

## A VERY PRIVATE GRAVE

By

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Discussion questions

1. Felicity has gone off to a monastery to study for the priesthood on something of a whim. What do you see as her strengths? Her weaknesses? How does her being an American affect the plot? How do you rate her chances for becoming a good priest— at the first? At the end of the book?
2. Fr. Antony desires to be a faithful priest and is considering becoming a monk. Yet he is a troubled man. What do you see as the source of his conflicts? What advice would you give him?
3. Felicity is attracted to Jonathan's charms and easy manners in contrast to Antony's stiffness and stuffiness, and yet she has sympathy for both men's problems. Do you find her caring and discerning or fickle? How would you have felt in her situation?
4. The story moves from setting to setting as the amateur sleuths search for clues. Which setting did you enjoy reading about the most? Which would you most like to visit?
5. The life and posthumous travels of St. Cuthbert provide a framework for the story. How did you respond to St. Cuthbert as a man? What did you think of the accounts of his wrestling with evil? What do you think about the idea of a body remaining uncorrupted?
6. The legend of the Three Guardians of St. Cuthbert's body is actually from Butler's *Lives of Saints*, as Antony referred to it. What do you think of the legend— could it be true?
7. The monastic background is developed with a lot of very traditional worship, much of it based on forms developed in the first centuries of Christianity. How do you respond to this type of worship? What do you think of the concept of saints?
8. How do the struggles and dangers Felicity and Antony go through change them? How do you see them developing in the future?
9. Were you startled with the idea of Fr. Anselm seemingly sending Antony away when the police were looking for him? Was this made clear to you in the end?
10. What would you say the theme of this story is? What did you learn from reading it? Are there things you would like to know more about?
11. Do you have questions you would like to ask the author? (If so, please do. write [donna@donnafletchercrow.com](mailto:donna@donnafletchercrow.com) )