

Summer Reading Assignment for Faith, Church, & Sacraments

Students are to read the book *Alive* by Piers Read. It is an account of the young men who survived a plane crash in the Andes Mountains in 1972. Their story is a one of community and faith. All the themes developed in the Faith, Church, and Sacraments course are part of their survival: the presence of God in their lives, our lives as a journey to God, community, relationships, Paschal Mystery, transcendence, symbols, ritual prayer, sacramental awareness, conversion. Students will be asked to refer to the book as they move through the course. It is very important that students fully read and appreciate this book. Students cannot do well in the course without reading and understanding *Alive*.

Theme 1: Awareness of the Presence of God

One of the most noteworthy aspects of the story of their survival is their awareness of God's presence with them. As you read, take time to make note of—in the book itself or in a notebook—the moments when they describe their awareness of God, their conversation with God or their prayer, and their moral struggles or questions about God/faith. You will serve yourself well to take notes on this book as you read it. All Sophomore religion classes assess your reading of *Alive*.

Theme 2: Importance of Community

Community played an important and necessary role in the ability to survive the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual challenges brought on by the crash and their subsequent weeks in the Andes. As you read or after you conclude the book, note five moments in the story where you see community as a significant factor in the survival of an individual or the full group.

Reading assessment

A test of your reading of *Alive* typically occurs within the first few days of the course. Pay attention to the characters in the text. You will find it help to annotate your reading.

You may also be asked to write a paper on *Alive*. Your notes on the book will serve as a significant aid for any assessment on *Alive*. As you read the book, make note of how and where you see the above themes in this powerful story.

Gentlemen: your reading of *Alive* is a significant aspect of the first quarter grade and, really, the entire course. Make sure you devote appropriate time and energy to reading and understanding this book this summer.