

## GODRIC: A NOVEL

### (Discussion Questions)

01. Had you ever heard of St. Godric of Finchale before reading this book? Did you find Frederick Buechner's poetic writing challenging to read? Do you normally like this kind of literature?
02. What did you think of Godric's choice of friends? On page 7, he describes friendship as the "giving and taking of wounds." Do you find this to be true? Who do you think was his best friend?
03. On page 3, it states that Godric dunk himself in the bone-chilling, treacherous river Wear for sixty winters. What was the purpose for this?
04. What did you think of Godric's self-imposed austerity—for example wearing an iron vest and not wearing shoes? Do you think this kind of self-mortification is pleasing to God? Is it possible to go too far?
05. What kind of relationship did Godric have with his father, Aedward? Did Godric's opinion of him change over time? What kind of relationship did Godric have with his mother, Aedwen?
06. Was the relationship among the siblings, Godric, Burcwen, and William normal? What was healthy or unhealthy in the relationships? What were some of the turning points?
07. How did Godric's near-drowning affect his relationship with his sister? How did it affect his relationship with Jesus?
08. Why did Godric balk when Reginald called him "Father?" Is Godric more like "God reigns" or "God's wreck?" (page 17)
09. Why do you think Godric is so antagonistic towards Reginald? Why does the best in Reginald bring out the worst in Godric?
10. What did the Blessed Virgin teach Godric? (page 21-22)
11. What did you think of the fate of the "martyr" Peregrine Small on pages 29-34? How did Godric use the situation to his advantage?
12. Godric has a vision of St. Cuthbert on pages 35-39. The saint says to Godric, "When a man leaves home, he leaves behind some scrap of his heart...it is the same with a place a man is going to...only then he sends a scrap of his heart ahead." Have you ever experienced this? What did Godric confess to St. Cuthbert?

13. What happened to Godric after he kissed the leper? How does Godric feel about old age?
14. Why did Godric tell Mouse his name is Deric? What type of friend was Mouse? What was Godric's reaction to his father's death? Why didn't Godric give his family any of Deric's money? How had Burcwen changed? Why didn't Burcwen go to Rome with Godric and his mother?
15. What was Godric's impression of Rome? How did the pilgrimage affect his relationship with his mother? What did you think of his fellow travelers, Richard the baker, Peg his wife, Ralph Bodo the mason, Maud the snob, and the priest John Cherryman?
16. What did Godric learn from his time with Lord Falkes de Granvill? What did Godric learn from his time with Elric? How does being a hermit and isolating yourself from people serve God?
17. Could you relate to Godric as a Saint? Why or why not?
18. What did you think of Godric's visions of the Blessed Mother, John the Baptist and the Savior on pages 142-144? Have you ever known anyone who claimed to have similar visions? If so, how do you feel about their claims?
19. On page 149, Godric says to his sister, "No life is wasted when it is spent for charity." Name examples of people who have spent significant parts of their lives for charity.
20. Godric describes Hell on page 159 as "...cold and shame and shaking...worst of all, it is loneliness." Do you think this is an accurate description? Do we sometimes create our own Hell?