

Queerness and Catholicism Collide in Bill Hulseman's Debut Essay Collection, Releases July 8, 2025

"six to carry the casket and one to say the mass" invites readers to examine identity, belonging, and faith through intimate and transformative storytelling.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Author Bill Hulseman releases his powerful debut, "six to carry the casket and one to say the mass", on July 8, 2025. A soul-baring essay collection that challenges what it means to inherit identity—and what it means to let it go. Part memoir, part meditation, this striking book offers a nuanced and heartfelt exploration of queerness, Catholicism, pop culture, family, and personal transformation.

Hulseman, the youngest of ten children in a devout Catholic family, grew up feeling like "an ornament" in his own household. As a gay man who went on to teach religion in Catholic schools, Hulseman writes from the tension between belonging and invisibility—offering readers raw, reflective, and often humorous glimpses into a life lived on the margins of acceptance and authenticity.



Author Bill Hulseman

"Sometimes the safest-looking spaces are the ones asking you to be small," Hulseman says.

"That's not safety—it's erasure."

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We are not stuck with the identity we inherit.”

Bill Hulseman

Through a series of compelling personal essays, Hulseman confronts the identities handed down to him—religious, familial, sexual, and cultural—and asks the reader to do the same. From channeling resilience through Madonna's

Ray of Light, to breaking silence in the classroom, "six to carry the casket and one to say the mass" is not a manifesto—it's an invitation.

"We are not stuck with the identity we inherit," says Hulseman. "The challenge—and the gift—is deciding what to keep and what to let go."

The book is divided thematically, covering key moments in Hulseman's personal evolution: his experiences in Catholic education, the complexity of growing up queer in a religious household, and the spiritual significance he finds in pop culture. The final section focuses on his queer identity, making the case that Pride is more than parades—it's personal reckoning.

Hulseman's voice will resonate with readers of memoirists like David Sedaris, Garrard Conley, or Alexander Chee. His essays offer comfort and challenge in equal measure for anyone who has ever wrestled with inherited identity, struggled with faith, or questioned the role of tradition in their modern life.

"six to carry the casket and one to say the mass" is published by Peanut Butter Publishing, the book is available on Hardcover for [pre-order on Amazon](#), Pathway, Allstora, Barnes & Noble or through your local bookstore. Advanced review copies may be [requested through NetGalley](#).

Title: six to carry the casket and one to say the mass

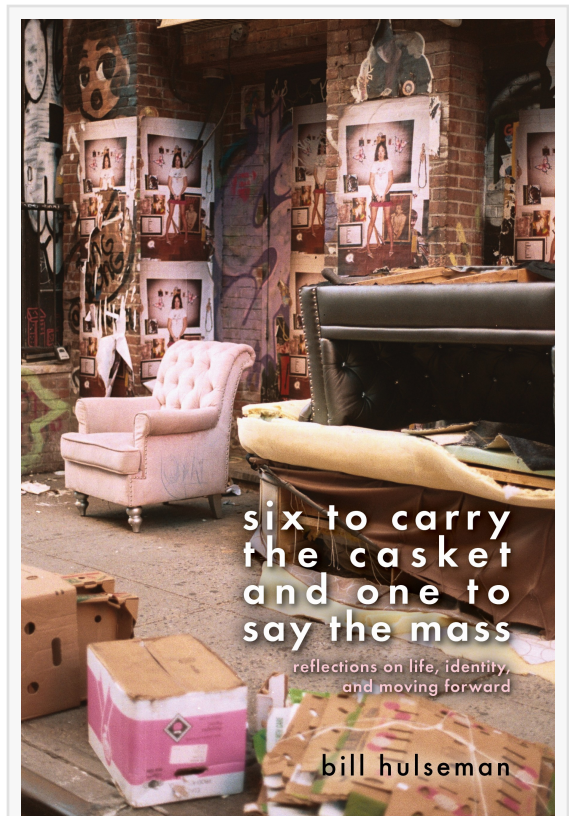
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About the Author

Bill Hulseman is a writer, ritual designer, and former Catholic school educator whose work explores the intersections of identity, queerness, and spirituality. A campus minister by training and a reflective educator by nature, he now leads weekly Zoom meditations for anyone looking for a little peace and quiet. Bill lives in Seattle, WA, where he continues to write and design meaningful experiences that challenge the status quo with gentleness and depth. "six to carry the casket and one to say the mass" is his debut book. Visit his [website](#) to learn more.□

Desiree Duffy
Black Chateau



six to carry the casket and one to say the mass : reflections on life, identity, and moving forward

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