



Parish of the Nativity of the Lord

Book+Circle – August 2024

The Lost Years – Mary Higgins Clark

About the book

With all the elements that have made her a worldwide best seller, Mary Higgins Clark's The Lost Years is a page turner, a thriller that is at once a breathless mystery and a hunt for the most precious religious and archaeological treasure of all time.

Dr. Richard Callahan, a world-respected biblical scholar, is astonished when Mariah Lyons shows him a letter left to her by her late father, a distinguished professor of ancient history, who has been found dead at his home. The letter, which contains a translation from a 2,000-year-old papyrus scroll, is accompanied by a dusty clay jar and a fragile fragment of papyrus torn from a scroll. If accurate, the translation made by Mariah's father, an Arabic scholar, shows that the scroll contains a letter in Christ's own handwriting, and more than that, concerns a pivotal moment in his life.

But the rest of the scroll has vanished, and Mariah is aware that somebody else out there wants it. With Dr. Callahan's help, Mariah is drawn into the search for the scroll, the very existence of which might change the world - and for which somebody close to her would kill her father to possess. Step by step, Mariah's quest takes her deeper and deeper into danger.

How did the book make us feel?

This was an easy summer read, it was entertaining, and we all enjoyed reading the story through. Some found the plot a 'bit of a leap' but left others intrigued whether a scroll could really have been written by a young Jesus.

We have read a couple of other books by this author and a few readers felt the story was a little formulaic.

Overall not too challenging – apart from keeping up with the different characters in the story.

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

We liked the short chapters, which made it easy to pick up and put down. The plot was easy to follow through and interesting to think whether it was based on fiction or fact. It was a page turner for most. We felt sorry for one of the main characters, Kathleen, who had Alzheimers as was treated very badly.

And what were the book's main weaknesses?

There were too many characters in the story, at least 21 people, making it difficult to keep up with who was who ... we thought it would have been useful to have a list of the characters at the start of the book.

Some of us found some of the language a bit 'american'! And we were weren't sure if the title quite fitted with the storyline. It could have done with a subheading.

Would we read another book written by the same author?

This is an easy summer read that we could recommend to anyone who likes a 'detective' type novel. But some of us thought we might not pick up another book by this author.

Next book: Ways of Imperfection by Simon Tugwell

Next meeting: Thursday 24 October 2024 @ 8.00 pm - St Joseph's parish room