

THE DEFIANT MIDDLE

summer patio series 2023 | chapters 3 & 4

Connect with the members of your group

First, **go around and share a word that describes how you are feeling coming to small group tonight and why.**

Discuss the following questions (or pick the ones that resonate most!)

On page 52 the author describes what she experiences as imposter syndrome; when you doubt your abilities, value, or worth. **Have you ever experienced this? When? Did that shift and how?**

On page 58, the author talks about the importance of her connection to faith and a church during a difficult season. **When has faith or participation in a faith community been most meaningful to you? When has it been most challenging?**

In the chapter titled, "Barren" the author shares her discomfort with the question, "Do you have children?" **What are your thoughts on her sharing this insight into her experience of not having children?**

Consider sharing your own experience in deciding whether or not to have children. **What factors impacted your decision making and how did that choice ultimately shape you?**

What is your response to her words on page 88: "That some religions have reduced women's value to their reproductive worth has become one of the many reasons increasing numbers of younger women have lost interest in participating in religion... when we reduce motherhood to a kind of pious simplicity, an unstoppable font of goodness, we also ignore the complexities that come with having children and turn motherhood into a series of hollow cliques."

What did you underline or highlight? **What passage in this section stood out to you and why?**

Close your conversations with the following prompt:

"I feel most alive and my fullest self when I _____"

Pray for your group

God of life; the world is quick to tell us who we should be, how we should act, and in what ways we are valued. Remind us this summer through in this gift of this community, that we are first and foremost created good. Grant us courage to break free from the expectations that bind us, that we might know you, ourselves, and one another fully and wholly. Amen.

Pick your next meeting location and time: _____

Sunday Group	Wednesday Group	Thursday Group
June 11 Chapters 1 & 2 June 25 Chapters 3 & 4	June 14 Chapters 1 & 2 June 28 Chapters 3 & 4	June 15 Chapters 1 & 2 June 29 Chapters 3 & 4
July 9 Chapters 5 & 6 July 23 Chapter 7	July 12 Chapters 5 & 6 July 26 Chapter 7	July 13 Chapters 5 & 6 July 27 Chapter 7
August 13 Postlude	August 9 Postlude	August 10 Postlude

discussion guides are available at www.stmichaelselca.com/patioseries