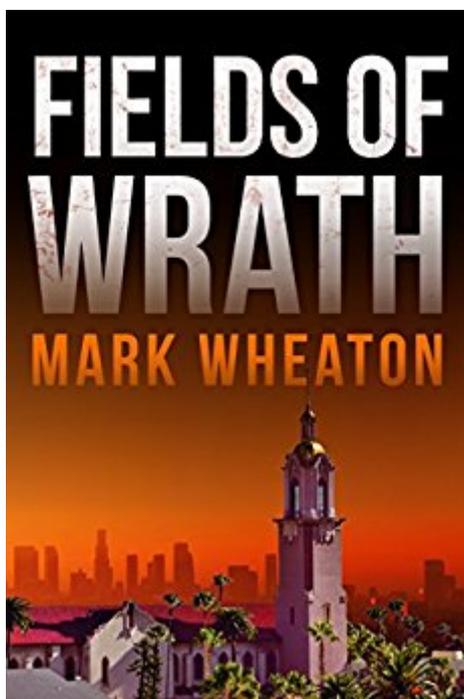


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Fields Of Wrath (Luis Chavez Book 1)



Synopsis

Following his ordination as a priest, Father Luis Chavez returns to the mean streets of his youth, hoping to put his past behind him. But the brutal murder of a worker in Ventura County's vast farm fields compels Luis to return to his criminal roots in order to unravel a massive conspiracy. Teaming up with Michael Story, an ambitious Los Angeles deputy DA, Chavez goes undercover as a farm laborer to bring down an immense human-trafficking ring tied to one of California's most prominent and powerful families. Fighting to stay on the path of the righteous while confronting evil at every turn, Father Chavez finds himself in a battle of good versus evil, with the souls of hundreds hanging in the balance.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Bible promises that God is "a very present help in trouble," but what help should God's church offer to those in trouble? Put it another way.... Is the purpose of the church to prepare people for the next life or to help them with their troubles in this one? Can it do both? These are questions that young Father Luis struggles with daily. "I know the sins of my church," he says sadly, yet he believes in the ability of the church to make a difference in the world. Luis is a former LA

gang-banger who left the street life for seminary. Now he's back in LA, serving his apprenticeship in the local diocese and trying to figure out what plans God has for him. When a very pretty, very frightened woman seeks sanctuary, he's the one who can communicate with her. She and her friend were scheduled to meet with the DA's office to turn over information of a serious criminal conspiracy. Now the friend's missing and the civil rights attorney who was helping them has been murdered. Before Fr. Luis can persuade the girl to talk to the police, she's kidnapped and disappears. When you think about it, cops and priests have a lot in common. Both wear uniforms and have titles and hear confessions. Both must operate in organizations with powerful hierarchies and are hemmed in by strict rules and regulations. And both spend their days trying to solve the problems that the rest of us don't even want to think about, much less get involved with. If they're frequently frustrated and angry, who can blame them? Deputy DA Michael Story says, "cops are masters of internal compromise and rationalization....." Is the same true of priests? Southern California is one of the world's largest and most profitable agricultural areas and agriculture is labor-intensive.

This book is a modern GRAPES OF WRATH, getting into the thick of corruption, murder and oppression against defenseless field workers. But more, it's built on the deep belief by people such as Father Luis Chavez that they and God can make a lasting improvement in their corner of the world. Also, I chose this book because I lived in its locale for over 25 years, and I love that part of the USA. I am also deeply intrigued with the spiritual implications – a young Catholic priest, formerly a tough gang member, returns to his Los Angeles home as a priest in a tough neighborhood. Father Chavez's life motto: "As a priest I'm to provide a vessel through which God's will is executed on earth." But don't get the impression he's a goody-goody. He's a fighter, even becoming a field worker to learn what's going on. This book is about much more than religion -- it's about the eternal battle of GOOD VS. EVIL. Chavez has no idea of HOW MUCH DIFFERENCE his struggle for justice involves. His actions will impact thousands of migrants held in "corporate slavery," a devious method by which powerful landowners get cheap labor. A dozen or so major characters from politics, law and business add much depth yet also at times confusion. Particularly in the first half of the book I had to backtrack to figure out who is who. But it was worth hanging in there. As the book progresses, the characters become more lovable... or more hate-able. The tension grows. We get taken up almost breathlessly as we search along with Father Chavez for missing Odilia, a young Mexican girl held in sex slavery. I'm glad I chose this book and recommend it for revealing a dark side of America's agricultural world. I began reading it shortly

after its release at midnight, went to bed at 2 a.m., and got up at 5:30 a.m.

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