ForeWord Reviews

SPIRITUAL

A Passion Most Pure: Daughters of Boston, Book 1
Julie Lessman
Revell
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Young Faith O'Connor, survivor of an early twentieth-century polio epidemic, carries two passions in her heart. One is a secret yearning for a handsome rogue, and the other is a love of God. The second passion is actually the first, and overshadows everything else, including her other desire for Colin McGuire. In fact, if it weren't for the rivalry between Faith and her sister Charity, life would be perfect, despite the clouds of conflict on the horizon.

Charity is a beauty with a canny knowledge of how to use her loveliness. If Charity hadn't set her sights on Colin McGuire, the sisters' rivalry would no doubt fade. But Faith's heart belongs to Colin. He championed Faith when she arrived in school bearing a pronounced limp from the bout with polio that had killed her twin sister. "Helplessly she had hung, the crippled runt of the fifth grade class," until Colin McGuire appeared and ordered the bully to release her. "Never again would her little girl heart beat the same again." Hero worship and romantic love blended with something deeper in Faith's soul, and she only shared her secrets with Mrs. Gerson, a blind neighbor to whom Faith read the Bible every Saturday.

Expressing confusion over the carnal nature of her feelings, Mrs. Gerson tells her that "the Song of Solomon was written to show what the love of a husband and wife should be, but it was also written to emulate the depth of feeling God has for each of us." When Colin proposes to Charity, Faith is faced with an enormous challenge to her relationship with God and her family. Further, when America enters the war in Europe, whole families are torn apart, including the O'Connors.

This novel is a delightful, engrossing tale, rich in historical detail and peopled by strong, engaging characters that will satisfy those who enjoy historical Christian romance. This series will also appeal to readers looking for novels where the protagonists face real challenges to their faith and deeply grow in the process (although the author stretches the boundaries of the taboo against having explicit sex in a Christian inspirational novel).

Author Jessman handles sexual attraction by taking it into the real heart of Christian values, grounding it in the longing of the Divine for Creation. This is the author's first novel,

though she has won several awards from Romance Writers of America.