



The Color of Light

Emilie Richards

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The deeper the darkness, the brighter the light

For more than a decade minister Analiese Wagner has felt privileged to lead her parishioners along a well-lit path. Her commitment has never been seriously tested until the frigid night she encounters a homeless family huddling in the churchyard. Offering them shelter in a vacant parish house apartment and taking teenage Shiloh Fowler—a girl desperate to rescue her parents—under her wing, she tests the loyalty and faith of her congregation.

Isaiah Colburn, the Catholic priest who was her first mentor and the man she secretly longed for, understands her struggles only too well. At a crossroads, he's suddenly reappeared in her life, torn between his priesthood and his growing desire for a future with Analiese.

Divided between love and vows they've taken, both must face the possibilities of living very different lives or continuing to serve their communities. With a defeated family's trust and her own happiness on the line, Analiese must define for herself where darkness ends and light begins.

The Color of Light Details

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Author : Emilie Richards

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From Reader Review The Color of Light for online ebook

Catherine says

The Color of Light is the fourth installment in Emilie Richards' Goddesses Anonymous series. I've read and enjoyed all of the books in the series, and this one was no exception.

This book centers on Analiese, who is a minister. We learn more about the rewards and challenges of her position as she helps a homeless family to get back on their feet. Ms. Richards does a wonderful job weaving faith into the story. I feel that no matter what religion a reader may practice, or if they don't practice any at all, the reader can find meaning in the words written by the author, especially if they've ever faced a weighty decision. Characters from previous books do appear throughout this book. Although I don't think it is 100% necessary to read the books in order, I do feel having done so will add to the enjoyment of the story. As with the other books, there is a love story, but I find these books are mostly about the strength of women.

The reason I gave the book 3 stars instead of a higher rating was that I thought it was overly long. There were many times when even though the writing was wonderful, my mind wandered because the pacing was slow. Also, a secondary story about one of the members of the homeless family is introduced in the last quarter or so of the book. The topic is a serious one, and I felt it was not needed and that it was not developed well especially coming so late in the book.

Judy Collins says

A special thank you to Harlequin/Mira and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

A long-time devoted fan of Emilie Richards, would not miss one of her thought-provoking books! The Goddesses Anonymous series is no exception, set in the beautiful mountain town of Asheville, NC (*where I visit as often as possible, when in NC from Florida*).

Having read all the previous books in the series, **THE COLOR OF LIGHT**, (*Goddesses Anonymous #4*) is a special beautiful story, featuring my favorite and original Goddess, Reverend Analiese Wagner. Where we get first hand exposure to a female minister's challenges, and learn of social and economic ills prevalent in our society today. *Homeless and abuse.*

Goddesses Anonymous Series

A group of women in Asheville, NC band together to find ways to help women who need them.

One Mountain Away, Book #1

Somewhere Between Luck and Trust, Book #2

No River Too Wide, Book #3

At the end of *One Mountain Away*, the first book of the Goddesses Anonymous series, Charlotte Hale wills her family farm in the mountains near Asheville, North Carolina to a group of friends and asks that they use the property and their many talents to help other women.

The friends decide to call themselves the *Goddesses Anonymous* to honor Kuan Yin, the bodhisattva of

compassion, a powerful figure to Buddhists and Taoists, with many different names and representations in Eastern Asia. Kuan Yin turned back on her journey to heaven when she heard the cries of the suffering on earth and asked to stay and minister to them anonymously until no more suffering remained.

About Analiese

When the series began the minister of the Church of the Covenant in Asheville, Analiese Wagner, was in her late thirties. As Charlotte's minister Analiese challenged and supported her, known for speaking her mind. With both beauty and brains, Analiese a successful broadcast journalist, prior to entering the seminary. A surprising choice for the large, traditional Protestant church, this is her first ministry, and she is their first female minister. Unhappily married in her twenties and prior to his death, she was gathering strength to divorce him. She remained single afterward.

Now, in Book #4, her old flame and mentor, Isaiah Colburn is back from the past, and her feelings may be changing, as she longs for a partner and a family, as she is getting older, and at a crossroads in her life.

Poor Analiese, gets hit with double barrels, (should say triple), when an array of obstacles blindsides her at one time. She is feeling pressure of ministering to a large, active congregation with contentious lay leadership. Exhaustion makes her question her own calling. Also the fact, she is getting older and her biological clock is ticking.

She is also concerned about the issue of the homeless, and while attending a rally, where she is a guest speaker, prior to arriving on stage, she is knocked to the ground. Afterwards she sees a man, who helped her up, who looks like Isaiah, from her past. *She would know his eyes anywhere. Where did he disappear to. Is she seeing things?*

They have been in love for years, but as a Roman Catholic priest, Isaiah could not act on, or acknowledge his feelings. Then he shows up during one of her sermons. What is he doing here in North Carolina?

Next, Analiese and Ethan Martin discover a homeless family in need of a place to spend the night, she offers them an empty apartment in the church parish house. Thereafter some of the council members feel she overstepped her authority (*however, I feel if they elect her for such position, the church should trust her judgement and give her the authority to make those decisions, accordingly*). Instead, there were some reactions of church council criticism, so Analiese is under added stress with deadlines and in her heart, torn - she knows the right thing to do is help this family. Now she has a congregation breathing down her neck to get the family out of the apartment into something more permanent. *Easier said than done.*

Analiese takes the homeless family under her wing, feeling responsible. It is in the middle of winter, the mother is very sick (diabetes), and the family was going to spend the night camped out in the church yard. When an old sexton's apartment is sitting unused upstairs, only for storage. The family is heartbreaking, as the father lost his job in Ohio, and they moved to SC to live with family as long as possible. Now they have been living on the streets with a daughter (who was in AP class) and a son (who has ADD). They are a nice family, down on their luck. No drugs, alcohol, or abuse, just an ordinary family suffering from misfortune, with poor health care and diet; could happen to anyone. If the church is not there to help, what hope do they have of getting back on their feet in a down job market?

The committee has given her a deadline of two weeks to find them a more permanent place to live, and here they are approaching the Christmas holiday season. She pulls out all the stops and resources, and continues hitting a dead end. First she has to get the kids in school, register them, plus she has to help cleanup the father's appearance with a haircut and better clothes to interview, get the mother to a doctor, get

them proper food, clothes, plus do all this without hurting the man's or family pride, plus fighting against council members.

She has to call in the Goddesses (Harmony) for assistance with the strong willed daughter, 14 year-old daughter Shiloh (loved her), who is primarily the one holding the family together, by taking her to the consignment shops, and convince her to get back in school, since she has been out so long, with a lot of work to make up. She is at the age with a lot of peer pressure, when other teens make fun of homeless kids with bullying and later other issues she is facing when she gets a part-time job. Now Analiese really feels bad.

Georgia and the other Goddesses are also there to help out when needed. She cannot throw this family out on the street, and in order to get food stamps and other assistance, they need a permanent address. All this plus her sermons to prepare, keeping the council members happy, while taking care of her church duties and other members, and now she has her old love back in town, and her own future to think about.

However, Isaiah may be just what the doctor ordered. He is experiencing some life changing decisions of his own, and using this time in a nearby log cabin to decide on his future, wrestling with the final vows he has not yet taken. In the meantime, he is a God-sent and steps in to help with this family, especially the father and the son with the help they need from a man's perspective.

Is there hope for this couple and their future together? Analiese is tested, throughout the book in many ways.

The author is a pro at this subject matter since she is married to a minister, so sure she could tell some stories. We sometimes forget the challenges facing ministers (male or female), and the novel highlights some of their struggles, of balancing work and personal, and outspoken church members; plus making the right decisions, with an array of opinions from others.

As Emilie mentions in reference in the reader's guide, 1700 ministers leave the ministry each month! Citing among other problems, exhaustion, depression, and negative impact on family. These are realistic feelings and I have worked in the church for years, starting as early as high school as church secretary, and later held offices, group leaders, teacher, director, committee chair, etc... and was married to a Minister of Music for fifteen years, so understand the politics, and many harsh words while trying to please a large group of people. Can only imagine what a minister experiences, especially female. My heart goes out to them.

So glad Emilie featured this character, as in the previous books, you always wonder how she can be so perfect and everyone has her on a pedestal. She is human, like the rest of the group, and we are able to see a more personal side, which is refreshing.

Fans will enjoy the original Goddesses making appearances or mentions: Georgia, Samantha, Taylor, and Harmony, and baby Charlotte (Lottie Lou) and also the new Goddesses: Christy, and Rilla. I have a feeling after this book, we may see another exceptional homeless young lady, we met here in **COLOR OF LIGHT** as a potential Goddesses candidate, as she seems to look up to the women, especially Analiese.

"The church is not a work of art. It's difficult and sometimes dirty and disappointing, but a church is about the people we befriend, the love we give, the difference we make. A church is the unflinching light of day and the rainbow-colored light of hope. We need both. The real life of a church is always beyond the walls of its sanctuary"

An inspiring story, and as always, Emile Richards speaks from the heart. A master storyteller, and an author which always leaves you with "food for thought"! Highly recommend this series- Can't wait for the next.

Thank you for tackling the subject of the homeless. As Richards reiterates, "The National Coalition for the Homeless reports that 41% of the homeless population are families, and homelessness disrupts virtually every aspect of family life. Poverty and the lack of affordable housing are prime causes." A wake up call to us all-- to help those in need. We may find ourselves in the same position, one day.

JDCMustReadBooks

Claudia Cheyne says

You would think most church congregations would want to help a homeless family who have nowhere to go. But minister Analiese Wagner discovers that is not the case when she offers a vacant parish house apartment to the Fowlers' when she finds them camping in the churchyard on a frigid November night. Analiese finds herself fighting many battles with different committees in the coming months. At the same time plans for a new stained glass window are being finalized. That part of the story line contributed to the title of the book. Also, the one man who Analiese has truly loved shows up unexpectedly, reentering into her life. She has never forgotten Isaiah Colburn - a Catholic priest who was her mentor - but she realized he would always be just a friend. Isaiah admits he is now having second thoughts about his vocation. Could they ever be more than friends?

Kate Vale says

Emilie Richards again proves why she's one of my all-time favorite authors. Her books are often described as "in-depth explorations." Of course they are, and not just of social issues, but of how the characters she creates reflect women in all walks of life and with various strengths.

In this book, which follows some of the Goddess Anonymous characters already introduced in other titles, we learn more about the pastor of the local church, Analiese Wagner, and how she is struggling to meet the needs of her many parishioners. When she discovers a homeless family camped behind the church, she takes them in and then has to convince the church council members to allow them to stay. Each of the family members has their own issues and Ana does her best to help them, both individually and collectively.

Her life is complicated further when the Catholic priest who, years earlier, had helped her to see her way into living the religious life, shows up on her door. He's at the crossroads of a decision: to stay or to leave the Jesuit life he entered years earlier. Ana loves him, but how can she tell him. She especially wants no part in pushing him to leave the priesthood. When he chooses to do so, she remains unconvinced that they should make a life together, even though he says he loves her. Won't this means she has to leave her role as faith leader in her own congregation?

Then there's that homeless family, trying so hard to get their lives back together. Perhaps the strongest of the characters in this story is 14-year-old Shiloh, who exhibits that strength in ways that shake up Ana's

congregation and threaten her own family's ability to stay at the church. How this is resolved, along with the angst that characterizes the difficult decisions faced by both Ana and Isaiah, is a worthy read, one that is far more than simply an in-depth exploration of the human condition. It is an explication of the many ways in which love is expressed.

Kathryn says

The Color of Light is #4 in the Goddesses Anonymous series by Emilie Richards. It is one of my top favourite series and the The Color of Light just added to the allure.

When Emilie Richards writes of church she has a ring of authority and compassion. A vision that is inspiring. And so we have in this novel the story of Annaliese the pastor of the local church. Annaliese is the kind of pastor I'd want for any and every church. She is strong, caring and compassionate. She is not about institution, she is about people. However the life of a pastor is not an easy one. If you belong to or have belonged to a parish of any kind, I am sure you are aware of the variety of people and their politics. That must be very taxing as a minister tries to follow their calling and deal with all the other minutiae that goes along with the role. Annaliese has a lot to contend with, often no time to eat or call her own. But she has a calling to ministry and it goes deeply into her being.

Annaliese welcomes a homeless family into a small apartment that is attached to the church when she finds them preparing to camp out in the cold. The Fowler family play a big part in this story and through it a church is offered the chance to explore what church is really about. This family has many problems and at the beginning it is Shiloh a fourteen year old that holds them together. How best to help them? There are a variety of ways, but which way is going to lead to self respect, dignity and eventually the chance to be independent and whole again as people and as a family?

Isaiah is a Roman Catholic priest and Jesuit, arrives in the area, taking time out to explore his calling. Annaliese and he have known each other many years ago, when he helped her discover her calling to ministry. However they have not been in contact for many years until now. I thought Emilie Richards explored his path and journey very well. I was very satisfied finally with the way he made his choices in line with his calling.

Of course we meet other characters from previous books and see their lives continuing to take shape. We see the struggles of the homeless, we see a very topical issue facing the church and Annaliese - one that Annaliese handles extremely well. While it is foreshadowed before it happens I don't want to discuss it so as not to give away the plot.

This book oozes warmth and humanity at its best and occasionally at its weakest. My heart was deeply touched by an "I love you" and the response to it. And no, it wasn't between Annaliese and Isaiah!

Story telling with sensitivity and at its finest.

Chris says

Very sad that this series is over :-(

THIS SUMMARY/REVIEW WAS COPIED FROM OTHER SOURCES AND IS USED ONLY AS A REMINDER OF WHAT THE BOOK WAS ABOUT
FOR MY PERSONAL INTEREST. ANY PERSONAL NOTATIONS ARE FOR MY RECOLLECTION ONLY

Ana is a minister for a protestant church who gave up her broadcast career to make a difference in other people's lives and of course ten years into being a minister, she realizes that it is really hard, demanding, challenging and draining. Of course bureaucracy and hypocrites get in the way of her work she struggles to make everyone happy and also get her work done. She always speaks with clarity and she can be witty and funny at times and she does a great job dealing with her choices and she has been in love with a Catholic priest, Isaiah, for 13 years.

Isaiah is a dream come true and he is Catholic priest facing crossroads in his life and is taking a break, thinking about his life and the choices he made and his backstory made so much sense and I completely understood him. I have family in the clergy too and I could understand his thinking. He is trying to come to terms with his actions and his life. He also has been in love with Ana but has avoided her for the past few years so that he won't be distracted. But it was Isaiah who counseled and helped Ana into her transition as a minister and was her mentor.

And so finally they meet after a long time and realize they have feelings for each.

And this story was done so well. It is difficult material to weave into a romance without being cheesy or the material being overdone or underdone. But Emilie did it so well, balancing and adding depth to all the elements that compliment each other.

Another secondary plot that comes in here is the hardship of the homeless Fowlers whom Ana takes in and lets them stay at the sexton's old apartment which had been empty for six months. Again this secondary part was done with a lot of sensitivity and maturity. The family's pain and struggles were depicted well.

Ana's quick wit and ability to reason with clarity in any situation has always impressed me. She's someone I think most of us would appreciate as a friend.

Reverend Ana doesn't hold back her opinion, even as a woman guided by her faith, but her approach always has a bit of finesse, tempered with an inspirational message. She's also funny in her thought process and humble about her own faults. Finally in *THE COLOR OF LIGHT*, we get to follow Reverend Ana's difficult foray into love and then wonder if she'll ever experience her own happy-ever-after, because she doesn't ever do anything easy, including falling in love with the man responsible for her entering the seminary, her dear friend, a Catholic Jesuit priest.

For those who have been following this series, many of our favorite secondary characters are in this book once again. I enjoyed catching up with Ethan, Harmony, Cristy, Georgia and Dawson. For those who are reading this book first before the other three, you won't be lost, but this book will mean so much more to you if you've followed along with Reverend Ana from the beginning. Also, even though each of the books have traces of faith undercurrents mixed in, I think this book is the most prominent in regards to questioning and accepting your faith journey. I'm glad I read the first two books so I could relate more to the characters who advise and support Ana.

Reverend Ana hasn't heard from her friend Isaiah Colburn, a Jesuit Catholic priest, in years. When she's

accosted at a rally meant to bring about support for the homeless, she is sure the man who helps her up after being knocked down is Isaiah. What is he doing in Ashville, North Carolina, when the last she heard he was serving in a parish in San Diego, California? He disappears into the crowd and Ana is left to wonder if it was really him or just her wishful thinking.

Ana's world has become overwhelming. She's trying to help her congregation, but many of them prefer a male minister so they question her at every turn. Ana is trying to do it all, sometimes unsuccessfully. Ethan, Ana's good friend's husband, has become her confidant because he's not a member of her congregation, and that makes him safe for Ana to unburden her fears and doubts. Ethan accompanies Ana back to the church safely after her speech at the rally, but they find something neither of them expects, a homeless family using one of the church buildings that was accidentally left unlocked while they were gone.

Reverend Ana takes it upon herself to allow the homeless family of four to use the apartment in this building that has been unused for some time without consulting any of her church members. The fate of the homeless family becomes an issue that divides the church and Reverend Ana has to use all her resources, including much of her free time, to ensure that this homeless family gets a second chance.

Meanwhile, Isaiah visits Ana and partially explains his absence from her life and then his reappearance, but much of what he's thinking and feeling he keeps to himself. Gradually their friendship is rekindled. Will Isaiah disappear again, or will he make an effort to personally commit to Ana?

I really love Emilie Richards' characterization and especially what she's done with Ana. Even though this book is about two people of devout faith, it's not preachy. Both of them have doubts in themselves and their calling, so it's realistic. Much of what Ana believes is just good common sense with a faith inspiration and I think this is the type of book that teaches life lessons as much as it entertains. Ana is far from perfect so her struggles are heartfelt.

Of course, Emilie Richards never takes the easy road with her characters, so hinting at a romance between a protestant minister and a priest is sure to inspire some great discussion, but I think it is very tastefully done and it never once offended me. *THE COLOR OF LIGHT* is appropriately named for the stained glass window Ana's congregation is designing, but it's also about the varied nuances of faith within this novel, allowing the many hues to light up this story.

Fear and the anxiety caused by that fear is also well-explored in this novel in several ways. There are so many interesting topics covered by each of the characters that it makes them easily relatable. Shiloh Fowler, the teen whose family is homeless, has had to grow up fast but her path is yet to get worse before it gets better, and even though I could predict what was coming, it didn't make it any easier to read when it happened. A bevy of emotion is tied up in this homeless family with very real and unfortunate circumstances that will make you think twice about what we're doing to help those who are displaced.

Dorine says

Rated 4.5 - I couldn't help but think about *THE THORN BIRDS* by Colleen McCullough when I began reading this story. Author Emilie Richards has a talent for grabbing a taboo subject, twisting it, turning it on its head, torturing her characters with it for a bit, then giving us the happy-ever-after we crave. So good!

Reverend Analiese “Ana” Wagner has been one of my favorite characters ever since we were introduced to her in book one of the GODDESSES ANONYMOUS series and I was so excited to hear that this book is her personal story. Ana’s quick wit and ability to reason with clarity in any situation has always impressed me. She’s someone I think most of us would appreciate as a friend.

Reverend Ana doesn’t hold back her opinion, even as a woman guided by her faith, but her approach always has a bit of finesse, tempered with an inspirational message. She’s also funny in her thought process and humble about her own faults. Finally in *THE COLOR OF LIGHT*, we get to follow Reverend Ana’s difficult foray into love and then wonder if she’ll ever experience her own happy-ever-after, because she doesn’t ever do anything easy, including falling in love with the man responsible for her entering the seminary, her dear friend, a Catholic Jesuit priest.

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My favorite GODDESSES ANONYMOUS story is book one, ONE MOUNTAIN AWAY, but I think that's because it was my first experience with Emilie Richards' talent. I also enjoyed book two, SOMEWHERE BETWEEN LUCK AND TRUST equally in comparison to THE COLOR OF LIGHT. I can't wait to catch up with the series by reading book three, NO RIVER TOO WIDE. Fans of the series will appreciate THE COLOR OF LIGHT because we get to know Ana on a more personal level and experience her life journey as it reaches new heights. None of these characters are perfect and I think that's what I like best about the GODDESSES ANONYMOUS series which exemplifies great women's fiction. They're each trying to find their path through life's hard knocks in a way that makes them better people for their effort, often resulting in a calling of the heart in the process.

Beautifully written and especially poignant in regards to the homeless, THE COLOR OF LIGHT touched my heart and I can't wait for the next GODDESSES ANONYMOUS book.

Reviewed by Dorine, courtesy of Romance Junkies and The Zest Quest. Digital ARC provided by the publisher through NetGalley.

Anna says

Having loved the first three books of the Goddesses Anonymous series, I was excited to read this latest installment. Each book focuses on a member of the Goddesses Anonymous, and for this book it is Analiese Wagner, a minister at the Church of the Covenant. She is struggling with the demands of her congregation and the many council meetings she presides over. What a surprise when a homeless family is found parked in the churchyard. The family has reached a point of desperation, and fourteen year old Shiloh has carried too many burdens for her young age. What is the Christian response, and can she convince the congregation to lend a helping hand and shelter in a vacant parish house apartment. When Isaiah Colburn, a Jesuit priest, and past mentor and friend shows up at a service one day, old feelings resurface. Isaiah is questioning his calling and the love for Analiese he has tried to bury for too long. They both have some really difficult decisions to make and remain true to their faith in God.

In each of the books in the series, Emilie Richards addresses some difficult social issues with compassion and warmth. I feel a connection to the characters and truly care what happens in their lives. I hope for a continuation of the series.

Sandra says

Note: I read this as a free e-ARC from Netgalley. Although I've been a fan of Emilie Richards since the Iron Lace Saga, I was not as satisfied with this book. The story centered on Reverend Analiese and her commitment leading her parishioners. However, her faith and her leadership are tested when she invites a homeless family (the Fowlers) to stay in the parish house apartment at the church. This combined with the return a unrequited love, a Catholic priest name Isaiah who is torn between the priesthood and his own feelings for Analiese, the book has too much going on. There are too many subplots within the arc of the story such as all the details that Analiese takes on to settle the Fowler family (the kids schools, activities, parents health and employment). Not to mention another arc involving Shiloh (Fowler's daughter) and her part time job. I realize the author needed to show how much Ana cares for her congregation and helping others that changing her life for Isaiah would definitely cause her heartache, but I think some of it could have been streamlined.

Catherine Anderson says

Emilie Richards is one of my favorite writers. Her novels are not heart-of-the-market romances, but I can always count on her to deliver a story with depth that touches me. I enjoyed every part of this story, and I was left guessing until nearly the end if the two main characters would choose separate but fulfilling paths in life or walk another, equally fulfilling path together. Either way, it would still be a fabulous book. And I won't spoil it for any of you who haven't yet read it by answering that question. Kudos, Emilie!

Sheree says

4.5 stars

This is one of my favourite series, Emilie Richards' signature poignant style hasn't disappointed and The Color of Light is no exception.

I loved seeing Reverend Analiese 'Ana' Wagner get her own story, she's been there from the beginning of the series providing wise counsel to previous main characters. Obviously given her calling, The Color of Light is quite spiritual but it's not preachy, which I appreciated.

Emilie Richards highlights the demands, rewards and struggles of a minister dealing with the many personalities in a congregation, some not so christian attitudes, juggling work and private life.

Enter Isaiah, a Catholic Jesuit priest, Analiese's former mentor and old friend. Richards explores their relationship with sensitivity and respect as they wrestle with issues of faith and heart.

Homelessness is at the core of The Color of Light and the fate of the Fowler family Reverend Ana has invited to stay in the parish apartment. The relationship between Ana and 14 year old Shiloh was really special and highlighted Ana's *realness* as well as her sense of humour.

Reverend Ana's gift is compassion; providing assistance and support to those in need while encouraging self respect and independence. But seeing her very human side was such a delight ... her frustration as she urges

the committee to put people before church. I liked seeing her 'fire up' ... showing not only her compassion which she has in spades, but her passion.

"I will help the Fowlers pitch their tent in the churchyard again, right where I found them the first time. Hopefully there will be a huge star shining in the sky, even if we can't count on a single wise man."

If I was part of a church I'd want the minister to be Reverend Ana.

Warmth and compassion dance on the page. Thank you Emilie Richards for another beautiful instalment.

Ian says

When Reverend Analiese finds a homeless family huddled on the steps of her church trying to keep warm she immediately steps in and without consulting the church board brings them into the unused parish house.

But as much as she was hoping for a christian response from the church, she finds herself being stymied at every turn by a group of conservative christians who have forgotten everything they learned in sunday school.

Adding to her problems the man she has always loved, a catholic priest has shown up and is sending mixed messages.

I love these books. I wouldn't describe them as particularly original. I've read the same themes many times before, but they're entertaining and life affirming. If you want something emotionally uplifting this series is worth a look.

Diane Chamberlain says

Loved it!

Addicted to Books says

5 Amazing, Heartwarming and I felt so much while reading this book Stars. Thank you Emile Richards for exploring love for people in the clergy world. You did it so well and tastefully.

5 I-loved-you-for-13-years-from-afar- stars !

No childish or insecure behavior or anything dysfunctional and just good drama done so well. Amazing
!!!!!!!

Emilie Richards has impressed me and I think this will be one of the best romances I have read this year and this was a bad year as I can think of 7 romances that were good this year. Yes this was a year of few precious well done romances and this is one of them. This one of those slow sweet ones and you just go along feeling all the emotions.

I will definitely will completing the series now I have discovered the series. I teared up a lot while reading this book. This book didn't read like a romance novel and more like a women's literature book.

Wow this author managed to amaze me and this is the romance book for the ladies who like the unnecessary drama and angst set aside and sink into a beautiful romance.

On with the review, Ana is a minister for a protestant church who gave up her broadcast career to make a difference in other people's lives and of course ten years into being a minister, she realizes that it is really hard, demanding, challenging and draining. Of course bureaucracy and hypocrites get in the way of her work she struggles to make everyone happy and also get her work done. She always speaks with clarity and she can be witty and funny at times and she does a great job dealing with her choices and she has been in love with a Catholic priest, Isaiah, for 13 years.

Isaiah is a dream come true and he is Catholic priest facing crossroads in his life and is taking a break, thinking about his life and the choices he made and his backstory made so much sense and I completely understood him. I have family in the clergy too and I could understand his thinking. He is trying to come to terms with his actions and his life. He also has been in love with Ana but has avoided her for the past few years so that he won't be distracted. But it was Isaiah who counseled and helped Ana into her transition as a minister and was her mentor.

And so finally they meet after a long time and realize they have feelings for each.

And this story was done so well. It is difficult material to weave into a romance without being cheesy or the material being overdone or underdone. But Emilie did it so well, balancing an adding depth to all the elements that compliment each other.

Another secondary plot that comes in here is the hardship of the homeless Fowlers whom Ana takes in and lets them stay at the sexton's old apartment which had been empty for six months. Again this secondary part was done with a lot of sensitivity and maturity. The family's pain and struggles were depicted well.

Of course other characters from the earlier Goddess Anonymous books made appearances and everything was so heartwarming and gosh I love small town romances and fiction and this was a winner!!!!!!

I will re read this book again some time soon. Wow oh wow! This is for those who like small town romances, Gilmore girls, the virgin river series by Robyn Carr, Lisa Kleypas or Mary Balogh or Susan Elizabeth Phillips.

Highly Recommended!!!!!!!!!!

karen otto says

What a thoughtful, thought provoking read. Emilie Richards manages to examine faith in such a realistic,

grounded way. I came away with nothing but admiration for those who manage to live their faith in today's complex world.

A very personal look at homelessness is also well researched and presented.
