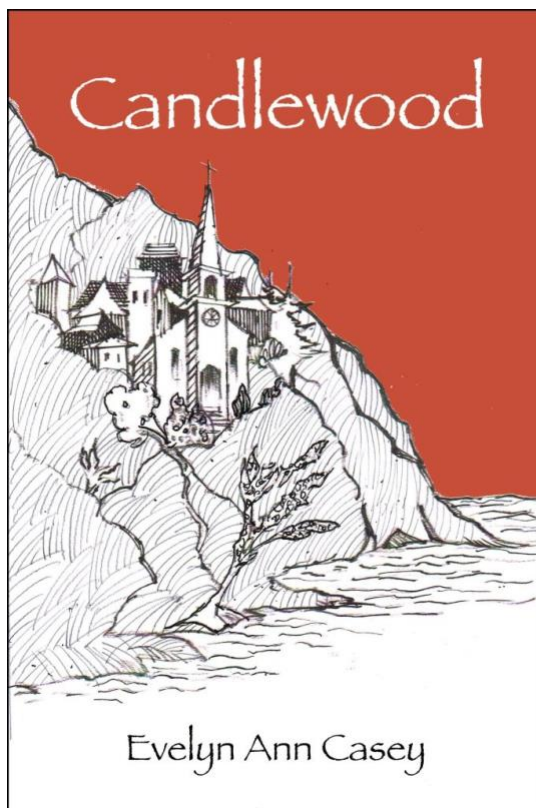


Publicity Contact: Kathleen Fletemeyer
kateflete@gmail.com (608) 514-4150

“A heartfelt and well-orchestrated story of disillusioned faith and elusive hope.”

Casey’s debut novel “charts... winding roads through violation and heartbreak with a readable style and a generous amount of empathy... her skill at crafting characters is finely tuned, and even the book’s minor secondary characters feel fully realized. Meg’s struggles with the dictates of the Church will resonate with a great many of Casey’s readers; the author’s refusal to settle for easy novelistic solutions to complicated issues is refreshing.”

— *Kirkus Reviews*



A young woman is caught in the crosshairs of a community she once trusted. Meg knows the rules, but does she know herself?

St. Croix Valley, Minnesota, 1977

First year teacher Meg Joyce toughed it out to get a toehold on the kind of life her family couldn’t give her. She cannot afford to be out on strike. When her pastor offers her a job at the parish, she believes it’s manna from heaven.

Meg soon finds herself fending off Father Darren, the menacing priest from prayer group. He tricks her into viewing a painting that hangs above his bed while he rants about the woman who gave it to him. Meg keeps quiet on the advice of her gay brother who warns her the bishop is likely glad his priest goes after women, not men or boys. Who would believe her anyway?

A different kind of challenge looms when salt of the earth Father Andy is assigned to the parish. Their friendship heats up, though Meg knows the rules and is loath to add another sin to her family’s litany of taboos. Meanwhile, the sleazy priest from prayer group goes

unchecked. Meg must confront the boys club of her Church, find a God she can trust, and reckon with her deepest desires.

For fans of: J. Courtney Sullivan, Jennifer Haigh, Jonathan Franzen, and Claire Keegan.

CANDLEWOOD

by Evelyn Ann Casey

Three Towers Press, an imprint of HenschelHAUS Publishing, Inc.

February 10, 2025 Historical women’s fiction 346 pp.

Paperback \$18.95 ISBN-13#: 979-8990820326



About the Author

Evelyn Ann Casey writes stories filled with grace and gumption. Her writing asks hard questions yet reflects hope in the darkest hours. A love of language and storytelling grew from her Chicago roots in a multi-ethnic neighborhood filled with Irish brogues and pubs, Sicilian music and cannoli, and the Yiddish banter of delis. Her debut novel, *Candlewood*, is peopled with flawed characters finding their footing, and perhaps love, in a world built on the mixed blessing of a tight-knit community.

On a trip to Minnesota to visit her former roommate, Evelyn discovered the St. Croix Valley with its scenic river and waterfalls. Her stories bring a strong sense of place from connections such as these. In college, she backpacked across Europe and later jumped at an opportunity to work on a year-long project at WNET in New York City.

Evelyn worked in government relations in Milwaukee before managing outreach programs in healthcare at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. When not exploring locales near and far with her husband, she attends music and theatre venues as often as possible and volunteers with community reading programs. Learn more about Evelyn Ann Casey at: evelynanncasey.com

Talking Points:

Becoming a debut novelist after 50

The pressures and stigma around writing about controversial subjects

The allure of forbidden love: From *The Scarlet Letter* to *Thorn Birds* to *Fleabag*

More Advance Praise for CANDLEWOOD

“Casey has brought storytelling back to its roots, with characters who know who they are and what they want, wrestling with the intersections of faith, fate, and fear.”

— Susanna Daniel, PEN/Bingham award winning author of *Stiltsville* and *Sea Creatures*

“*Candlewood* is a tender, suspenseful, and well-written story of love and its many facets... With a plot set in the 1970s... the story shows the challenges for a young person trying to find her footing in life beyond matters of the heart. This is a first novel for the author but let’s hope for many more. The book contains excellent research notes and questions for book clubs. Highly recommended.”

— Christine DeSmet, bestselling mystery author and director of the nationally recognized Write by the Lake retreat.

“*Candlewood* by Evelyn Ann Casey is a gorgeously-written story... It’s impossible not to cheer for this captivating heroine whose story takes the reader through triumph and heartbreak in her search for love and inner peace. Meg will stay with the reader long after finishing the book.”

— Gregory Lee Renz, author of *Beneath the Flames* and *Beyond the Flames*