Things to Talk About

1. In what ways was Colin justified in blaming his father for his emotional pain? In what ways was he wrong?

2. How was Father Bede like or unlike Colin’s father?

3. Which characters needed to forgive? What made forgiveness difficult and how did they overcome that difficulty?

4. What did Father Dunstan mean when he said, “Only those who are forgiven are able truly to forgive. And only those who forgive are free to receive forgiveness”? Was he right?

5. What is the role of the cup in the story? How is it different from a relic or a magic charm?

6. How did Colin’s view of God change over the course of the book?

7. How would your knowledge of God be different if you had no Bible in your own language or could only read it in church?

8. Colin encounters various forms of faith—the established church under King Henry VIII, Brother Fergus and the Pilgrims of Grace who wanted to return to the church of Rome, and the Thatcher’s non-conformist community. How are these groups similar and how are they different?