

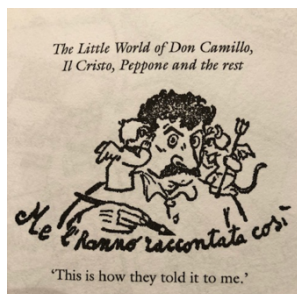
Parish of the Nativity of the Lord

Book+Circle - 8 January 2020

First meeting in the New Year and New Decade

***The Little World of Don Camillo*, by Giovanni Guareschi**

About the book



This book is a classic, the story takes place in 1946 in a small village in Italy with three main characters – the village priest Don Camillo, the communist mayor, Peppone and Il Cristo, Christ on the Cross. In the 'Little World' the absurd dramas of everyday life take place.

How did the book make us feel?

The Book+Circle members had mixed views about this book. Some really enjoyed the stories and chuckled at some of the short stories and could recognise the Italian humour. Others didn't enjoy the book, found it a little bit boring and repetitive ... story after story and didn't get to the end. Those that didn't enjoy the book found it difficult to empathise with the characters in the book. Those that enjoyed the stories, found Don Camillo a great character and the relationship with Il Cristo felt very real. It was thought to be refreshingly close to reality, in that it shows how God loves everyone, failings and all, and has a sense of humour of His own (reminiscent of James Martin's book).

What did the group think were the book's main strengths?

- This was not a complex read, a compilation of lots of short stories each one had an element of humour within – easy to read
- Peppone the key protagonist in the story reminded one reader of Arthur Scargill in his active political days in the Mining Union, and the author does a great job at showing the absurdity of human concerns
- The translation from the Italian was thought to be good and picked up most of the nuances.
- The book does a great job at pointing fun at human nature but also touches on the deep emotions
- We found it interesting how both Don Camillo and Peppone hid their good side from each other
- The way Don Camillo chatted to Il Cristo as a close friend sharing his thoughts and being his conscious was really well written

Any questions email Anne or Teresa

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And what were the book's main weaknesses?

- Some readers didn't warm to Don Camillo and therefore didn't find the situations funny. They couldn't see the message in the book
- We wondered if the book was 'of its time' and was hard to relate to not living in a rural, small community and felt quite male dominated
- The 'human' characters in the stories were thought to be hard to relate to today.

Would we read another book written by the same author?

Some thought that if the author had written other stories, they might be interested to read them, but others weren't keen, but were pleased to have read this book

Would we recommend this book to someone else?

Yes, most could think of someone who would find this book interesting and fun

Next book

***The Seven Storey Mountain* by Thomas Merton**

Date of next meetings

Friday 21 February 10.30 am in the Retreat Café at the PNL Centre, St Joseph's, Redhill

Other dates for 2020

- Wednesday 1 April 20.00 – **Book A Biblical Walk through the Mass" by Edward Sri**
- Friday 15 May 10.30 am café
- Wednesday 24 June 20.00
- Friday 7 August 10.30 am café
- Wednesday 16 September 20.00
- Friday 30 October 10.30 am café
- Wednesday 9 December 20.00