

## ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA PARISH

- Catholic Book Discussion Group: *Signs of Life* by Dr. Scott Hahn
- Chapters 31, 32, 33
- Session Eleven: January 25, 2018

- 1. PILGRIMAGE:** Dr. Scott Hahn writes: "For us, a pilgrimage is a sacramental: an outward sign of an inward grace. It reminds us that we are wayfarers as long as we live here on earth, and we must stay on the path to our glorious destination." (page 206)
  - Why are "pilgrimages" so common in almost every religion and faith?
  - Hahn says that a "pilgrimage soon became the dominant metaphor for ordinary life on earth." (page 205) What do a "pilgrimage" and an "ordinary life" have in common?
  
- 2.** Hahn quotes Pope St. John Paul II: "no pilgrim – whether real or metaphorical – walks alone. We are all accompanied by the 'mysterious Pilgrim of Emmaus'". (page 206)
  - Who is the "mysterious Pilgrim of Emmaus'.
  - Why is it important to know we do not walk alone?
  - How does all this fit in with our prayer at Mass: "strengthen in faith and love your Pilgrim Church on earth"?
  
- 3.** Every "pilgrimage" has a destination – be it a sacred site here below or the common destination we all hope for the Kingdom of Heaven.
  - In the Scriptures, the people of Israel went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem? Why?
  - The early Christians made pilgrimage where?
  - Have you ever went on a "pilgrimage"? To where? Why?
  - Where are possible places of pilgrimage easily accessible to us here in WNY?
  
- 4. THE PRESENCE OF GOD:** Dr. Scott Hahn writes: "We want to be aware of the presence of God at all times...our awareness of God will cover our entire day, as ivy covers an old brick wall and makes it beautiful." (page 211)
  - As you journey through the day, what makes you aware of the Presence of God?
  - What does the prayer called "the Morning Offering" have to do with enhancing our awareness of the Presence of God? (page 212)

5. On our spiritual journey, we should have as our goal “to live in a continual sense of his presence, and, if possible, never more to forget him.” What helps you achieve this goal? Is it even possible to achieve this goal?
  
6. For the people of Israel the Temple was “the divinely ordained place of God’s presence. It was the place where God’s Spirit dwelt...The Temple was the place where they could withdraw from the pollutions of the world and know God’s presence in purity.” (page 208) Do you have to “withdraw” to know the Presence of God? How can you become more aware of God’s Presence in all that happens each day? (confer: page 213)
  
7. **ALMSGIVING:** Dr. Hahn writes: “Almsgiving has everything to do with devotions and piety...it is a powerful form of prayer...”. (page 214)  
- What is the difference between “almsgiving” and “philanthropy”?
  
8. One of the key sentences in Chapter 33 is: “And so our response to the poor was a test to the authenticity of our worship.” (page 216) Hahn also says: “we cannot make a good Communion if we are neglecting the poor.” (page 215) What are these statements teaching us about almsgiving?
  
9. Explain in your own words what Hahn means when he writes: “The Eucharist is the key to a civilization of love. It saves us from misguided tenderness and feel-good philanthropy because it gives us the grace to sacrifice as Jesus did.” (page 216)
  
10. Final comments, observations, questions, insights...