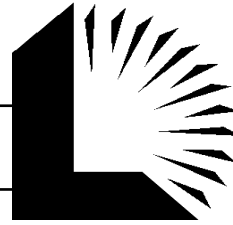


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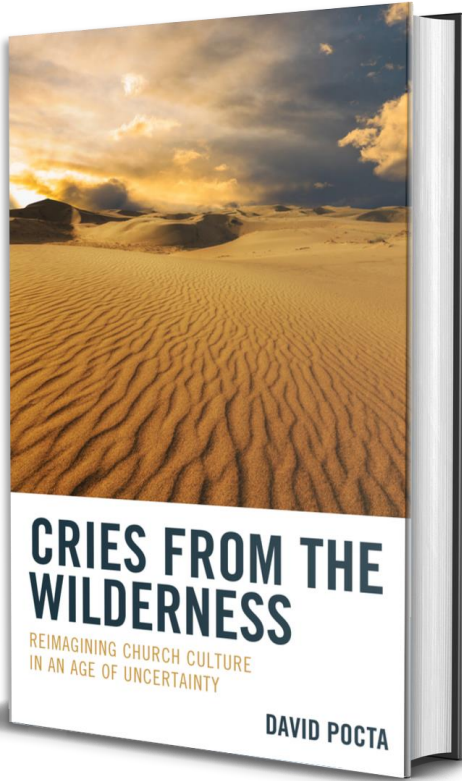
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CRIES FROM THE WILDERNESS: REIMAGINING CHURCH CULTURE IN AN AGE OF UNCERTAINTY

by David Pocta



With a depth gained from both profound spiritual struggle and intellectual rigor, David Pocta has given the church a pastoral gift—an examination of its role in driving Christians into the wilderness. With his own journey as backdrop, Pocta analyzes the stories of three fellow pilgrims, offering a rich understanding of their wanderings and pointing out common markers along the way. The result is a narrative of how transformed faith and hope can spring from personal desolation. This volume will serve as a remarkable resource for the healing of the churches in which our journeys begin and of those alienated by their faith traditions.

—Douglas A. Foster, Abilene Christian University

This book is for anyone who has experienced the spiritual wilderness or who knows someone trying to navigate the spiritual wilderness. In other words, it is for everyone. This book gives hope for those who are wandering and breathes life into dry bones. David Pocta helps faith communities understand how to listen to and have conversations with wilderness folk. Take and read.

—G. Steve Kinnard, editor of *Teleios*, a journal of holistic Christian spirituality

ABOUT THIS BOOK

One of the most prevalent challenges in contemporary Christianity is navigating the relationship between the individual and their faith community when the Christian enters spiritually challenging times: periods of aridity, misunderstanding, suffering, or darkness. This problem is amplified because of the growing angst that many feel with organized religion. When loyalty to the church gets tested during a personal faith crisis or honest intellectual query, many leave disenchanted, claiming a desire to be spiritual but not religious.

Cries from the Wilderness: Reimagining Church Culture in an Age of Uncertainty explores the memoirs of three contemporary sojourners (Rachel Held Evans, David Gushee, and Macy Halford) asking: What postures were common in his or her journey that helped them navigate their spiritual wilderness? David Pocta then argues that a primary problem is that many faith communities rarely see themselves in the spiritual wilderness. The author's contention is that spiritual communities are often ill-equipped to nurture the spiritual life of disoriented or questioning Christians. By acknowledging their own spiritual journey and drawing lessons from healthy wilderness postures they would be better positioned to transform and mature their community while creating a nurturing environment for individual sojourners.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Pocta is director of the Institute for the Study of Contemporary Spirituality at the Oblate School of Theology and Executive Director of the Disciples Center for Education.

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