



## Parish of the Nativity of the Lord

Book+Circle – January 2022

### Praying the Truth by William Barry SJ (mentioned on Invited by Dom Stephen Ortiger)

#### About the book

William A. Barry, SJ, helps us deepen our friendship with God by examining how to approach God, at any time and with any problem, in complete honesty. Fr. Barry reflects on how secrecy can hurt families, the Church, and ourselves and how what we are keeping secret can get in the way of our connection with God. He acknowledges that we may fear God's reaction when revealing our most intimate truths; but just like with friendships, we risk not developing our relationship with God if we are dishonest about who we are and how we feel. *Praying the Truth* helps us realize that if we do not approach God in complete honesty, we may be holding back a part of ourselves that needs to be healed. By learning how to communicate honestly with God, our friendship with God and our faith in God's promise to love us unconditionally will be strengthened.

#### How did the book make us feel?

In the words of one member they 'loved it' and felt it had a lot to say to them personally. It triggered thoughts on how we are not always honest in our friendships for fear of damaging our relationships. The quote 'Honesty is the bedrock of friendship' particularly resonated with one member and how we can put ourselves in the hands of God to inspire us in the right way forward. We don't always listen properly in our conversations, thinking of solutions before the other person has finished speaking.

The book, also, spoke of our reaction to beauty and how we can see God's presence in it. This can make us feel a deep and special longing for God which was very poignant. One member is taking more notice of God's presence in nature during her daily dog walks.... "Ignatius of Loyola is known for wanting to find God in all things, being conscious of God's presence".

The subheading, 'Deepening our Friendship with God' is 'right there'. The word friendship is interesting as some had never thought of God as a friend but it was explained so well that it now seems obvious. The message many took from the book is that prayer is a dialogue and not a monologue. God is our friend and friends talk to each other.

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

We liked the size, the short chapters and the easy language. It was an enjoyable and simple read which was understandable and accessible to all.

There are sixteen chapters covering a range of topics, for example, rage, sin and anger etc. Each chapter leads you through honest prayer with God to an understanding of the area of difficulty with helpful poems and psalms to meditate on.

#### And what were the book's main weaknesses?

The only weakness of this book was that it seemed a bit expensive for its size.

**Would we read another book written by the same author?**

Yes definitely.

**Would we recommend this book to someone else?**

There were mixed reactions to this question. Yes but it depends where you are on your faith journey. You would certainly need some faith otherwise it would be meaningless.

**Next book: Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom**

**Next meeting: 4<sup>th</sup> March Friday 10.30 St. Joseph's Cafe after Mass**