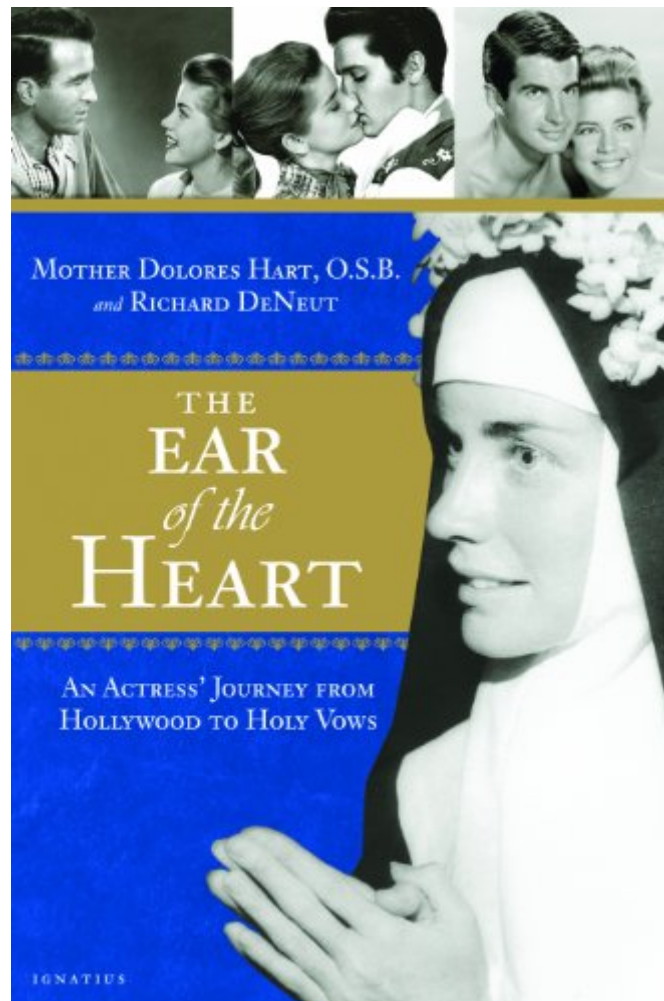


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The Ear Of The Heart: An Actress' Journey From Hollywood To Holy Vows



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.

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Customer Reviews

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.

"Listen and attend with the ear of your heart." ~ Saint Benedict
Growing up in the 40's and 50's, Dolores dreamed of becoming an actress. She tells us that it is the only thing she ever wanted to be. Yet, at the peak of a promising acting career, she abandoned her childhood dream and left Hollywood to enter a cloistered monastery. In her memoir, *The Ear of the Heart*, Benedictine nun Mother Dolores Hart, Prioress of Regina Laudis Abbey in Bethlehem, Connecticut, shares the remarkable account of her calling to the monastic life and the reasons why she has remained steadfast in her vocation for half a century. Her lifelong friend, publicist Dick De Neut assists in disclosing the details, providing a second voice to the narrative. There is a question and answer format that runs through the story, which makes one feel as if they are listening in on the conversation of two friends, as they reminisce over the good old days of Hollywood when Anthony Quinn, Gary Cooper, and Elvis Presley were all the rage. In fact, it was Dolores Hart who gave Elvis his first onscreen kiss in her first film entitled *Loving You*. And, the answer is, yes, Mother Dolores

does tell us what it was like to kiss Elvis. She also describes what it was like to work with Anthony Quinn and to interact with Gary Cooper. The Ear of the Heart provides so many insights and depth into Dolores Hart's life on a variety of levels-- spiritual, physical, emotional, and psychological.

Daunting! Terrifying!...these thoughts have consumed me for the past two weeks as I have tried to write my review of Mother Dolores Hart, O.S. B., and Richard DeNeut's inspirational "The Ear of the Heart: An Actress's Journey from Hollywood to Holy Vows." My relationship with Mother Dolores began in September 2011 when I invited her to participate as a guest speaker for the Diocese of Oakland's 2012-2013 Catholics@Work Speakers Series, [...] She unexpectedly called on a Sunday afternoon in November apologizing for the long delay in responding. "Your letter was buried and I just found it." We spoke for an hour, mostly about Chicago, Regina Laudis and the difficulty of travel for one committed to the contemplative life. But she left the door open. She was working on a biography with her close friend, Richard DeNeut, and may need to come to San Francisco to discuss the book with Ignatius Press. She promised to arrange something if she came my way. We talked periodically to see how the book was progressing and learned in early 2013 that it was soon to be published...but to my great disappointment, there would be no visit. I did get an early copy but did not begin to read "The Ear of the Heart" in earnest until after we met at the Napa Institute in 2013 where she talked about the book and answered questions. I introduced myself the "Catholics@Work guy" and she gave me a radiant smile that could only come from a person of God. I then called her several weeks ago when I finished the book, told her I loved it and was about to write my review. She was very pleased then asked me to call Dick to share what I thought about their effort. While she has received hundreds of letters on the book, they could not be passed along to Dick.

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