



Book+Circle - March 2021 – held on zoom

Title of the book & author	Five People we meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom
About the Book -	<p>THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN is a wonderfully moving story that addresses the meaning of life, and life after death, in a poignant way. The novel's protagonist is an elderly amusement park maintenance worker named Eddie who, while operating a ride called the 'Free Fall', dies while trying to save a young girl who gets in the way of a falling cart that hurtles to earth. Eddie goes to heaven, where he meets five people who were unexpectedly instrumental in some way in his life. While each guide takes him through heaven, Eddie learns a little bit more about what his time on earth meant, what he was supposed to have learned, and what his true purpose on earth was. Throughout there are dramatic flashbacks where we see scenes from his troubled childhood, his years in the army in the Philippines jungle, and with his first and only love, his wife Marguerite.</p>
How did the book make us feel?	<p>The Book+Circle members all felt really positive about this book. Everyone enjoyed this unique, surprising and “very clever” little book, finding it moving and emotional.</p> <p>We felt it conveyed the idea of purgatory as a positive place of understanding and reconciliation.</p> <p>The revelation of all the people that Eddie kept safe through his life in maintenance was joyful and a great reminder that none of us knows how our tiny efforts as humans, can matter.</p>
What did the group think were the Book's main strengths?	<p>It was very easy to read. Whilst not a challenging read in its language/structure, it offered a lot to think about what may happen after death. The descriptions of incidents in Eddie's life, some of which were harrowing, as well as the many characters, were realistic and beautiful, reinforcing a connectivity between people and events, as part of God's care and plan. Even negative times were redemptive as Eddie is faced with the power of forgiveness – both towards himself and towards others.</p> <p>The message that all lives have value and meaning and that we may often not appreciate the impact we have on others - and that all endings are beginnings -were uplifting, as were some of the little quotes/little gems that some readers remembered eg. “life has to end, love doesn't”.</p>

And what were the Book's main weaknesses?	There were a lot of characters involved, especially at the beginning and took some concentration to remember who they were Maybe "heaven" was a misnomer in the title for where the story plays out, although the attraction of the book's title might be lost if it was changed!
Would we read another Book written by the same author?	Yes – two are now on the list of potential future books to read.
Would we recommend this Book to someone else?	Yes – such an easy read it would be thought-provoking for anyone.
Any other observations/next Book/next meeting date/Venue	<p>Mitch Albom's earlier book "Tuesdays with Morrie" was recommended for the reading list.</p> <p>Next meeting 16th April – AM "Let Us Dream" by Pope Francis in conversation with Austen Ivereigh</p> <p>May 26th meeting - PM</p> <p>"Praying the Rosary Like Never Before" by Edward Sri</p>