



# Discussion Guide

LOYOLAPRESS.

## **Prologue; Chapters 1 – 2**

1. In chapter 2, James is surrounded by protection twice, but his fellow soldiers died in front of his eyes or were captured. It is probably true that people were praying for their safety, but prayer doesn't promise to keep us safe from harm. Why do you pray? Does it help?
2. God doesn't give bicycles. What does God give?

## **Chapters 3 – 5**

3. Do you say grace in restaurants? At the homes of friends who are not religious?
4. Have you ever had an experience, like Bistra, when you felt afraid to pray in front of other people?
5. In chapter 3, Toni's son prays when his father asks him to lead. How comfortable are you with leading prayer?

## **Chapters 6 – 9**

6. Have you ever been furious with God? Did you tell God?
7. Does God feel like one of the family to you? Why do you think Debbie felt this way?
8. In chapter 8, Ellen and Martha are not surprised that Jesus would show up to eat an English muffin; they are just a little surprised by how he looks. When you say “Come, Lord Jesus,” do you expect him to really do that?

## **Chapters 10 – 12**

9. Do you have a favorite story about praying with your children?
10. In chapter 11, the Muslim families shared stories of praying with their children. The story of the Syrian family is heartbreaking because of the disaster that is taking place in Syria. The little daughter led the parents not only to teach her to pray when she was very young, but also to create a sacred place in their home for prayer. Those wise parents let her lead. Have you ever let a child lead you in praying?

### **Chapters 13 – 15**

11. What ordinary things in your house do you use to help you pray?  
Candles? Water? Songs?
12. When you pray, do you picture God as a father? Or do you picture God more like the human Jesus? Or do you have a different picture of God?

### **Chapters 16 – 18**

13. Is prayer something you do? Is it something you get done?
14. Would you be the same person if you did not pray?
15. Is your family defined by prayer in any way? How would your family be different if you did/didn't pray together?

## **Chapters 19 – 21**

16. Rita and Gulaine write their prayers on egg-shaped paper and “hatch” them between the pages of their Bible. Marina prays in the car, because that is the only time her busy family has for prayer. And the young mom believed so strongly that selling used books would be God’s way to get the money needed for adoption. These stories are all so perfectly simple. Do you have a simple way that you pray in your family?
17. When your family sits together to eat a meal, do you say grace? Which one? Do you know where it comes from?

## **Chapters 22 – 24**

18. Do you have a favorite icon, statue, crucifix, or other religious object in your home?
19. Does your family know how much it means to you?

### **Chapters 25 – 27**

20. It might be comforting to know that even a priest can struggle with family prayer. In chapter 26, Fr. Mike says that God's dream for us is that we are successful at family love. This sounds so simple, yet it's not always so simple. Is there someone in your family with whom you struggle to pray?
21. In chapter 27, Nancy can't pray with words because of her intense grief. She prays instead by holding her granddaughter and through tears. Have you ever prayed without words? How?

### **Chapters 28 – 29; Epilogue**

22. Have you experienced a great love? Where is it leading you?
23. When have you felt an awareness of peace in prayer?