



Parish of the Nativity of the Lord

Book+Circle – May 2024

About the Book – The Road to Emmaus and Beyond by Fr Denis McBride

A best-selling classic which has had 4 reprints, and was originally published by Dominican Publications. Following the death of Jesus in Jerusalem, two disappointed disciples leave the city of lost hopes and head away. They meet a mysterious stranger who helps them reinterpret the past in a new light, giving them fresh hope. For many people, the story of Emmaus is the most moving of the resurrection narratives, and Denis McBride's reflections uncover the depth and beauty of Luke's unique scene. The story gives Christians a perfect reminder of coming to know Jesus as Lord in the Eucharist.

How did the book make us feel?

We had mixed reactions across the group about this book. All agreed it was very interesting and very thorough, it put the case about the importance of the Road to Emmaus well. A few of us did find it quite a serious and heavy read and recognised that it needed digesting slowly.

There were some good nuggets in the book that made great sense to us all – such as thinking about experiences we have had in the past that we may not have noticed at the time, but that impact on our future; and the section on pg 175 looking at bereavement and understanding the bigger picture of someone's life was very thought provoking.

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

The book is manageable in length – 170 pages – and feels very well written. It is clearly signposted and breaks into clear logical sections. The author inspires confidence in his analysis. It is a 'teaching book' and needs to be approached with that in mind.

We found it intriguing how everything knitted together from the predications in the Old Testament through to the Passion and Resurrection. Most of us hadn't thought about the journey from Easter through to Pentecost in the way this book takes the reader. McBride makes an interesting case for how Luke approaches this. We learn how meticulously God planned the journey, taking time between Jesus's death, the Resurrection and the Holy Spirit appearing.

We all learnt something new – for example the importance of moving forward from the focus on the 12 Apostles, with one new one being elected to replace Judas, to the focus post the Resurrection on the disciples and the importance of a much wider group spreading the word of God.

What did we think were the book's main weaknesses?

Some of the detail feels repetitive, we understood why as McBride is reinforcing points, but we wondered if he could have got to the key messages quicker. Having said that we did agree that much of the Bible is repetitive and does a good job because of this.

There were a few technical words we hadn't heard of such as 'eschatological' and this made the read a harder work.

There were a lot of references in the book that we all thought would be good to follow through, but as with a lot of books we agreed we probably wouldn't remember to go back to them.

Would we read other books by this author and would we recommend this book to others?

Yes we all agreed it would be good to read other books by this Author, it was very well written. And some of us were interested to listen to him on YouTube.

We thought it would be a good read for anyone wanting to develop their Faith further – rather than for someone new to the Catholic church

Next Book – Thursday 11 July 8.00pm Small meeting room, St Joseph's

Next Read - Opening to God by Thomas Green