



# **Food and Faith in Christian Culture (Arts and Traditions of the Table: Perspectives on Culinary History)**

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Without a uniform dietary code, Christians around the world used food in strikingly different ways, developing widely divergent practices that spread, nurtured, and strengthened their religious beliefs and communities. Featuring never-before published essays, this anthology follows the intersection of food and faith from the fourteenth to the twenty-first century, charting the complex relationship among religious eating habits and politics, culture, and social structure.

Theoretically rich and full of engaging portraits, essays consider the rise of food buying and consumerism in the fourteenth century, the Reformation ideology of fasting and its resulting sanctions against sumptuous eating, the gender and racial politics of sacramental food production in colonial America, and the struggle to define "enlightened" Lenten dietary restrictions in early modern France. Essays on the nineteenth century explore the religious implications of wheat growing and breadmaking among New Zealand's Maori population and the revival of the Agape meal, or love feast, among American brethren in Christ Church. Twentieth-century topics include the metaphysical significance of vegetarianism, the function of diet in Greek Orthodoxy, American Christian weight loss programs, and the practice of silent eating rituals among English Benedictine monks. Two introductory essays detail the key themes tying these essays together and survey food's role in developing and disseminating the teachings of Christianity, not to mention providing a tangible experience of faith.

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