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## From the Clergy Associate

### *My Life with the Saints*

*How monotonously alike all the great tyrants and conquerors have been: how gloriously different are the saints.*

C. S. Lewis, from *Mere Christianity*

This Lent the Book Group will be reading *My Life with the Saints* by James Martin, S.J. As we discovered last year as we read another of his books, Martin's manner and style of writing about such weighty matters as spirituality and religion are quite accessible and down-to-earth, yet thought-provoking and stirring. And he also has a great sense of humor!

In writing about some of the saints that Martin has discovered along his spiritual journey, such as Joan of Arc, Thomas Aquinas, Thérèse of Lisieux, Thomas Merton, Mother Teresa, Peter, and Joseph, he reflects on how he came to see them as "models of holiness" who do, indeed, remain relevant to us today in our daily living. And he began to appreciate more fully the amazing ways in which God works in the lives of individuals. Martin reflects on how each saint was holy in his or her own way. And this revelation of God's delight in our individuality made him realize that "none of us are meant to be Thérèse of Lisieux...or Thomas More. We're meant to be ourselves, and meant to allow God to work in and through our own individuality, our own humanity. "As St. Thomas Aquinas said, grace builds on nature" (p. 6).

Some of the "models of holiness" Martin writes about are not well-known to many of us, such as the Ugandan Martyrs (22 of whom were Roman Catholic and 23 Anglican). We not only learn about different saints' stories, but also how these various "models of holiness" and their stories have influenced one man's life story in particular, and how they might interact with each of our life stories as well.

The group gathers every Friday morning with coffee beginning at 9:30 and book discussion from 10:00 to 11:30 in the Garden Room. We will be discussing various chapters of *My Life with the Saints* over 5 Fridays in Lent, beginning on February 12<sup>th</sup>. Copies of the book and the reading schedule will be available in the office. New members are always welcome. I look forward to joining this

vibrant multi-generational group as we discover what blessings and grace our reading, discussion, and reflection together on these saints and their stories might confer on us. I hope you will join us!

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