



# The Grace of Incorruption: The Selected Essays of Donald Sheehan on Orthodox Faith and Poetics

*Donald Sheehan*

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Professor of literature, scholar, teacher of poets and poetry, convert to the Eastern Orthodox Church, man of prayer, Donald Sheehan wrote these wide-ranging essays with a common commitment to understanding the ways in which the ruining oppositions of our experience can be held within the disciplines of lyric art—held “until God Himself can be seen in the ruins . . . and overwhelmingly and gratefully loved.” That is what Sheehan means by “the grace of incorruption.” Part One weaves together themes from Sheehan’s life and pilgrimages; the spiritual art of Orthodox Saints Gregory of Nyssa, Isaac and Ephraim of Syria, Sergius of Radonezh, Herman of Alaska; the literary art of Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, Frost, Salinger, and contemporary poets Jane Kenyon, Sydney Lea, and Nicholas Samaras; the philosophy of René Girard—examining the nature of penitence, prayer, personhood, freedom, depression, and the right relationship to the earth. Part Two delves into the poetics of Psalms, especially LXX 118: a “poetics of resurrection,” a poetics that came to govern the lifework of an extraordinary man, blessed with faith, learning, and humility.



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