

Discussion Questions for *The Golden Thread*

1. Who are Uli and Juanita? Why do you think these characters are in the story?
2. Who is Don Iñigo de Loyola? What is his character like at the beginning of the story? What are his goals and aspirations?
3. How did Iñigo handle his injury? Why was it so important that there was no deformity?
4. What books does Iñigo read during his recovery? How did they affect him?
5. How does his family react to his calling?
6. Why is Iñigo's brother a "bad" priest? How does his priesthood contrast with his brother's?
7. Throughout the books, there are various passages from Iñigo's writings. What was your favorite of his writings in the story? Why?
8. What happened on his pilgrimage during his conversation with the Moslem man? How does he battle his desire to kill him and find God's will? Does this help him overcome his lust for battle, blood, etc.?
9. How does he prepare for his general confession? What does he do after his general confession?
10. Why is it so hard for Iñigo to beg for bread?
11. What temptations does Iñigo face after he leaves everything behind?
12. Why does Uli think that God doesn't care about human suffering? How does his understanding of this mystery change throughout the story?
13. What happens on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land? What is going on with the Moslems at this period in history?
14. What happens to Iñigo when he goes before the Inquisition?
15. What happens when Rome is overtaken? Why is this piece of history included in the novel? Does it help to understand why the Society of Jesus was badly needed?
16. Have you ever read the *Spiritual Exercises* or done a retreat based on them? What was your experience? Does this novel help you to understand them better?
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?

