

ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA PARISH

- Catholic Book Discussion Group: *Signs of Life* by Dr. Scott Hahn
- Chapters 4 thru 9: Mass, Angels, Calendar, Seasons and Novenas
- Session Two: March 2, 2017

1. **THE MASS:** Dr. Hahn writes: "The Mass was the center of life for the disciples of Jesus, and so it has ever been. Even today, the Mass is where we experience the apostolic teaching and communion, the breaking of bread and the prayers." (page 37)

- How would you describe the Mass to a non- Catholic friend?
- If that same non-Catholic friend asks you, "Why is Mass so important to you?" how would you respond?
- What words does Dr. Hahn use to describe the Mass?
- What could you do personally to enhance your appreciation of the Mass?

2. **GUARDIAN ANGELS:** Dr. Hahn writes: "Among the liveliest traditions in the ancient Church was devotion to the guardian angels...The story of the Church moves forward with the guidance, protection, and assistance of angels. So do our lives." (page 43)

- When did you personally hear of/learn of your "Guardian Angel"?
- According to Dr. Hahn, what roles did angels play in the Bible? In the history of the Church?
- Why does Dr. Hahn insist that "we should, of course, be particularly attentive to our own guardian angels, since they are specifically assigned to our care."? (page 45) How aware – if at all – are you of the presence of a "Guardian Angel" in your life, your faith?

3. **THE CHURCH'S CALENDAR:** Dr. Hahn writes: "The cycle brings times of fasting and times of feasting, times of sorrow and times of joy, times of penance and times of reconciliation. All creation tells the story. All history tells the story. All our lives, yours and mind, tell the story." (page 55)

- What is "the story" that Scott Hahn refers to in the above quote and what does "the story" have to do with the Church's calendar?
- Do you agree with Hahn's statement that "we often learn our doctrine much more deeply and effecting simply by celebrating the feasts and fasts of the Church"? (page 51)

4. **LENT AND EASTER.** Dr. Hahn writes: "For Christians, the Paschal Mystery should evoke the ancient Passover, when all the firstborn children of Israel were spared, when the chosen people were liberated from slavery, and when they embarked upon their journey to the promised land." (pages 57-58)

- As we begin the Lenten Journey, did any of Dr. Hahn's insights help you to prepare yourself for the 'best Lent' of your life? Which ones?

- What references/passages of the Bible are connected with the number "40"? What do all these biblical events have in common?

- What do you hope for your own personal journey this Lent? What are you doing so that God (the Potter) will mold and form you (the clay) into the Image of Jesus?

5. **ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS:** Dr. Hahn writes: "With the birth of Christ came the fulfilment of all the holy desires of all those many centuries. That is the joy we mark in Christmas, but it's difficult for us to experience the joy unless we undergo the longing." (page 64)

- What new understanding of "Advent" and "Christmas" did you gain from this chapter of Scott Hahn's book?

- Why does Dr. Hahn insist "Advent is a season we must recover, even if it takes heroic effort?" (page 63)

- What is your favorite Liturgical Season? Why?

6. **NOVENAS:** Dr. Hahn writes: "As we pray novenas, it's good for us to remember the fundamentals of Christian prayer. We go to God in our need; we raise our minds and hearts to him; and we ask him for good things...take care not to treat prayer as a mechanical or magical action/" (pages 71-72)

- Growing up in Buffalo, do you remember participating in "novenas"? Did you go by yourself or with others? Where did the Novenas take place? In whose honor were they celebrated? Share your memories...

- Do you personally pray any Novena either privately or with others publicly? In whose honor do you pray? Whose heavenly intercession do you seek?

- What is Dr. Hahn's "word of caution"? (page 72)

7. **ANYTHING ELSE – YOU WANT TO BRING UP AND SHARE?**