



## John Cassian: The Conferences (Ancient Christian Writers 57)

By BONIFACE RAMSEY, JOHN CASSIAN

Paulist Pr November 1997, 1997. Hardcover. Condition: New. No Jacket. John Cassian (360-430) traveled to Egypt and sat at the feet of the Fathers, eventually structuring his writings around the question-and-answer sessions he had with them on topics ranging from prayer to fasting to friendship. Boniface Ramsey's preface details how Cassian's Institutes proved in time to be merely the preface to Cassian's much more extensive teaching here in the Conferences. Written in dialogue form, the instruction of such renowned Abbots as Moses, Paphnutios, Daniel, Serapion, and Theodore are presented on spiritual concerns such as chastity, discernment, friendship, silence, and ultimately what Cassian calls "perfect prayer," the prayer of stillness or the prayer of fire. The famous thirteenth Conference contains Cassian's teaching on grace and free will, offered explicitly to temper Augustine's views on the subject. Cassian was sainted in the East but not in the West, perhaps because of his opposition to Augustine. The Conferences nevertheless became the basis for the Rule of St. Benedict and through that entered the bloodstream of Western civilization. 886 pp.

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