



## **Theology Summer Reading: Catholic Mission and Identity**

**All students will read *Thrift Store Saints*, by Jane Knuth, and complete the assignment described below.** You will be required to submit your typed responses in your Theology teacher's First Class Conference in the first week of school.

Before you begin reading:

1. What is your impression of the title? What do you think the book is about?
2. Search on the web for information about Saint Vincent de Paul and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. What kind of work does the society do? What else did you learn?

Jane Knuth, the author of *Thrift Store Saints*, was invited to work in the thrift store at a time in her life when she was feeling very busy with her family and wasn't really thinking about getting involved with service.

3. Why do you think Jane went to the first meeting? Why do you think she got involved?

In an interview with the author, she said: "These stories changed my life and I think God wanted me to use them to change other lives as well."

4. In what ways was Jane's life changed by the people she met, and by their stories? In what ways were you changed by reading them?

In the same interview she said, "I wish for my readers that you will be delighted when you read the stories and I wish, maybe, you will be a little disturbed too."

5. Which of her stories delighted you? Why? Which of them made you feel uncomfortable? Why?
6. Why is Dorothy so important to the story? Have you had a Dorothy in your life?
7. What do we mean when we say that service is transformative? Discuss the inner change in Jane that you see happening in the book. What sparks this change? Who else is changed by her service?

One of the themes of the book is that the poor can be our teachers. In Chapter 3, Jane encounters such a teacher, who gives her a powerful lesson about forgiveness.

8. Is this lesson helpful to you in your life?
9. How is Tim, in Chapter 11, a teacher for Jane? Do you know anyone like Tim? What have you learned from the person?
10. Of all the "teachers" in the book, which one made the most vivid impression on you?

In her work at the thrift store, Jane soon comes to see God at work with and within the thrift store customers, volunteers, and donors.

11. What incident showing God's presence is especially vivid for you?
12. Review the impressions you had of the title before you started the book. How accurate was your first impression?

## **ENGLISH SUMMER READING**

Students in Pre-AP, Honors, and CP classes will complete the following work over the summer (AP Seminar and AP Language students will receive separate assignments). Each class has been assigned a book to read over the summer. Books, Google Classroom codes, and assignments for each class are listed below.

- Students (except freshmen) will submit responses to summer writing assignments in the Summer Reading Google Classroom for their grade. The questions are printed below, and may be found in the Google Classrooms listed below for sophomores, juniors and seniors. Responses are due in the Summer Google Classroom by 8:00 am on the first day of classes.
- Following these activities, class time will be spent working with the book that was assigned. Students will be expected to have a physical copy of the book (paperback or hardcover) and participate in class discussions and activities. Following the unit of study, an additional assessment will be given. An Amazon link to purchase the book is included in the Summer Reading Google Classroom for each grade.
- Rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors can access the Google Classroom dedicated to Summer Reading 2025 resources for their class using the codes listed below.

### **FRESHMAN PRE-AP & CP**

*All freshmen are encouraged to attend a Summer Reading Review Session. These sessions (approximately 90 minutes long) are designed to help students review the book and understand the expectations for their work. Registration is required: Please use [this link](#) or go to the "Summer Reading" tab on the school website. This year's sessions will be held at 10:30 am on Thursday, August 14th, and Wednesday, August 20th.*

**Book: *The Other Wes Moore*, by Wes Moore**

### **FRESHMAN SUMMER READING STUDY GUIDE**

- *Discussion Questions:* Consult the discussion questions provided at the back of the book. Think about how you would answer each question if you were asked to write a short-answer response to them on a test. In particular, develop your thinking about Questions #1, 6, 9, and 11.
- *Structure:* What does the author do to indicate which parts of the book are about himself, and which parts are about the Other Wes Moore? Why does

the author decide to emphasize certain years in their lives? Why does the author alternate their stories moment-by-moment?

- *Environment:* What are the environments surrounding each Wes Moore like? How do these environments change and/or remain the same? How do these environments affect them?
- *Mothers:* What does each mother do for her son? Is one mother “better” or more successful than the other? What factors seem to influence each mother’s ability to guide, protect, teach, and love her son?
- *Turning Points:* What seem to be the key moments in the life of each Wes Moore? What opportunities did they have to succeed or fail, and how did they respond to those opportunities?

#### IDEAS FOR TAKING NOTES

- List the names of the people important to each Wes Moore, along with a short description of how they are related to him, and/or what they mean to him.
- Construct a chart (like this) to keep track of what happens to each Wes Moore, and when. This exercise is helpful for seeing the similarities and differences in their experiences.

YEAR	AUTHOR WES MOORE	OTHER WES MOORE

## **SOPHOMORE HONORS & CP**

Google Classroom Code: 4kjoxf57

**Book: *The Last Lecture*, by Randy Pausch**

### **ASSIGNMENT**

Your answers to the following questions are due on the first day of class at 8:00am in the Summer Reading Google Classroom. Each response should be 1-2 paragraphs, and include evidence from the text to support your claims.

At the beginning of Part II, the author makes a list of his childhood dreams. What do those dreams, and their fulfillment, tell you about the kind of person he is?

List your own childhood dreams. Which ones are you still working on? Which ones are you willing to keep working on until they are realized?

In Chapter 23, the author gives time management advice, including, "Ask yourself: Are you spending your time on the right things?" What percentage of your time do you think you are spending on the "right things?" What steps could you take to increase that percentage?

## **JUNIOR HONORS & CP**

Google Classroom Code: xgsnpbwj

**Book: *Mind and Matter*, by John Urschel**

### **ASSIGNMENT**

Your answers to the following questions are due on the first day of class at 8:00am in the Summer Reading Google Classroom.

- A. Please go to [this link](#) to hear the author interviewed on the AMDG podcast. What are the three most interesting things you learn about John Urschel in this conversation that were not included in the book?
- B. In Chapter 1, Urschel acknowledges that most people will never need calculus or quadratic equations in their everyday lives, but he also writes that “it would be a mistake to think that they don’t use math . . . .No matter what career you have, you need to be able to reason well, recognize patterns, use logic, compute numbers, make rational predictions, and communicate clearly. Everybody needs to solve problems.” Based on that list of skills, how do you think the author would say he used what he learned through mathematics to become an outstanding football player?
- C. In the last chapter of the book, Urschel describes how he made the decision to retire from football, and talks about the impact of the article about CTE in retired football players. Do you think if John Urschel was beginning his career now, his parents would have encouraged him to play football? Why or why not?
- D. Would you recommend this book? Why or why not? And, if you would, who do you think would enjoy it?

## **SENIOR HONORS & CP**

Google Classroom Code: wpjhlb4j

**Book: *The Midnight Library*, by Matt Haig**

### **ASSIGNMENT**

Answers to these questions are due in the Summer Reading Google Classroom by 8:00 am on the first day of school. Each response should be 1-2 paragraphs, and include evidence from the text to support your argument.

- 1) Nora tries a number of variations of her life. During each, she is able to eliminate regret from her past. Why does this happen, and what might she (or anyone) learn about the role of regret in our lives from what happens to her?
- 2) If you could accompany Nora in any of these "lives," which one would it be? What role would you play? What would be different and what would remain the same?