



Parish of the Nativity of the Lord

Book+Circle – March 2025

Dilexit Nos – Pope Francis – Encyclical Letter... on the Human and Divine Love of the Heart of Jesus Christ

About the Book

Dilexit nos," Pope Francis' fourth Encyclical, retraces the tradition and relevance of thought on "the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ," calling for a renewal of authentic devotion to avoid forgetting the tenderness of faith, the joy of serving, and the fervour of mission.

The text concludes with this prayer of Pope Francis:

"I ask our Lord Jesus Christ to grant that His Sacred Heart may continue to pour forth the streams of living water that can heal the hurt we have caused, strengthen our ability to love and serve others, and inspire us to journey together towards a just, solidary and fraternal world. Until that day when we will rejoice in celebrating together the banquet of the heavenly kingdom in the presence of the risen Lord, who harmonizes all our differences in the light that radiates perpetually from his open heart. May he be blessed forever".

How did the Encyclical Letter make us feel?

- We enjoyed reading this Book, although it was relatively complex. The principle of what the Pope is saying was very reassuring and confirming.
- We all agreed with the Pope that over the years the Church has focussed less on Devotions to the Sacred Heart – even though many churches and schools are named after the Sacred Heart
- Focussing on the Sacred Heart has strong visual impact, and the book helped us have a better understanding of its meaning.
- Although this book felt quite different to Laudate Si, which we had read twice, there were some similar themes running through
- The Pope reminds us that the World seems to have lost its heart, the concepts within the text are very profound

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

- The Pope gets across the message about the importance of the Sacred Heart clearly.
- There are some lovely nuggets in the book - Jesus' words – *Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart*" And Pope Francis' words: *"Once our hearts welcome the love of Christ in complete trust, and enable its fire to spread in our lives, we become capable of loving others as Christ did, in humility and closeness to all"*
- The book shows how the Sacred Heart is a symbol of Christ's love for Humanity and that modern Society is distracted with tech and constantly being 'on the go' which can lead us to forget or ignore the 'reality' of life - that love and care for others are so important.

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

- The book required a lot of time to take in everything that Pope Francis discusses.
- It was almost too detailed and for some of us rather to abstract in areas.
- It was a book that needed to be read slowly.

Would we recommend that this Encyclical Letter is read by others?

Yes – we all agreed that the Encyclical is well worth reading and would recommend to others. Perhaps with a note to take time to read each section before moving on.

Next Book+Circle - Small Meeting Room at St Joseph's

Thursday 22 May 8.00pm The Jesuit Guide to (almost) everything By James Martin.

Friday 11 July @ 10.30 am (after morning mass) No Truth No Justice, by Audrey Edwards

Subtitle: *A David and Goliath Story of a Mother's Successful Struggle for Justice Against Public Authorities to Secure Justice for Her Son Murdered While in Their Care.*

<https://www.watersidepress.co.uk/audrey-edwards-1934-2025/>

Paul has kindly lent us 3 copies, so we will circulate Audrey's book among Book+Circle members