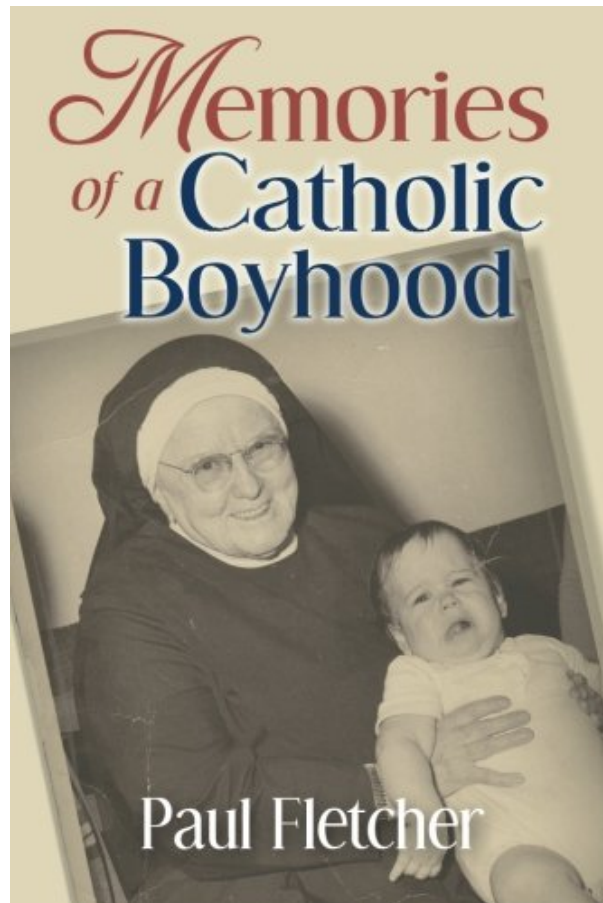
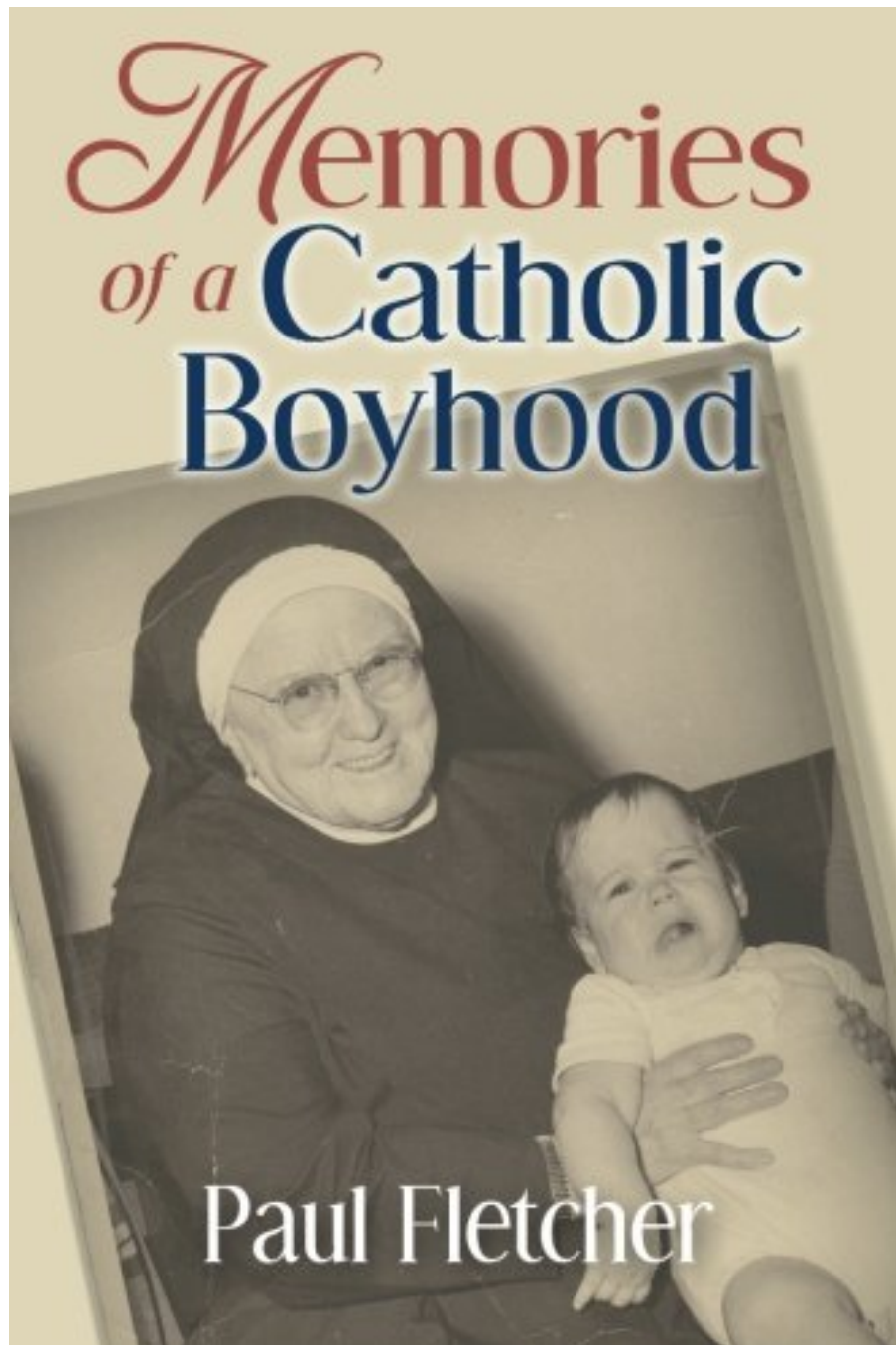


MEMORIES OF A CATHOLIC BOYHOOD: FALL RIVER BY PAUL FLETCHER



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Essentially this is a memoir of growing to manhood in Fall River based on my Irish-Catholic family in the old New England textile town Fall River, Massachusetts. It is from the point of view (flawed or otherwise) of myself. The oldest of eight children and their first grandchild and the great ethnic surge of Irish, French Canadian, and Portuguese immigrant mill labor force during and after the Great Depression with the Catholic Church in Fall River including a few priests and a couple of aunts who are nuns. All of the above no doubt factors in my mother's nervous breakdown—as I move from parochial schools to the public high school, to a Catholic Seminary, on to the Bristol County (MA) T.B. Sanatorium, where amidst cure and chaos and the medical staff's hijinks I meet my future wife.

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- Binding: Paperback
- 248 pages

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

We see Paul's family through his youthful eyes -- with all its foibles and fun

By Margo Grant

I just saw the film *Philomena* and was troubled once again by that severe Catholic world that I grew up in--where many "celibate" priests felt free to molest small boys while threatening the rest of us with fire and brimstone for having a sexual thought--and where your life was ruined if you were an "unwed mother."

These *Memories of a Catholic Boyhood* are a different look at that world. It's written by my oldest brother Paul, poking around for the fun he can find in that world--lovingly describing the humor and the *joie de vivre* of his moving-man Grandpa Sweeney, who make up his own fractured Latin incantations, taking us on his long hikes he took with saintly Uncle Bernard and communing with the birds and the woods (where the writing becomes poetic) . Paul uses the dark shadows in his world, and there are plenty, as a backdrop as he keeps digging for what strikes him as making life worth living and fun.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Fortress of American Catholicism in its Heyday

By Patrick Conley

Set in the mill city of Fall River, Massachusetts, replete with its Catholic enclaves, Professor Paul Fletcher's delightful reminiscence strikes a responsive chord for those, like me, who shared a similar and formative experience while growing up in an Irish-Catholic setting in the mid-20th century when the Church permeated nearly every aspect of our lives. Fletcher's stay in a Catholic seminary adds depth and understanding to his

vivid recollections. This well-written book transcends the confines of Fletcher's fascinating family to provide a revealing portrait of ethnic (and Fortress) American Catholicism in its heyday. He preserves for us an era and an ethos that has vanished, never to return.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

In the hospital he meet and feel in love with sweet Louise who later became his wife and ...

By Yahanna

In the Memories of a Catholic Boyhood, Paul captures Fall River and his families past with such grace. The stories told bring you to the cold stoic churches of the east coast with the lightness of Pauls many experiences growing up in a large Catholic family. Himself persuing a carrier in the church up untill he was diagnosed with TB. In the hospital he meet and feel in love with sweet Louise who later became his wife and mother to his seven children. I higly recomend this book. The fluid story telling bring threw strenght, and laughter.

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