

# JANUARY IS NATIONAL BOOK MONTH!



*“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.” – Dr. Seuss*

*“You can never get a cup of tea large enough or a book long enough to suit me.” –CS Lewis*

*“There is no friend as loyal as a book.” – Ernest Hemingway*

January is National book month, and here at Lourdes we can’t get enough of our favorite stories. Books are a wonderful pass time with many great benefits. They offer opportunities for adventure, taking us to epic lands both real and imagined. They teach us hard lessons about life, love and friendship. Books strengthen our capacity for empathy and connect us to others.

There are many health benefits as well. Reading improves analytical thinking and concentration. There is also a correlation between reading and reduced stress. Relaxing with a good book has been shown to reduce heart rate and muscle tension, alleviate depression and anxiety, and reduce the risk of Dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

Whatever the reason for reading, there’s nothing quite like the excitement of picking up a new book. Except maybe sharing your experience with others.

Monsignor Ricardo Bass is a resident at Fox Manor. He is also the leader of their book club.

“I surfaced the idea of a book club without knowing if the other residents had any interest. They did!” said Msgr. Bass. “I offered a five week course in the Eucharist. Surprisingly, I averaged twenty five to thirty people each session!” The book club changes books every other month. In November they began reading *The Shack* by William P. Young. *The Shack* is a work of fiction that focuses on the question “where is God” in a world full of pain.

“We had approximately twenty people who read the book with us,” said Msgr. Bass. “After, we had a special showing of the movie and that also drew a large crowd.”

In January the book club began another work of fiction titled *Wise Blood* by Flannery O’Connor. This novel explores topics of faith, redemption and wisdom.

Monsignor Bass chooses the books the club will read, but the group gives their input to the selection process. Other titles they plan to discuss include *Time for God* by Jacques Philippe, *Night* by Elie Wiesel and *Diary of a Country Priest* by Georges Bernanos.

“I am blessed to be in a community with so many well- read and intellectually- astute individuals,” said Msgr. Bass. If you missed out on National Book Month, don’t let that discourage you from picking up a great new read today.