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Nota di contenuto	; pt. I. The Origins of the Parochial System. ; 1. Church and parish. ; 2. Rectors and vicars: from Gratian to the Reformation. ; 3. The parish, its bounds and its division. ; 4. The urban parish -- ; pt. II. The Functions of the Parish. ; 5. The parish and its servants. ; 6. The economics of the parish. ; 7. The parish and the community. ; 8. The parish and the church courts: a mirror of society. ; 9. The parish church, popular culture and the Reformation -- ; pt. III. The Parish and its Church. ; 10. The parish: its church and churchyard. ; 11. The fabric of the church: the priest's church. ; 12. The people's church: the nave and the laity.
Sommario/riassunto	Most writings on church history have been concerned mainly with church hierarchy, and with theology, liturgy and canon law. This book looks at the church 'from below', from the lowest stratum of its organisation - the parish - in which the church building is seen as the

parishioners' handiwork and as a reflection of local popular culture. The book discusses in turn the origin and development of the system of precisely-defined parishes, their function - in terms of economics and personnel - and the church fabric which embodied the aspirations of parishioners, who saw the church more as an expression of their cultural and social hopes than as the embodiment of their faith. The book ends with the failure of the parish to meet all of its obligations - social, governmental and religious - from the late eighteenth century onwards.

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