My Father’s House McClelland Book Discussion Group

(2023) December 2, 2023

By 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Joseph O’Connor

Joseph O’Connor is an Irish novelist born in 1963. He currently lives in Dublin and is the author of numerous works including several historical novels (*Star of the Sea, Ghost Light,* and *Shadowplay*).

*My Father’s House* is the first of trilogy: *The Rome Escape Line.*

* Consider the title *My Father’s House.* As well as a geographical meaning, what metaphors do you think O’Connor intended?
* O’Connor has emphasized that this is a fictional account of a real person, Msgr. Hugh O’Flaherty. He has also emphasized that the book is not about the Catholic Church.

If you are familiar with the controversy surrounding the Vatican and World War II, does this novel give you a different perspective or reinforce a view?

* The novel switches between third person narratives and descriptions of the escape plan headed by Msgr. O’Flaherty to first person interviews and remembrances of members of the “choir” 20 years later. These narratives fill in many of the details. Are they all reliable? Do you get any insight into if one of them was an informer?
* O’Connor has said that the second novel in the trilogy the protagonist is Countess Giovanna and the final book will be narrated by the English Ambassador’s servant, John May. What do you expect from these two very different narrators?

Our January 27, 2024 we will read and discuss *Apeirogon* by Colum McCann.