



# Book Clubs

## Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Book Clubs involve each member of a group purchasing and reading the selected book in its entirety. In addition, members commit to meetings on the content of the book, and to preparing for such meetings.

Someone who holds a **professional youth ministry certification** must facilitate each book club meeting. Participants gain clock hours as assigned for each book outlined.



Process for initiating a book club:

- Choose a book from those below that a group (no less than 4 and no more than 10 participants) would like to read together and meet about for discussion.
- Participants must commit to attending ALL of the meetings, participating in the discussion of the group.
- Facilitator completes enclosed book club registration form at least two weeks prior to the first meeting and submits it to the Division of Youth & Young Adult Ministry.
- If a group is open to outside participants, facilitator checks that on the registration form so that information on the club may be made available to others looking for a discussion group, on request.
- Clock hours forms will be provided to the facilitator to distribute at the final meeting of the group.

# **Book Club Titles**

The following books have been approved by the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and have clock hours assigned to them:

**Amore, Mary. *Primary Symbols of Worship***

**Bass, Dorothy C. ed. *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People***

**Carotta, Michael, *Sometimes We Dance, Sometimes We Wrestle: Embracing the Spiritual Growth of Adolescents***

**Dean, Kenda Creasy and Ron Foster, *The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth***

**Durka, Gloria. *The Teacher's Calling: A Spirituality for Those Who Teach***

**Groome, Thomas. *What Makes Us Catholic***

**Grun, Anselm. *Images of Jesus***

**Howe, Neil and William Strauss, *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation***

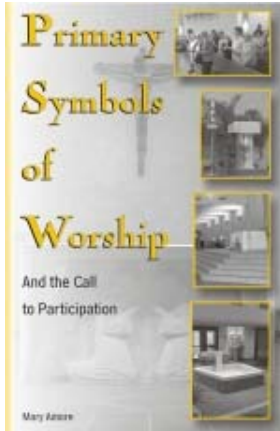
**Martin, James, S.J., ed. *Awake My Soul: Contemporary Catholics on Traditional Devotions***

**Nouwen, Henri, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership***

**Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach***

**Simmons, Rachael. *Odd Girl Out***





**Amore, Mary. *Primary Symbols of Worship* (San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, 2004.)**

- ❑ Read entire book
- ❑ Hold 3 meetings; each 60-75 minutes in length
- ❑ Use discussion questions at the end of each chapter for group discussion; Wherever possible, make connection between the chapter content and questions as posed and the specific ministry context of book club participants (ie, as parish staff members, as religion teachers, as volunteer youth ministry leaders, as youth retreat facilitators, as confirmation team members); Ask what application a knowledge of this information has for our specific ministry with youth, or for our deeper understanding as persons of faith ourselves (who minister to youth)
- ❑ Determine if you wish to use meditation/prayer/reflection segments at the close of chapters for prayer with the group
- ❑ Gain 4 clock hours: 1 in A, 1 in C, 2 in D

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### **Guide Questions for Group Discussions**

Meeting One:

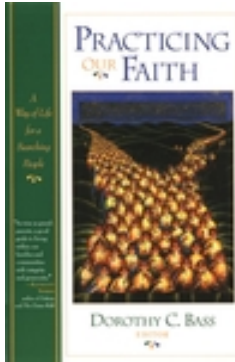
Discuss Introduction and Chapters #1, 2 -- pp. 1-16

Meeting Two:

Discuss Chapters #3, 4 – pp. 17-28

Meeting Three:

Discuss Chapters #5, 6 – pp. 29-39



Bass, Dorothy C. ed. *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997.)

- ❑ Read entire book
- ❑ Hold 4 meetings. The first and last meeting should be 90 minutes each in length. The second and third meetings can be 60-75 minutes each in length.
- ❑ Gain 8 clock hours: 3A, 3C, 2D

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### Guide Questions for Group Discussions

#### Meeting One:

Preface, pp. ix-xv

Chapter 1, pp. 1-12

- ❑ How do the authors think practices will help us in our understanding of how faith is lived? What practices do you believe essential in the life of a Catholic Christian?
- ❑ How are practices like rehearsing a way of life?

Chapter 2, pp. 13-27

- ❑ How can a practice of honoring the body teach us something about God's message to us about being bodied persons?
- ❑ How might we communicate/teach children and youth about honoring the body? How would that help us/them?

Chapter 3, pp. 29-42

- ❑ How is hospitality as a practice scripturally rooted?
- ❑ How can we practice hospitality in our daily lives?

Chapter 4, pp. 43-58

- ❑ What is meant by household economics? And how does "cumber" affect us?
- ❑ What would a practice of simplicity look like? And how might we model that and communicate about it to youth?

#### Meeting Two:

Chapter 5, pp. 59-73

- ❑ How is the practice of saying yes and saying no a spiritual practice? What does it have to teach contemporary people?
- ❑ What understanding of asceticism did you have as a child, do you have as an adult? What does this chapter have to say to that ancient practice?
- ❑ What is your evaluation of the means suggested to strengthen our yes and our no?

Chapter 6, pp. 75-89

- ❑ What is Sabbath, and how can it be kept today?
- ❑ What is the value of keeping the Sabbath?

Chapter 7, pp. 91-103

- ❑ What could be a helpful understanding of testimony? And how can it relate to Christian witness?
- ❑ Is there anything about “testimony” as it is described that you think might be a helpful construct in talking to young people?

### **Meeting Three:**

#### **Chapter 8, pp. 105-118**

- ❑ What are some of the complexities that face a person attempting discernment?
- ❑ How can discernment happen in communities? Can you see this as useful in any groups – family, friends, staffs, etc. – of which you are part?

#### **Chapter 9, pp. 119-132**

- ❑ What understandings of community in this chapter do you find helpful, challenging, on target?
- ❑ How can we teach young people the skills of community-making?

#### **Chapter 10, pp. 133-147**

- ❑ How is forgiveness a practice, and not only an attitude?
- ❑ What can we do to learn better the behaviors of this practice? To teach better these behaviors? And how could it benefit us, young people, the world?
- ❑ How are forgiveness and worship related?

#### **Chapter 11, pp. 149-162**

- ❑ How are Christians called to embody God’s healing presence? How can you and I do that?
- ❑ How is our understanding of illness and injury affected by a practice of healing?

### **Meeting Four:**

#### **Chapter 12, pp. 163-177**

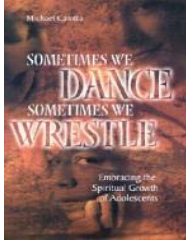
- ❑ What of death and hope and healing?
- ❑ What can be said about a practice of dying well?

#### **Chapter 13, pp. 179-193**

- ❑ How is song an image for a way of living? What does it say of a practice of living well?
- ❑ If we can’t sing, how can our lives sing? How does praise become a practice in a life? How can we make it more part of ours? Of young peoples’?

#### **Chapter 14, pp. 195-204**

- ❑ Review pp. 199-200 together. What does it say to you, now that you are at the end of this book study, of your own life? Of your ministry to and with young people? What are implications for your life and your ministry?
- ❑ How can we encourage Christianity as *a way* of life?



**Carotta, Michael, *Sometimes We Dance, Sometimes We Wrestle: Embracing the Spiritual Growth of Adolescents* (Dubuque, IA: Harcourt Religion Publishers, 2002.)**

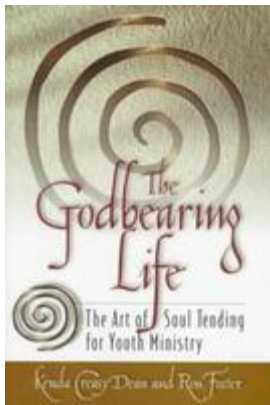
- Read entire book
- Hold 2 meetings; each 90 minutes in length
- Use guide questions at the end of each chapter for group discussion
- Gain 5 clock hours: 2 in B, 3 in C

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### **Guide Questions for Group Discussions**

Meeting One: Discuss Chapters #1, 2, 3 -- pp. 1-69

Meeting Two: Discuss Chapters #4, 5, 6 – pp. 70-125



**Dean, Kenda Creasy and Ron Foster, *The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1998.)**

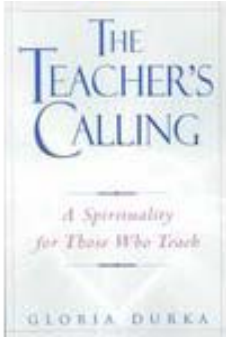
- Read entire book
- Hold 3 meetings: each 60-75 minutes in length.
- Use guide questions at the end of each chapter of the book for group discussion
- Gain 6 clock hours in Area A

### **Guide for Group Discussions**

Meeting One: Discuss Preface and Section One, pp. 9-67

Meeting Two: Discuss Sections Two and Three, pp. 71-136

Meeting Three: Discuss Section Four, pp. 139-210



**Durka, Gloria. *The Teacher's Calling: A Spirituality for Those Who Teach* (New York: Paulist Press, 2002.)**

- ❑ Read entire book
- ❑ Hold 3 meetings; each 60-75 minutes in length
- ❑ Use guide questions (*Reflections*) at the end of each chapter for group discussion
- ❑ Gain 6 clock hours: 4 in A, 2 in C

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### **Guide Questions for Group Discussions**

Meeting One:

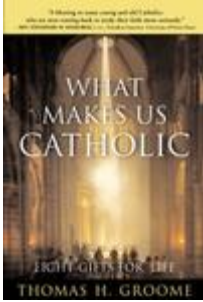
Discuss Introduction and Chapters #1, 2 -- pp. 1-25

Meeting Two:

Discuss Chapters #3, 4, 5 – pp. 26-59

Meeting Three:

Discuss Chapters #6, 7 – pp. 60-82



**Groome, Thomas. *What Makes Us Catholic* (San Francisco: Harper, 2002.)**

- ❑ Read entire book – This is one that readers will want to have a pencil or highlighter in hand while they are reading, in order to make meetings most productive.
- ❑ Hold 5 meetings. Meetings #1-4 should be 90 minutes in length. Meeting #5 should be 120 minutes in length.
- ❑ Use guide questions for group discussion
- ❑ Gain 14 clock hours: 4 in A, 2 in B, 2 in C, 6 in D

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**Guide Questions for Group Discussions**

**Meeting One:** Preface and Chapter 1, pp. ix-37

Preface, pp. ix-xxii

- ❑ What Catholic devotions, practices, symbols were most meaningful to you as a child? And now, as an adult?

Chapter 1, pp. 3-37

- ❑ In what way is the creed something to which we “give our hearts”?
- ❑ Use questions on p. 12 with the group
- ❑ Use questions p. 31
- ❑ Which chapters, as they are described on pp. 35-36, look like they will be most interesting to you?

**Meeting Two:** Chapters 2 and 3, pp.41-103

Chapter 2, pp. 41-71

- ❑ Use questions provided on pp. 47 and 71
- ❑ Provide opportunity for individuals to share points that stood out for them

Chapter 3, pp. 75-103

- ❑ Use questions provided on pp. 79, 95, and 103
- ❑ Provide opportunity for individuals to share points that stood out for them

**Meeting Three:** Chapters 4 and 5, pp.107-167

Chapter 4, pp. 107-132

- ❑ Use questions provided on pp. 111,121 and 132
- ❑ Provide opportunity for individuals to share points that stood out for them

Chapter 5, pp. 135-167

- ❑ Use questions provided on pp. 139, 158 and 167
- ❑ Provide opportunity for individuals to share points that stood out for them

**Meeting Four:** Chapters 6 and 7, 171-233

Chapter 6, pp. 171-206

- ❑ Use questions provided on pp. 175, 200 and 206
- ❑ Provide opportunity for individuals to share points that stood out for them

Chapter 7, pp. 209-233

- ❑ Use questions provided on pp. 214, 229 and 233
- ❑ Provide opportunity for individuals to share points that stood out for them

Meeting Five: Chapters 8 and 9, 237-299

Chapter 8, pp. 237-263

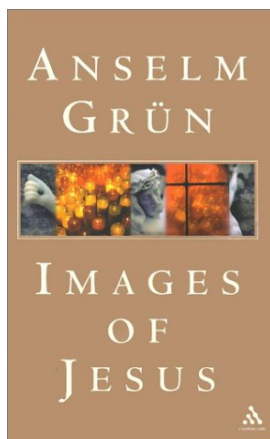
- ❑ Use questions provided on pp. 243, 249 and 263
- ❑ Provide opportunity for individuals to share points that stood out for them

Chapter 9, pp. 267-299

- ❑ Use questions provided on pp. 273, 293 and 299
- ❑ Provide opportunity for individuals to share points that stood out for them

General

- ❑ What reflections on what makes us Catholic would you want to say in summary?
- ❑ How does the ministry you are involved in with youth contribute to them better understanding what it means to be Catholic? How could it do so more intentionally or more effectively?



**Anselm Grun, Images of Jesus, (New York: Continuum, 2002.)**

50 reflections are provided, plus a prologue and epilogue  
Two options for format follow. Both include individual time/reflection in addition to group meetings.

At completion of either, clock hours gained are 45A, 10D

**Option One for Group and Individual Format – 50 WEEKS**

- Use as a tool for a year. Each individual buys the books, commits to reading one of the images per week and journaling about, or talking with one person about, the questions at the end of each

image. Small groups of NO MORE THAN 4-5 adults gather every month for a meeting with the following elements:

- Prayer as a group
- Each individual responds to the following:
  1. How did the images encourage or affirm or comfort you?
  2. How did the images challenge or disturb or unnerve you?
  3. What do they have to say to your everyday life?
  4. Is there one thing you want to consider, think about, do differently, or try as a result of these images.
- On weeks following the first gathering, add a question to start with:  
Did you find your actions, thoughts, beliefs, perceptions in a specific moment in the last month affected/changed in any way? Describe the moment. What does it teach you? What call is in it from God for you?

□ Guidelines for the group process:

- Each individual speaks their response to each of the questions one at a time, without interruption or comment from the other group members. Group members simply provide very active listening and presence to the speaker. In this way the speaker is allowed to communicate what she/he is thinking without being sidetracked by interpretations or questions from others. This serves as almost a verbal journaling, and the articulation of the responses may even take the speaker to a place they did not intend to go in the beginning.
- After each person has spoken, a moment or two of quiet ensues, which gives the speaker a chance to hear the “echoes” of their own words, and the listeners a chance to pray for the speaker. Each person should speak for no longer than 10-12 minutes.
- After all group members have spoken once, share food or drink and, if desired, focus on one person at a time in the group, allowing only then an opportunity from each other person a chance for a word of affirmation or encouragement on what struck the listeners as they spoke. Here the original speaker is silent, and simply hears from the group.
- Once each person has received an opportunity for feedback on their earlier comments, then the floor is open to general conversation.
- The timing of such sessions should run approximately as follows. They will be approximately 2 1/2 hours in length. Approximate timing:

5 minutes – brief prayer asking openness to the Holy Spirit and one another





**Howe, Neil and William Strauss, *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation* (New York: Vintage Books/Random House, Inc., 2000.)**

- Read entire book
- Hold 4 meetings. Meeting #1 and #4 should be 60-75 minutes in length. Meeting #2 and #3 should be 90-120 minutes in length.
- Use guide questions for group discussion
- Gain 9 clock hours: 6 in B, 3 in C

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## **Guide Questions for Group Discussions**

### **Meeting One: Where They Come From**

#### **Chapter I, pp. 3-29**

- How do Millennials compare to other recent generations? How might that affect how they are seen by the generations that interact with them?
- What concerns would the generations that we belong to have for this generation? What natural tensions would exist between our generation and theirs? What natural collaborations, or common goals, might exist? How can that impact our ministry with them?

#### **Chapter II, pp. 31-58**

- What contemporary events impacted you when you were an adolescent? How? What events will mark the Millennials and how do you think these events will impact the generation long term? (You might use the list in the book, but also add more recent events – international, national, regional, local, even in the neighborhood or class).
- How do you understand media's role regarding generations? How does it define each? Define Millennials? How does it isolate?
- What gift does it seem the Millennials could bring to society? What flaws in thinking or perception might be traps?

#### **Chapter III, pp. 59-70**

- Do you find merit in the analysis of generations here? Why/why not?
- Describe two members of the Millennial generation that you know and compare the characteristics described with the young people you know. Have a general discussion of these three chapters' information, as you understand it against the real young people you each bring to mind. What gives you hope? What concerns you? What skills will they need? What knowledge? What skills will YOU need? What knowledge?

### **Meeting Two: Who They Are - Part I**

#### **Chapter IV, pp. 73-95**

- Demographic changes including older parents, smaller families, more firstborns, more parental education, and the slowing down of family breakup influence this generation. What impact do you see? Include benefits as well as concerns.
- What impact do you expect to see or are you seeing in immigrant population, particularly Latino, where you minister? What will this require and how can you prepare?
- The increased health and well being of young people is a plus. Is this true in your ministry setting statistically? Do you find the increases in the same concern areas that the book outlines?

#### **Chapter V, pp. 97-120**

- What fragmentation that Millennials experience do you believe most affects your ministry with them? What are the issues that this raises? Are there facts/information provided that you find surprising?

Comment on the safety and security factors described and their impact on the development of this generation – physically, emotionally, spiritually, economically, and politically.

#### **Chapter VI, pp. 121-142**

- Describe some of the experiences of family that a Millennial might have.
- What ways can our ministry with youth be responsive to and related to their experience of family?
- What will parents of Millennials need? How can we assist them? (To minister to and with youth is also to minister to and with their families!)

#### **Chapter VII, pp. 143-166**

- What issues in the educational arena are affecting Millennials and their families strongly? What of these do you experience in your setting?
- How do you see the impact of character education and education in values? How can it/does it relate to our ministry?
- Discuss standards for this generation and the manner in which progress is assessed and outcomes are achieved. Are there concerns for you here?

#### **Chapter VIII, pp. 167-188**

- How does the time and activity stress differ for this generation versus previous ones? What resources can this generation bring to this? What perspective? What message do we wish to give them as they have these experiences? How can they be communicated?
- Choose one or two of the quotes in the sidebar to explore a theme of the chapter.
- Is there a contradiction between the description of a “typical adolescent” which has included a need to be independent and to separate and to be an individual, and this generation? How will or do members of this generation express their specific identity or their independence?

#### **Meeting Three: Who They Are - Part II**

#### **Chapter IX, pp. 189-212**

- The chapter describes millennial as becoming a corrective generation. How do you understand this? Do you see this? What are the ramifications?
- Love, sex, substance abuse, discipline.... Where is this generation on these issues? How might that change our way of talking about these issues? How might it change our starting point or goal in these conversations?

#### **Chapter X, pp. 213-237**

- What is your experience of this generation’s understanding of community? Do you find the increased focus on service in your setting?
- Given the millenials’ context for understanding race and gender, what will be the challenges of those of us ministering to and with them?
- How does the millenials’ experience of and perception of politics and religion influence their possible behavior or adult perspective? What tasks does that point us to in our work with them?

#### **Chapter XI, pp. 239-262**

- What is the millennial tremor described? And how will/does that affect millenials relationship with other generations, or our generations’ relationship with millennials?
- On p. 256, the authors assert, “Now, the pain is on the surface, the order within.” Does the reality the authors are describing now make for a generation that is more resilient? Less resilient? Differently resilient or in need? What are the implications for our work?
- Is there a millennial culture, and what are its key characteristics?

#### **Chapter XII, pp. 263-286**

- How will millennials shape the market that is aimed at them?

- How are those who market adapting to millennials? And so how can we best provide ways for millennials to bring a critical sensitivity to advertising, purchasing, consuming?
- What are the practical implications of a technologically immersed generation?

**Chapter XIII, pp. 287-**

- What is meant by global generation? And do you think that the millennial are becoming one/are one?
- North American millennials are described as borrowing from many cultures and countries various characteristics, more so than any previous generation. How do you see this in your setting? How can you use this? What are the cautions?
- What kind of civic action can you see this generation involved in? What can we do to impact their formation for a civic involvement that is Gospel motivated?

**Meeting Four: Where They're Going**

**Chapter XIV, pp. 307-324**

- Discuss the projections given about this generation in each decade described.

**Chapter XV, pp. 325-346**

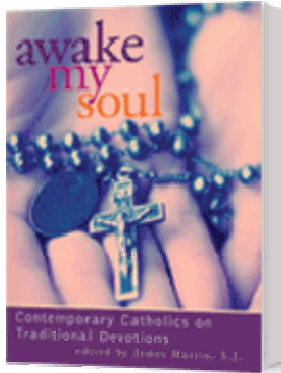
- What about the millennials makes for a “hero generation”? What are the benefits and drawbacks of such a generation on society? On the continuing work for God’s reign and the proclamation of the Gospel? What will they bring? What do they need?
- Does the tracing of previous generations provide insight for you for your present ministry? If so, in what ways?

**Chapter XVI, pp. 347-362**

- The authors describe a shift in America’s public mood. Has that shift occurred? What do the millennials bring to emerging American society and world citizenship?
- Discuss the concepts presented of potential crisis, millennial hero trial, and a new era and change in public direction. Is this plausible? Happening? What can you say about this generation’s preparation for such realities? How can we positively contribute?

**Chapter XVII, pp. 363-367**

- What hopes are strongest for you with respect to this generation? What concerns or fears?
- Revisit any of the content from the previous meetings that seems to provide some sense of conclusions to be drawn or directions to be taken. Pay particular attention to concrete actions that individuals in the group, or a parish or school or system you are part of, can take NOW.



**Martin, James, S.J., ed. *Awake My Soul: Contemporary Catholics on Traditional Devotions* (Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2004.)**

- ❑ Read entire book
- ❑ Hold 4 meetings; each 60 minutes in length
- ❑ Use guide questions at the end of each chapter for group discussion
- ❑ Gain 6 clock hours: 5 in A, 1 in C

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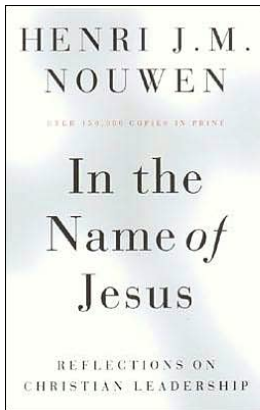
### **Guide Questions for Group Discussions**

<u>Meeting One:</u>	Discuss Introduction and Chapters #1, 2, 3, 4 -- pp. ix-32
<u>Meeting Two:</u>	Discuss Chapters #5, 6, 7, 8, 9 pp. 33-68
<u>Meeting Three:</u>	Discuss Chapters #10, 11, 12, 13, 14 – pp. 69-112
<u>Meeting Four:</u>	Discuss Chapters #15, 16, 17, 18, 19 – pp. 113-154

This book explores traditional Catholic devotions through the lens of the reflections of contemporary Catholics. For each meeting:

- ❑ discuss the role that the named devotions have played in each participants' life of faith – explore what each is (make no assumption that all participants have first hand experience of the devotion described), and how it has functioned in the life of participants who are familiar with it
- ❑ discuss insights gained from reflection on the writings of the authors on each devotion treated in the reading for the week
- ❑ discuss what implications this has for participants' own spiritual practice, and the role of devotion and consistent ritual in supporting their life of faith and, therefore, their ministry
- ❑ groups may wish to actually practice one of the devotions named (in whole or part) as part of a prayer practice for each session

The first and last meetings might also pay particular attention/discussion time to the material found in the introduction as context for discussing the role of devotions in the life of faith today. Groups might find ways to determine and discuss what devotions they have acquainted young people with, and how that has functioned.



**Nouwen, Henri, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York, Crossroad Publishing, 2002.)**

- ❑ Read entire book
  - ❑ Hold 3 meetings; each 60-75 minutes in length
  - ❑ Use guide questions for group discussion found in "Study Guide" at back of book (pp. 103-107)
  - ❑ Gain 6 clock hours: 5 in A, 1 in C
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Meeting One:

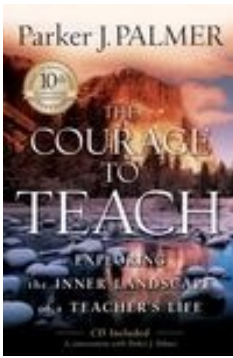
Discuss Introduction and Section One, pp. 11-47 (use Study Guide pp. 103-104)

Meeting Two:

Discuss Section Two, pp. 49-70 (use Study Guide p.105)

Meeting Three:

Discuss Section Three and Epilogue, pp. 73-101 (use Study Guide pp.106-107)



**Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1998.)**

- Read entire book
  - Hold 3 meetings; each 60-75 minutes in length
  - Use guide questions for group discussion
  - Gain 6 clock hours: 3 in A, 3 in C
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## **Guide Questions for Group Discussions**

### **Meeting One: The Teacher**

#### **Introduction, pp.1-7**

- Do you see a focus on the inner landscape of teaching as useful/viable? Why? Why not?

#### **Chapter I, pp. 9-33**

- Palmer says that “teaching is a daily exercise in vulnerability” and that good teaching comes from the integrity and identity of the teacher. Do you agree? How do you experience teaching?
- Have you experienced teachers that you have lost heart? What tempts us today/you today to lose heart? What can assist us/you?
- Who have been your mentors? Who are your mentors now? Do you make space – both time and attentiveness to their message – to learn from them?

#### **Chapter II, pp. 35-60**

- What is your experience of the culture of fear or disconnected life that Palmer describes? With your students? With yourself? With colleagues?

#### **Chapter III, pp. 61-87**

- Do you experience the tension between objective knowledge and subjective engagement? Explain.
- How does our students’ response to us affect us?
- How does our students’ response to our teaching affect us?
- How do we experience paradox and tension in teaching?

### **Meeting Two: The Community**

#### **Chapter IV, pp. 89-113**

- How does understandings of community impact our ministry with young people?
- Discuss the model of the community of truth that Palmer lays out. Does the model make sense in your experience? What impacts might it have on our ministry, our teaching, our structures?

#### **Chapter V, pp. 115-140**

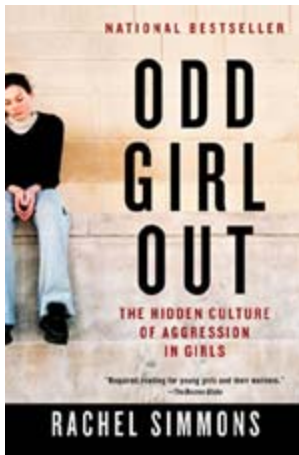
- What do you think of the subject-centered classroom as Palmer describes it?
- What might teaching from the microcosm look like in your area?
- What type of skills development might be called for to implement the above?
- How can ministers/educators at your site gain these skills? How might you go about this? How could you assist with this?

**Meeting Three: Colleague Communities & Impact for Ongoing Growth**  
**Chapter VI, pp. 141-161**

- Can we create a community of colleagues in a more intentional way? Would we want to? Why? What would it assist with? What would block such a colleague group?
- Many professions have colleague groups for shared supervision --- therapists, counselors, spiritual directors – why not teachers, catechists, youth ministers? How can those of us involved in the same ministry support and challenge one another in appropriate and life-giving ways?
- What does leadership look like in such a system?

**Chapter VII, pp. 163-183**

- What are sources for hope in our ministry?
- How can the challenges of the reading and our reflections from it be enfolded in our practice? In individual ways? As a school? As a parish? As a system?



## **Book Club for Odd Girl Out** **by Rachel Simmons**

- ❑ Hold 3 meetings; each 60-75 minutes in length
- ❑ Session One – Introduction and Chapters One and Two
- ❑ Session Two - Chapters Three through Six
- ❑ Session Three - Chapters Seven through Nine
  
- ❑ Gain 4 clock hours: 3 in B, 1 in C

### **Guideline Questions for Book Club Discussion**

1) In the Introduction, Simmons references that "Silence is deeply woven into the fabric of female experience" What in your experience leads you to agree or not agree with that statement? In your experience where does that silence originate from? In what ways so you think that silence becomes re-enforced?

2) Chapter One delineates three types of aggression "relational", "indirect" and "social". (p.21) Referring to them collectively as alternate aggressions. Which do you think are the hardest to spot as the adult in the situation? You may choose to share how have you seen them exhibited. Which one of the three aggressions would have the most potential harm on you and why?

3) In the Introduction and Chapter One, Simmons remarks on "nice" (p.18) behavior, "good girls" (p.18) and "perfect girls". Give an example from your own experience of one of these "nice" girls by Simmons definition. Now give an example of a girl who is the aggressive counterpart. Discuss the pros and cons to each of these roles.

4) Chapter Two "intimate enemies" addresses that "lifeblood of relational aggression is relationship. As a result, most relational aggression occurs within intimate social or friendship networks. The closer the target to the perpetrator, the more cutting the loss. . . When relationships are weapons, friendship itself can be a tool of anger."(p.43) Is that true of adult friendships as well? How have you seen a relationship be used as a weapon?

5) Chapter Three "the truth hurts" , focuses on the decision to address or avoid the situation of alternate aggression. In what ways do you find yourself addressing or avoiding conflict? In what ways would you prefer someone else would confront you? Are they consistent? Why or Why not?

6) In Chapter Four “she’s all that” Simmons outlines the responses a girl might receive who may appear “assertive or self-satisfied” (p. 118) What is your experience of how men respond to assertive women? What is your experience of how women respond to assertive women? Speculate as to why assertive and self-satisfied women evoke those responses?

7) Take a moment to reflect on the chart in Chapter Four of the Ideal Girl and Anti Girl (124-125) Did anything startle you? In what ways is the book’s chart unrealistic or unhealthy? Why?

8) Now, make a chart for yourselves of the Ideal Woman / Anti Woman in what ways does it compare and contrast to the Ideal Girl / Anti-Girl chart presented in the book? In what ways is your “Woman” chart unrealistic or unhealthy? Why?

9) In Chapter Eight, “parents & teachers”, Simmons confronts the emotional experience that the adults may have when exposed to “alternative aggressions”. When you are exposed to this type of behavior as the adult in the situation, what emotion response does it evoke? How can that response help or harm the situation?

10) Chapter Nine “the road ahead” offers “strategies to combat alternate aggressions” which strategies most interested you? Why? Discuss some changes you may make in regards to teaching/working with girls having read this book?