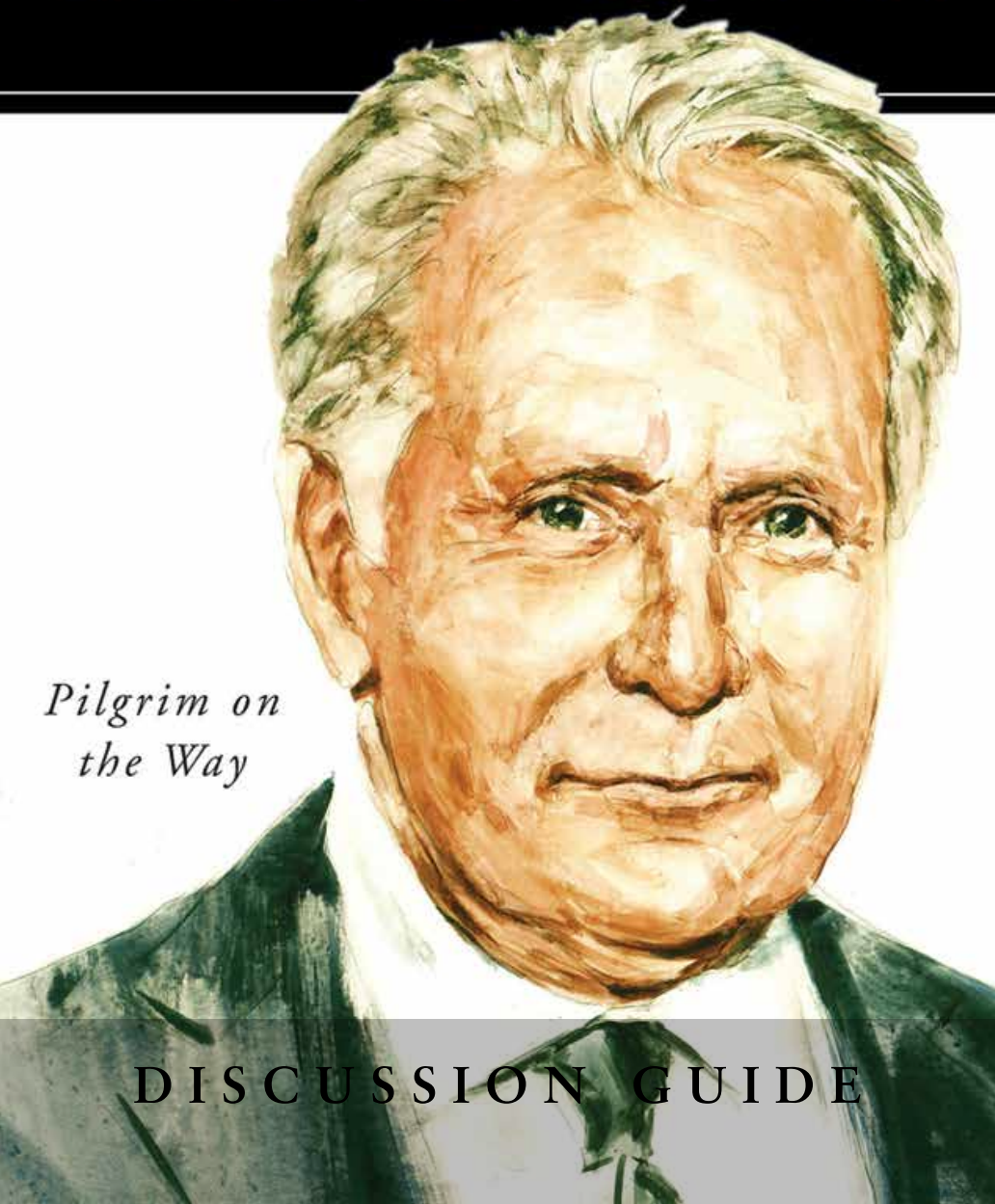


ROSE PACATTE

MARTIN SHEEN

*Pilgrim on
the Way*

DISCUSSION GUIDE



About the Book

Martin Sheen, best known for his role as a Catholic president in the prestigious television series *The West Wing*, returned to the practice of his Catholic faith at the age of forty after decades away. After years of battling alcohol addiction, a near-fatal heart attack, and a nervous breakdown, the stage, film, and television actor renewed his dedication to his family and activated his faith with energy, grace, and joy. Through the sacraments, Mass, the rosary, the support of family, and numerous friends and peace and justice activists such as Daniel Berrigan, SJ, and the Catholic Worker Movement, Martin Sheen today sees himself as a man in the pew. He has been arrested more than sixty times for nonviolent civil disobedience, speaking out for human rights. Sister Rose Pacatte's unique biography moves beyond tabloid news to include information and inspiring stories gleaned from interviews with Martin Sheen, his sister and brothers, as well as longtime friends.

About the Author

Sister Rose Pacatte, FSP, is a Daughter of St. Paul and the director of the Pauline Center for Media Studies in Los Angeles. Rose has an MA in Education in Media Studies from the University of London and a Certificate in Pastoral Communications from the University of Dayton. In addition to being a course designer and facilitator for the University of Dayton's online faith formation program, she does catechetical film reviews for RCL Benziger. She is the film columnist for St. Anthony Messenger, a regular contributor to the National Catholic Reporter on film and popular culture, and host of the Jesuit-sponsored online program "The INNdustry with Sister Rose on the IN Network."



Discussion Guide

Introduction

1. What did you already know about Martin Sheen before beginning this book? What are you hoping to learn about him?
2. Discuss the neurologist's description of Martin. Do you think these qualities are even more important for celebrities to have than others, or equally so?
3. Reflect on Martin's quote, "There is little doubt that we are all responsible for each other, and the world is exactly the way it is because consciously, or unconsciously, we have made it so."

Chapter One

1. Why did Martin change his name? Do you believe a person's name is a central part of identity, or is it "just a name"?
2. Both of Martin's parents immigrated to the United States. Discuss how views on immigration have changed compared to a century ago.
3. What various details about Martin's upbringing were distinctly Catholic? Did your childhood have any similarities in this regard?
4. Discuss how Martin's work as a caddy sparked an interest in social activism.
5. What effect did their mother have on Martin and his siblings? Reflect on how the family coped after her death.

Chapter Two

1. What influence did The Living Theatre have on Martin besides spurring his acting career?
2. Discuss the story about Martin told by Matt Clark. Compare this to chapter 12 in the Gospel of Mark (verses 41-44).
3. Why did Janet Templeton, Martin's wife, reject organized religion?
4. Why did Martin ask that his name be removed from award nomination lists? What do you think of his reasoning?
5. What do you think of Martin's relationship with his father?
6. How did Martin contribute to the Civil Rights Movement?
7. Reflect on Martin's quote on pages 32-33.

Chapter Three

1. Of all the *Insight* episodes mentioned, which are you most interested in seeing and why?
2. What was the main reason Martin chose to work with Fr. Bud Kieser?
3. Reflect on Pop's last words to Martin's sister, Carmen.
4. What was so difficult about the experience of filming *Apocalypse Now*? Think about Martin's comment about films "that last are things that cost people and the actors that portray them." Do you agree with this, or does it change the way you now view films?
5. Why did Martin struggle to return to the practice of his faith? Do you relate to his experience in any way?
6. Discuss how visiting India during the filming of *Gandhi* had a positive effect on Martin. What interesting discovery did he make about his son Emilio?
7. What specifically about AA helped Martin in his spiritual journey?

Chapter Four

1. For Martin, what was significant about the filming of *In the King of Prussia*?
2. Who had the strongest influence on Martin when he began to participate in social justice?
3. What was Martin's first experience of being arrested like?
4. Reflect on this comment of Martin's: "You're not going to change the world so don't get any ideas. If you change yourself, you've done it."
5. Discuss Fr. John Dear's remarks about Martin (pp. 64–65, 66, 67–68).
6. How does Martin approach social activism? Do you think it's effective?
7. What do you find most interesting about Roy Bourgeois's reflections on pages 84–85, and Blase Bonpane's on pages 87–89?
8. Discuss Martin's statement that "'success' is measured in tiny increments, while the planting of seeds for the future is essential."
9. What part of Martin's prayer (pp. 96–97) speaks to you the most?

Chapter Five

1. What do you think of Martin's remarks about replacing "man" with "human" in the Creed?
2. Martin experiences the Eucharist with a strong sense of community. Do you relate to this, or would this be a new way for you to experience the Eucharist?
3. Why are the sayings "Deo Gratias" and "Everything is grace" so meaningful for Martin?
4. Discuss Martin's views on parenting.
5. What is the significance of "Behold the Lamb of God . . ." for Martin?
6. Reflect on Doug Kmiec's moving words about Martin on pages 111–12, and Terrance Sweeney's on pages 113–14.
7. According to Martin, what was *The West Wing* trying to accomplish? If you've seen this show, do you think it succeeded?
8. Reread the excerpt from Martin's Laetare Medal acceptance speech on pages 122–23. What point holds the most meaning for you?