



Finding God in a Bag of Groceries

1. Laura begins the book with a story about rule breaking. Why do you think she began this way and why is rule breaking the best introduction to this story? Consider how certain denominations have strict rules whereas others do not. Discuss the rule breaking of Jesus and how that affected his ministry.

2. *Finding God in a Bag of Groceries* describes many people whose lives are foreign to Laura. How does this story compare to stories about poverty in other countries, places where people's lives are unfamiliar? Does rural Tennessee feel like a foreign place to you? Do you think there is poverty hiding in your own community?

3. Prayer is an important way for Laura to connect with her clients. Reflect on the ways Laura prayed with and for her clients and how she prayed with the volunteers who packed groceries.

4. Chapter 4 is called, "My Calling Card." In it, Laura describes how that bag of groceries was her calling card. What are the symbols you carry to show your passions or your vocation? How do we acknowledge the calling cards of others?

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5. In chapter 7, the story of Nell and the matching dishes undoes a college student. Are there places in your life where you have abundance and yet still crave more? Are there things you should give away or let go of to feel more at peace?

6. Quiet and contemplation are important ways for Laura to process what she saw and experienced. How did you react to the horrors she saw? The joys she experienced? How does quiet fit into your spiritual life?

7. Chapter 14 begins with the quote “What does love look like?” from St. Augustine. What do you think looked like love in this story? What does love look like in your own life?

8. There are at least two instances where Laura says, “I wanted to be Jesus.” (with Autumn on page 156 and with Frances on page 212). Do you ever want to be Jesus for someone else? Has someone ever been Jesus for you, similar to the way Frances was Jesus for Laura when Frances put her hands on Laura’s face?

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9. If Laura found God in a bag of groceries, where else did she find God? In what unexpected or ordinary places have you found God?

10. Laura ends her book without resolving her question about ordination. Does this matter? Do you agree with her friend who says, “You’ve been ordained by this community” (p. 175)?