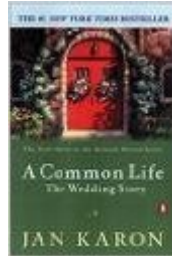


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# A Common Life: The Wedding Story



## Synopsis

Creator of the best-selling Mitford series Jan Karon answers her listeners' questions with more of the romance between Father Tim and Cynthia. In this heart-warming tale, excitement sweeps the town after Mitford's beloved Episcopal priest announces plans to end his long-time bachelorhood. Sixty-something Father Tim always thought he would remain single. But when Cynthia begins attending his parish, he loses his heart. Afraid to step forward, but terrified of wasting another moment, he pours out his feelings. As the parishoners and townsfolk learn of the impending wedding, they wonder-who will bake the cake; who will arrange the flowers? But even while they joyously make plans, they worry: will marriage change Father Tim?

## Book Information

Series: Mitford (Book 6)

Audio CD

Publisher: Recorded Books (2001)

Language: English

ASIN: B000SDZ6GM

Product Dimensions: 6.9 x 6.2 x 1 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (437 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,030,001 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in [Books > Books on CD >](#)

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## Customer Reviews

I read this sixth Mitford installment after completing the second one, which is where it really belongs, and I have to say that Jan Karon continues to please me. While *A Common Life* is not as long or as in depth as her other Mitford novels, it still maintained that downhome sweetness and comfortable, cozy feeling that I've come to expect and love in these books. *A Common Life* tells the story of Father Tim's acceptance of the importance and necessity of Cynthia in his life. After proposing, the couple encounters the typical problems, jitters and joys that most engaged couples do. And as expected, the whole town of Mitford is getting into the celebration: HESSIE MAYHEW is in charge of the flowers, ESTHER BOLICK is waiting for her invitation to bake the cake, and Uncle Joe is busily searching for the best joke to tell at the reception. And of course the wedding couldn't come off without at least a small hitch -- at 10 minutes after starting time, Cynthia is nowhere to be

found...Jan Karon has written another pleasing and endearing story. It is written in the same beautiful, classy way as the others, and any Mitford fan will consider this novel to be a wonderful addition to the series. Having said that, I can see where some readers could be disappointed if they were reading the books in order since *A Common Life* (#6) does not continue with the story where #5 stopped but instead goes back in time to between #2 and #3. However, despite which order you read it (and I recommend #6 after #2), I believe *A Common Life* is a treasure and perfect as a gift for any engaged or newly married couple as it celebrates a wonderful and simple romance. Looking forward to continuing on with the third book in the series. I know I won't be disappointed.

No, it isn't long enough - hence 4 stars, not 5 - but it is a sheer joy for what it is. As a Mitford-addicted reader and tape listener I approached with trepidation hearing the tape read by anyone but Jan. Dana Ivy is superb and captures Cynthia especially with new shades of color cast on this fascinating character. The complexity and challenge of what it means to make a marriage commitment is genuinely explored through Father Tim; we learn more about the Mitfordites through vignettes connected to their own marriages or love stories; Miss Sadie is ALIVE again; Dooley's singing, so eloquently done by Dana on the tape - all are joys. The simple reiteration of the Gospel and how to find spiritual wholeness - for me, the heart of all Mitford books - is there in power. *A COMMON LIFE* is a lorgnette-view of characters about whom we have come to care during the single event about which we would most like to know every detail. The book delivers - but we'll never stop wanting more, because Jan's storytelling gift has made room for itself permanently for so many.

My wife and I have read each of Karon's Mitford books aloud to each other over the past few years. This is one of the better ones. One thing I enjoyed about this book is that several different characters narrate it. In the other Mitford books (thus far) everything is narrated from Father Tim's perspective. But here we are privy to the thoughts and observations of other well-known characters, such as: Esther Bolick, Uncle Billy Watson, and Mayor Cunningham. I think this change of structure works well for this particular installment. It gives us a fuller view of that most dramatic of events: the marriage of a beloved old bachelor. Let's face it; if it were up to Father Tim to remember the events surrounding his wedding to Cynthia, we wouldn't have much to work with because he had too much going on around him. This book is slimmer than the others, perhaps offering less story than fans are used to. One compensatory value might be that it has a nice two-color interior design. I recommend *A Common Life* to fans of the series mainly on the virtue of its unique structure, giving voice to

other familiar characters

I think the bad reviews on this site are based on disappointment -- and a misunderstanding of what this book is. This is not a continuation of the Mitford series, but rather a novella (that means it's short!) about the engagement and marriage of Father Tim and Cynthia. I thought the story was lovely -- I especially appreciated seeing a more vulnerable side to Cynthia... we learn things about her that we didn't know before. I'm sure that Jan Karon is under great pressure from her publisher to write MORE, MORE, MORE Mitford books, and they would like to have one a year from her. Well, she won't do that; she can't do that. So we wait longer between books and receive stories of astonishing depth and quality. This novella reminds us how desperate we are for the next in the series. I have to admit that I think the publisher's price and the packaging are a bit deceiving -- the double-spacing and wide margins feel like an attempt to pull the wool over our eyes. But don't blame Jan Karon -- she is like her character, Cynthia Coppersmith... she agonizes over her deadlines and worries that her work isn't up to her readers' expectations.

To enjoy Jan Karon's writing, you have to be somewhat of a romantic at heart or at least believe that a place like Mitford could exist. To enjoy her latest "A Common Life" you have to believe in the fun and excitement of a small-town wedding, and the love of two people pledged to marry. This book would make a great gift for a bride, and Jan Karon has done a good job of helping the first-time reader feel welcome in Mitford. For those who love Mitford, this book fills in the gaps between Father Tim and Cynthia. Just enjoy this book for what it is: an affirmation of true love and marriage, and a pleasant visit to Mitford! I too look forward to the next installment of the Mitford series, but I am glad that Jan Karon went back to fill in the wedding story details.

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