

Small Group Material Options

Advent

1. *"Jesus is the Gift"* Regis J Flaherty 144pages **Martha reviewed, she thought this was good and a good choice for Stella maris**

Very good content, though written as a book without study questions. The first 6 chapters, covering 90 pages are called Prepares; the last 5 chapters, covering 60 pages is called the witnesses.

It seems that this would be a good book to use as a twist on the usual small group study format. Folks could read a chapter or two in between sessions and then simply discuss the book at sessions. The second half the book (the Shepherds, Wise men and the Presentation with Anna and Simeon could be covered in January.

2. **The Advent of Christ: Scripture Reflections to Prepare for Christmas** **Dixie reviewed, she liked but sad it is better suited for personal devotional use**

Paperback – July 18, 2013 by [Edward Sri](#) (Author) \$12.74 used from \$2.98

Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Good Reads – all give this book 5 stars

Designed for Advent (4 weeks plus Christmas week) including daily reflections

'Perhaps the Christmas story has become almost too familiar. A virgin giving birth. A child laid in a manger. Shepherds greeted by angels. The Christmas story has become so familiar that the profound, even shocking, nature of the incarnation might be overlooked. But what if we had never heard the story before? What if we were hearing it for the first time, like the first-century Jews? These events certainly would not be taken for granted—they would signal something new: the dawning of the long-awaited Messiah.

This Advent, put yourself in that ancient Jewish world. Containing an entry for each day of Advent and continuing through the Christmas season, Dr. Ted Sri will help you to discover spiritual treasures in the Gospels and gain a new understanding of the coming of Christ.'

Lent

1. *"Ashes to Easter"* Robert Morneau 116 pages

Very good content, written as a daily devotional with 3 reflection questions each day. There are 14 pages in each week. It would be good to have small group review to see if they could adapt to the format, with folks reading during the week and discussing at sessions, or reading some together at sessions and discussing

General

1. *"Resisting Happiness"* Mathew Kelly 186 pages **Angela really enjoyed this book**

Good content, maybe a good suggestion to folks finishing Alpha. Could take orders and order the books for them.

2. *"Living in the Power of the Holy Spirit"* Rich Cleveland 99 pages

Good content, a nine session Bible study. Could be good post-Alpha or after Easter

3. *"Living Prayer- A Simple Guide to Everyday Enlightenment"* Robert Morneau 124 pages

Very good content, written as a book with 12 chapters and a few reflection questions at each chapter. Could be a good post-Alpha with someone willing to serve as facilitator.

4. *"Rediscovering the Heart of a Disciple"* Edward Sri 117 pages Sharon is reviewing

The book walks through *"The Joy of the Gospel"*, focusing on themes relating to our call to live as missionary disciples. Very good content with 11 chapters and reflection questions with each chapter. *Great post-Alpha offering with someone willing to serve as facilitator.

Pope Francis and the Joy of the Gospel: Rediscovering the Heart of a Disciple

Paperback – September 9, 2014 by [Edward Sri](#) (Author) \$10.96 used from \$2.48

11 chapters, if used for Advent or Lent someone would need to develop format.

"I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ."-Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*

The call of Christ to each of us is as heart-stopping as the moment captured by Caravaggio in his painting, *The Call of St. Matthew*. Jesus points, he invites-and Matthew the tax-collector must make a decision. "The Lord does not disappoint those who take that risk" and choose him, Pope Francis tells us in his Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*.

Dr. Edward Sri, theologian, author, and speaker, unpacks *The Joy of the Gospel*, making it accessible and actionable. In these brief reflections Sri explores those things that hold us back, how we can open ourselves to God's love, and the difference this can make to our joyful proclamation of the Gospel.

Pope Francis and the *Joy of the Gospel* reminds us that when life weighs us down, "the Lord is already there, waiting for us with open arms."

Great for use by individuals, a little more challenging for group discussion, each chapter concludes with questions for reflection or discussion, moving readers further into a renewed personal relationship with Christ.

Rediscover Jesus by Matthew Kelly

If there is one person we should each get to know in a deeply personal way, it is Jesus. And the best time to get to know Jesus is right now. In his NEW book *Rediscover Jesus*, Matthew Kelly, America's best-selling Catholic author and internationally acclaimed speaker, takes you on a 40-day spiritual journey to encounter Jesus—the amazing friend who is going to help you answer life's tough questions.

I am enjoying reading and reflecting on one chapter then sharing with my prayer partner when we meet every other week.

More than a Carpenter by Josh McDowell

More than a Carpenter, is now updated for a new generation of seekers with a fresh look, revised material, and a new chapter that addresses questions commonly raised today. Former skeptic Josh McDowell is now joined by his son Sean as they examine the evidence about Jesus. Is he really the Lord he claimed to be? How can we know for sure?

The book offers a perspective from a skeptic point of view who was on a mission to prove other Christians wrong. In the process the author uncovers countless facts to support who Jesus was. Since sharing this with my prayer partner we have turned many others onto reading the book.