

ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA PARISH

- Catholic Book Discussion: *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything* by Father James Martin, SJ
- Chapter 11: "Surrendering to the Future: Obedience, Acceptance, and Suffering"
- September 17, 2015

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

1. One of the basic premises of Jesuit (Ignatian) Spirituality is "to find God in all things." Father Martin writes: "God sometimes asks each of us to accept certain things that seem unacceptable. Unbearable. Even impossible...embracing them may sometimes lead to new ways of finding God." (page 304) How could "obedience" and "suffering", the two main themes of Chapter 11, help us "find God"? Has this ever happened in your life?
2. Father Martin tells the stories of two Jesuits, Father Robert Drinan and Father John Courtney Murray. (pages 273ff). Why does he tell these stories? What lessons are there in these stories as you journey into the future?
3. "Obedience is desirable in dogs but suspect in people." (page 279) Describe the Jesuit VOW of Obedience? What does this have to do with your life?...because Father Martin goes on to write: "obedience is something that everyone has to face in the spiritual life." (page 279)
4. Father Walter Ciszek (pages 279ff) is cited as a man who surrendered completely to God obediently accepting great suffering. Father Walter insisted that "we had to learn to recognize his will in the reality of the situation". (page 281) "Obedience means accepting the reality" (page 283) Do you agree with Father Walter's view? Is it too simplistic? Is he saying just be passive and don't try to change reality?

5. Father Martin also discusses the reality of suffering in Chapter 11. On page 292, he speaks of “glib answers” to the problem of suffering. Do any of these “glib answers” make sense to you? Why? Why not?
Father Martin also speaks of the insight that he finds most helpful in times of pain. (page 191) Does this “insight” make sense to you? Why? Why not?

6. “In the end, each of us must grapple with suffering for ourselves.” (page 292) How do you “grapple” with pain, suffering, evil in your life and in our world?
Father Martin goes on to write: “Suffering is a mystery for most believers, but it is one that we should engage with all our minds, hearts, and souls. And the way of Ignatius can help us do so.” (page 292) What insights does Ignatian Spirituality give us in regards to suffering and evil?

7. Why does Father Martin entitle Chapter 11 – a chapter that focuses on obedience and suffering - “Surrendering to the Future”?

8. Anything else that struck you, challenged you, helped you, confused you that you wish to share with the group...