name published in the Acknowledgments section of her book, MUCH to my surprise! I am now forever linked with a friend I have never met face to face but have shared most of my life with, bonded by that priceless gift of prayer. I have purchased the hard copy of this book, I have it on my Kindle, and I've purchased additional copies and Kindle versions for friends and family members. I am forever thankful for Reverend Mother Dolores' decision to take us on her incredible journey with this well-written book. I encourage anyone to read it. You, too, will meet a friend for life.

Ummmm. I'm going to give it a two because there are too many unanswered questions. I even went to a book signing in LA when she was here & took questions - I asked my specific questions & still didn't get an answer. There's a lot of mystery/history regarding this Abbey and it was briefly mentioned & then whisked away. I've heard through the literary grapevine another book is in the works about this subject and that's the book I'm dying to read! She doesn't give a really great understanding of what Benedictine life means, how her "vocation" really came about (as in how it manifested itself) and honest details about community life. I feel like she's read too much of the Abbey's own

vocational material about her (though to be honest - they don't do that, however, she is dragged out constantly as their pride & joy) to give the reader a really great look into her life & the life she chose for herself. I think I've grown a little exhausted about her story as a HUGE movie star. She was on the brink...she wasn't Lana Turner - nor, most definitely - Grace Kelly. That undercurrent gets a little tiresome. Let's see what else comes out regarding this place. If you are a fan, know & live the Abbey, Inrecommend it. If you are looking for answers (as in the truth) about their checkered past, don't bother. Party line, nothing new. Please, let there be a really good, honest, thorough book on this place. It's pretty fascinating. Let us in!

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