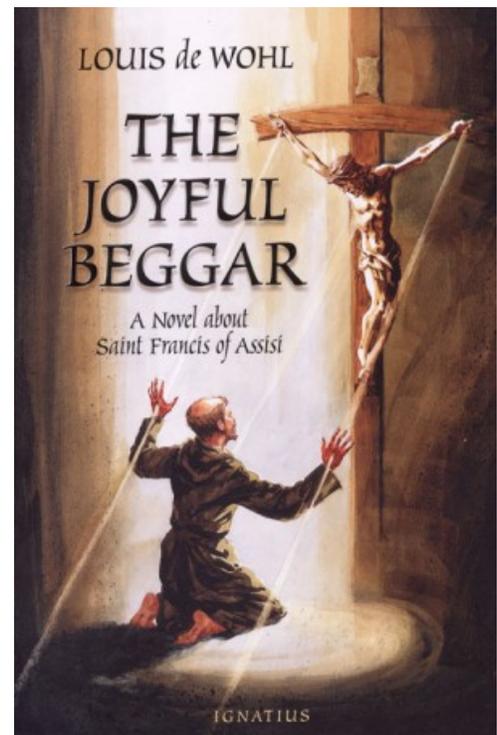


## Discussion Questions for *The Joyful Beggar*

1. What is the character of young Francis Bernardone?
2. What is the character of young Clare Scifi?
3. How does being in prison affect Francis? What were his goals and how did prison change this?
4. How do Pietro Bernardone and Donna Pica's characters differ? How do their wishes for their son differ?
5. Who is Roger of Vandria? He is a fictional character—what is his purpose in this historical novel?
6. What happened in Sicily with King Frederick, Emperor Otto, and Pope Innocent III? What type of power and authority did the Pope have?
7. Discuss Francis's love of "Lady Poverty"—who is she? What happens when he encounters the leper?
8. What happens during Francis's trial with his father and the bishop?
9. How does Francis's example affect the people in Assisi? How does his understanding of God's call evolve from rebuilding physical churches to rebuilding the faith of the Church?
10. Who were Francis's first followers and why did they follow him?
11. What happened during the meeting of Francis and Pope Innocent III?
12. How does Lady Clare escape to start the Franciscan sisters? What is her relationship with Francis?
13. While the Franciscans were growing, what was happening in Italy under Frederick? Why does God give Francis and his followers their mission at this time in history?
14. What problems does the Franciscan order face as it grows? What happens at the general chapter?
15. Why did Francis want to go on a crusade? What happens during his encounter with the Sultan? How does this meeting impact Roger of Vandria?
16. Why was Francis forced to rewrite the constitution of the order?
17. This is a historical novel—did you do any research to see how much of the story was factual versus how much was artistic license by the author?



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