

Dear James—Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Use the following questions as guides to deeper individual understanding of the novel or for group discussion.

1. Forgiveness is an important theme of *Dear James*, which relates how strict, unforgiving Agatha McGee comes to forgive both James O'Hannon and Imogene Kite. How did this forgiveness come about? What motivated these changes?
 2. Why did Agatha suddenly reveal the secret of French's parentage?
 3. The novel shows how two older people, James O'Hannon and Agatha McGee, find new meaning and new direction in later life. What challenges did James and Agatha have to face? What personal qualities did they bring to bear on their crises?
 4. Did Pope John Paul II miraculously discern the nature of James's mission of reconciliation, or was he making a general comment about the priestly vocation (p. 409)? Does the answer matter in the story?
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10. How does Jon Hassler portray small-town life in the novel? Discuss its attractive and unattractive features.