The Nones Are Alright

A New Generation of Believers, Seekers, and Those in Between

KAYA OAKES
Founded in 1970, Orbis Books endeavors to publish works that enlighten the mind, nourish the spirit, and challenge the conscience. The publishing arm of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Orbis seeks to explore the global dimensions of the Christian faith and mission, to invite dialogue with diverse cultures and religious traditions, and to serve the cause of reconciliation and peace. The books published reflect the views of their authors and do not represent the official position of the Maryknoll Society. To learn more about Maryknoll and Orbis Books, please visit our website at www.maryknollsociety.org.

Copyright © 2015 by Kaya Oakes.
Published by Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York 10545–0302.
Manufactured in the United States of America.
Manuscript editing and typesetting by Joan Weber Laflamme.
All rights reserved.

Portions of this book appeared, in slightly different forms, in the following publications: America, Commonweal, Cross Currents, Killing the Buddha and the National Catholic Reporter. Thanks to the editors of those publications for their guidance and support.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Queries regarding rights and permissions should be addressed to: Orbis Books, P.O. Box 302, Maryknoll, New York 10545–0302.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Oakes, Kaya.
The nones are alright : a new generation of believers, seekers, and those in between / Kaya Oakes.
   pages cm
ISBN 978-1-62698-157-7 (pbk.)
BV652.5.O25 2015
277.3'083—dc23

2015013948
# Contents

*Acknowledgments* ix

*Introduction: The Seekers* 1

1. Nothing from Nothing 17

2. Belonging without Believing 33

3. Liminal Faith 47

4. When Women Don’t Worship 63

5. Queering the Nones 79

6. Among the Catholics 93

7. Boomerangs 107

8. Sex, Marriage, and the Unholy Mess 123

9. Catholic Roots, Broken Branches 141

10. The Binding 159

11. Guerrilla Faith 173

*Afterword: Jumping the Fence* 193