

SAINT ALOYSIUS GONZAGA CHURCH

Book Discussion: *My Life with the Saints* by Father James Martin, SJ

Saint Joseph - Chapter 14, "Hidden Lives", Pages 297 thru 312

Thursday – November 21, 2013 – 7:00PM

PLEASE BRING A BIBLE WITH YOU TO THE DISCUSSION – IF YOU REMEMBER...

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

1. What do you already know about Saint Joseph?

2. What did the following have to say about Saint Joseph?
 - St. Paul in his Letters
 - The Gospel of Mark
 - The Gospel of Matthew
 - The Gospel of Luke
 - The Gospel of John

FATHER MARTIN'S UNDERSTANDING OF SAINT JOSEPH

3. Father Martin writes: "I began to find the notion of the hidden life attractive" (page 304). In what ways was the "hidden life" of Jesus and the "hidden life" of Joseph similar – "the beauty of being a copy of mine"? (page 305)

4. Father Martin quotes another author, Robert Ellsberg. When he asks these questions about the "hidden life" of Jesus and by extension the "hidden life" of Joseph: "What was the meaning of that part of my life?" and "What was it I was teaching you?"
 - What have you learned from the "hidden lives" of Jesus and Joseph?

5. Why does Father Martin place such importance on the Little Sisters of Jesus, Charles de Foucauld, Groum?

6. After writing, "Joseph leads a life of quiet service to God, a life that remains almost totally unknown to us." (page 309), Father Martin goes on to talk about the refugees, loving parents of an autistic child, a daughter who remains unmarried to care for her aging mother, a single mother working two jobs (pages 309-310). What connection does Father Martin make in these passages? Do you know anyone who as Father Martin writes embraces "the day to day pouring out of oneself for God"? (page 310)

7. Father Martin describes "indifference" and "availability" as "a kind of goal for the Jesuit life". (page 298) What does it mean for him? What do these words mean to you? Any evidence that they are a part of your own personal spiritual journey?

8. Father Martin quotes Father Nouwen on page 311: "Hidden from the world, but visible to God". After reading about St. Joseph, do these words have any NEW meaning? Are they helpful to you on your spiritual journey? Are they a guide for the journey towards becoming a more "dynamic Catholic"?

9. Father Martin is blatantly honest when he wrote: "This kind of hiddenness is attractive to me because it is so far from the goals of my own selfish desires...I find my appetite for fame in contradiction to what Jesus taught." (Page 310) Do these words resonate at all in your own heart?

10. Sharing with us his desire to grow in holiness, Father Martin writes: "I long for that kind of holiness. But I am very far from it." (page 311) What kind of holiness does Father Martin long for? Describe it. How does he reach it? What do you long for? How do you reach it?

11. How does Joseph help you grow into a more "dynamic Catholic"? What is the essence of "the holiness of hidden lives"? (page 311)