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Holy Consumerism

Ed Hays | Feb. 5, 2010

Karen Armstrong, the author of several excellent books on religion, makes an intriguing observation when she says that for many people religion has become just another consumer item or service. How many people use their religion to undergo a transformation, and how many expect attending church or synagogue will provide them with a little moral uplift?

Understandably, religion couldn?t escape from being swept up into the magnetic whirlpool of consumerism that so dominates our culture. Envision an intersection with a Wal-Mart store on one corner, a Taco Bell on another, a Home Depot on the third, and on the fourth your parish church. Each of the four places provides some service and is eager to attract customers. While to refer to worshippers as customers is disturbing, isn?t that how many approach the ?service? they attend? If the service at the Taco Bell isn?t good, customers go elsewhere, which is usually what happens with religious customers too.

May I never come to pray
like a dissatisfied customer
but rather as your beloved, grateful and accepting
of whatever happens in our holy rendezvous.

From *A Book of Wonders* by Ed Hays

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Prayer action suggestion:
Read one of Karen Armstrong?s books. Discuss it with a friend or family member.

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