



# The Clowns of God

*Morris L. West*

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## **The Clowns of God** Morris L. West

What would happen if members of the Roman Curia discovered that the Pope was about to publicly state that he had received a private revelation that the world was about to end - an apocalypse coming at any moment? Is he a madman, as his cardinals suspect, a mystic, or a fanatic grasping for an unholy power?

## **The Clowns of God Details**

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Author : Morris L. West

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## From Reader Review The Clowns of God for online ebook

### Mo says

I am loving this book by Morris West. He wrote it years ago but it's basic premise is timeless. He writes of a Pope who understands that people who have Downs Syndrome are gifted and are bringing a special gift to the world for those who are open to learn from people with this giftedness. Further review, when I'm finished reading this, so far, wonderful read.

I'm not Roman Catholic, however it is interesting to get a bit of an insider view (just a tad) of some of the goings on in the Vatican. With this present Pope, Pope Francis we humans finally seem to have a great spiritual leader who seems to truly be a genuinely, great man of God. Pope Francis seems to truly understand the Love of God as did his namesake, Francis of Assisi. Francis of Assisi was so in tune with Love and with all of creation: animals, birds, plants, The Divine and with the human heart. So this present Pope also seems to truly be in tune with Spirit moving and doing a new thing; and it is good to be reading this older novel, about a Pope at a time when a similar such man stands, as the Roman Catholics believe, "in the shoes of the fisherman". Finally a major spiritual leader who does live out and demonstrate the inclusive love of The Good Shephard.

I enjoy that Morris West envisioned a character, a Pope, who could be such a good person, decades before a similar real Pope, was finally elected into the top Roman Catholic religious position of leadership.

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### Jerry Wendt says

Everyone remembers Morris West for his book "The Shoes of the Fisherman," a wonderfully written book about a new pope who revitalizes the Catholic Church and reinstates "humility" to the Church. It is very much more interesting in light of the new Pope Francis. It was also made into a riveting, lush, and pertinent motion picture starring Anthony Quinn at his best.

However "The Clowns of God" which is grouped into what they now call West's "Vatican Trilogy" with "Shoes," this book and "Fisherman" While "Fisherman" is his best known, "The Clowns of God," in my opinion is his best book. His writing, plot development and morality tale are expertly woven into an engrossing tale that keeps you reading impatiently all the way through.

In this case Pope Gregory receives a message directly from God and being ridiculed and doubted, he abdicates the high office and retires to the country of Italy to administer to a flock of poor, ill and lost souls. I can't tell you what happens from that point without spoiling it for you, but I know you will find it fascinating and worth the read.

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### Jose Luis Meza Garcia says

Vaya! Qué libro más difícil de sintetizar! Es que pasan tantas cosas en sus más de 500 páginas que uno se queda pensando en muchas cosas. Sobretudo viendo lo real y factible que sea el libro. Definitivamente Morris West tiene un privilegio al momento de contar historias respecto a la religión, pero el libro no es sólo para los creyentes de alguna religión particular, es para todos y es que es lo suficientemente abierto y explicativo para ello.

En el libro, el Papa Gregorio XVII menciona haber tenido una visión del fin del mundo y tiene toda la intención de comunicarla. Los cardenales y obispos temiendo el pánico lo hacen abdicar al Papado e ir a un monasterio, no sin antes él haber enviado éste manuscrito a su mejor amigo Carl Mendelius, un profesor alemán que hacía años había dejado la vida religiosa. Éste junto a un reconocido editor publican el libro con la visión del Ex-Papa. Con esto empieza una historia donde se ven realidades de diferentes países que al borde una tercera guerra mundial toman esta noticia de forma muy diferente.

Lo que me deja un signo de interrogación es el final, no es que sea malo, es lógico y hasta entendible, pero hubiera preferido que fuese diferente. De todas formas es lo que él autor quiso plasmar y eso se aplaude ya que hay que tener mucho valor literario para hacer lo que él hizo.

Si les ha gustado algún libro de Morris West lean éste. Encontrarán más que un momento de reflexión en las turbulencias del libro.

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### **Mary says**

I read this because it's alluded to in I am the Messenger by Markus Zusak. I was stunned by the thematic similarities and the message.

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### **booklady says**

I'd heard this was better than Morris' first in the trilogy, The Shoes of the Fisherman. Perhaps because I stopped and started it so often, it failed to capture me the way his first one did. Once I got back into it, however, then I was hooked. I especially liked when it switched vantage points and I loved the ending. Someday I'm going to try reading it over again from start to finish without all the breaks and see if I don't get more out of it.

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### **Kari says**

I really liked this book UP UNTIL the end. (I would give the first 4/5 of the book five stars but the last 1/5... not even one!) The characters were very intricately written and the relationships and/or encounters between them so real and full of meaning. There were powerful struggles with faith and doubt in terms of human to human relationships, individual to institution relationships and human to divine. Each character represented a diverse and interesting reaction to the inevitability of the end of the world that had me really questioning what I would do in their shoes. (How DO you plan for the end of the world!?) BUT... the end of the book was so weak and disappointing. I wouldn't even say it was predictable because I never would have guessed that West would do something so uninteresting! If only I could go back and unread that ending...

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### **Anne Hawn Smith says**

This is another great book by Morris West. Jesus has come as Redeemer in the modern age. One of the things that I will always remember is the incident that gives the book its name. The "clowns of God" are

children who are mentally or physically handicapped. The French have given them that name and feel that these children are especially close to God's heart. Jesus pulls one of the children towards him and tells his followers that he knows that they want a sign that he is really the Messiah and they want him to miraculously heal the small group of children in the nun's care.

He tells his followers that they need these children to complete their humanity. I won't spoil the rest by telling what he said, but it has stayed with me all these years.

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### **Amberlee Bixler says**

As a sister to a challenged individual, I found this book insulting. As a Protestant/Christian, the story was ok, but not something that would have kept my attention if I didn't have to read it for my book club. This book reminds me of overly greasy pizza the morning after: it'll get you through if you have to have something - but it's not something you really want to have on an ongoing basis.

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### **Kevin Canavan says**

#### A Pure Challenge of Understanding

The Clowns of God, by Morris West, was a roller coaster of emotions and confusion. Right off the bat you find out that the Pope during this time received a vision from God about the end of the world, or the second coming of Jesus. West fills this story with twists and turns that will keep any reader on their toes. The amount of trauma and violence that occurs in this book is baffling. From shootings to the CIA planting bombs, this story is not for the faint hearted.

Although exciting, The Clowns of God was truly a tough read. I would be lying if I said that I understood any sort of deeper meanings in the story. I'm sure that if someone of stronger faith and comprehension of the deeper meaning of Catholicism would find this book quite enjoyable. Therefore I suggest that anyone who is looking for a good, challenging story reads The Clowns of God in their own rate and time.

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### **Paul Gaya Ochieng Simeon Juma says**

I was very disappointed after reading this book. I expected a lot of religious philosophy but instead it turned out to be a debate as to whether between the concept of Consummation and Continuity. It was one's man search to find out the truth in the pope's prophecy of the end times. If one is not careful and is weak in faith

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then the book can easily shake the ground on which he or she stands. Maybe the first one is better if only I could find it.

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### **Mariella says**

I think this is a wonderful book. I never tire of re-reading it.

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### **Gbolahan says**

So.

This is what I spent the last 20 years looking for.

I started this book as a teenager, I'm not sure any longer why I couldn't finish it then, probably lost or got torn or something. I just remember I was hooked and had to finish it. When I eventually got a Kobo account some 2 years ago, it was one of the first books I looked for on kobostore. It was there for 10 dollars, so I kept it on my to-read shelf, until Kobo took it off their shelf last year or so, so I couldn't buy it from them eventually.

Spent months looking for it again, until I remembered I had an account with openlibrary.org...Ha! They even had multiple copies of the book. I borrowed it from them and spent about 21 days reading it (had to borrow it twice, you must return each book after 14 days).

And finally, it is over. After 20 years.

What was West trying to achieve with this book? It started so well, an abdication, a vision (true or false or hallucination?), a former priest who was now married, a bomb, face and hand blown off, goodness!

Then it just seemed to start meandering. There was this coming war they kept on beating us the head over with...we never even got to know just who the heck wanted to fight a war and WHY (!!)...something about...grain???

West also wasn't very clear about what the end of world was to be, a real end from God or war, or were people going to rise from the ashes of war to continue living, if so, where was the end in that? Was Jesus coming back? Or he had been around all that while? Was Atha delusional?

Just have faith.

Someone had a stroke. Eh.

Then it seemed God changed his mind at the end. Or did he? He just...postponed...?

I really liked the early parts of this book I read as a child. Finishing it now, not so much.

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### **Dean Tsoumbakopoulos says**

## A journey Through Philosophy

The Clowns of God by Morris West, is not your average book. This book delves deep into the depths of the philosophy of religion, politics, corruption, and what is truly moral. From the start, a pope faces the destructive decision of whether or not to proclaim the second coming of Christ, which would cause panic across the world, and possibly another Schism in the church. Morris West keeps the reader enthralled from beginning to end with plot twists. One of these plot twists causes the book to switch the entire point of view of the story at times. This book can be hard to comprehend, and I do not think I was able to grasp anything past the surface of the book. I believe this is a great book, however it is not for everyone. In order to get the most out of this book, you have to approach it metaphorically and analytically.

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## Linda Robinson says

A good friend who shares reading tastes loaned me this book. She said it made an impression when she read it in the 80s. The novel still makes quite an impact. It begins: "In the seventh year of his reign, two days before his sixty-fifth birthday, in the presence of a full consistory of Cardinals, Jean Marie Barette, Pope Gregory XVII, signed an instrument of abdication, took off the Fisherman's ring, handed his seal to the Cardinal Camerlengo and made a curt speech of farewell." The short good-bye wished the Curia bon chance finding a new Pope because "God knows you will need him!" World governments are tipping toward global annihilation. What causes Pope Gregory XVII's leaving is a vision of what the future will hold. Conditions on earth are similar to what we have now. But, since humans have been in charge, hasn't it always been this way? Conflict, poverty, techy egos on purple thrones in positions of power, fingers on triggers. This is a novel of faith with wonderful intellectual discussions about what that means to whom. Beautiful read. Grace is a word- and condition- that enters all faith and belief discussions, not always with a satisfying conclusion. This novel gives the word full measure. There's a star gone missing because I can't figure out why humor is spelled "homor" throughout, but that's on the publisher, not West. Written in 1981, West and his publisher should have been aware that "mongols" was neither accurate, nor current usage for Down's syndrome. That will not stop an eager reader from enjoying this journey.

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## Mary says

Just reread this wonderful 30 year old book. It certainly applies to life in today's world. The current governments of the world, the Church, and people who have attained power have not changed or improved from those described when the book was written, which is truly a disappointment but not a surprise.

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