

Michael Mayne
The Enduring Melody
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This remarkable and moving book is a summation of the faith which has sustained Michael Mayne throughout his life and of which we had insights in his previous books, in particular *A Year Lost and Found* in which he reflects on his recovery from ME, and *Learning to Dance* which considers a spirituality for old age. In *The Enduring Melody* he likens the thread of faith running throughout his life to the cantus firmus, or enduring melody, in music - hence the book's title.

Michael Mayne presents the book in the form of a journal documenting his final battle with cancer - in fact the book was published just three weeks before his death in October 2006. He takes the journal format as a loose frame, often using the psalms from the Daily Office as the starting point of his reflections on a wide range of spiritual issues. While the descriptions of his journey with cancer are painfully honest, they are never self-pitying but he draws on his extensive knowledge of poetry and literature, and occasionally humour, to keep the reader's mind focussed on God. His statement that 'to die with gratitude for all that has been, without resentment for what you are going through, and with openness towards the future, is the greatest gift we can leave to those who love us and are left behind' (p.250) is a fitting testimony to the life and faith of one of the great Christians of today.

This is a courageous book and one which should give inspiration and comfort to many people struggling to come to terms with life's most difficult questions.

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