**Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation**

**By Parker J. Palmer**

**Chapter 3, When Way Closes**

1. The Ecology of a Life

“Our created natures make us like organisms in an ecosystem: there are some roles and relationships in which we thrive and others in which we wither and die. “

Reflect on a role or relationship in which you thrive… and/or one in which you wither.

1. “Each time a door closes, the rest of the world opens up. All we need to do is stop pounding on the door that just closed, turn around-- which puts the door behind us-- and welcome the largeness of life that now lies open to our souls.” Have you experienced a turning around like this? How might these words deepen your sense of preparation this Advent season?

**Chapter 4, All The Way Down**

1. The Way to God is Down

When Parker emerged from his depression, he describes feeling “at home in his own skin.” Describe a place or time when you felt especially at home in your own skin.

Parker writes, “I now know myself to be a person of weakness and strength, liability and giftedness, darkness and light. I now know that to be whole means to reject none of it but to embrace all of it.” What do you think about Parker’s definition of human wholeness? What would it be like for you to embrace all of yourself and your life events?

**Chapter 5, Leading From Within**

1. Looking back, Annie Dillard describes monsters as, “the violence and terror of which psychology has warned us.” (Pg. 80) These monsters could be described as the fears and insecurities within all of us and that they are part of our spiritual journey.

The Five Monsters (Pgs. 85-91)

1. Insecurity about identity and worth

2. The universe is a battleground, hostile to human interests

3. ‘Functional Atheism’, the belief that ultimate responsibility for everything rests with us.

4. Fear of the natural chaos of life

5. Denial of death itself

Did any of the five monsters resonate with you?

Have you ever held back on a passion or objective because of a fear in your life?