

Discussion Questions/Journaling Prompts for Readers of *Ink and Honey*

The following discussion questions for *Ink and Honey* are created for individuals, book clubs, and reading groups to provide the exploration of the themes of prophecy, pilgrimage, prayer, calling, and the creative spirit contained within the story. You may choose to use the questions as journal prompts or as stepping stones to dialogue with a group of readers.

- 1) Petronilla, the visionary of Belle Coeur, shares her prophetic wisdom with her community, Mystical wisdom received through her visions and dreams.
 - ❖ Has there been a time in your life when you've received prophetic guidance from another?
 - ❖ Have you had an experience of sharing your *prophetic* wisdom?
- 2) The sisters of Belle Coeur rely upon and trust Petronilla's guidance.
 - ❖ Describe someone you know that you turn to for trustworthy guidance.
 - ❖ What are the qualities that inspire your trust and reliance in this person?
- 3) Peramony, the dream ritual shared by the Sisters of Belle Coeur, informed their discernment process.
 - ❖ How might you imagine sharing this experience with your circle of women?
 - ❖ What rituals or prayer practices do you incorporate into your life?
- 4) Goscelin, the scribe of Belle Coeur, is passionate about the craft of creating illuminated manuscripts.
 - ❖ What fuels your creative passion?
 - ❖ How do you express your creative spirit?
 - ❖ What form of creative expression inspires you to feel most connected to life's flow?
- 5) There are moments in the story of *Ink and Honey* when the sisters' faith is sorely tested.
 - ❖ Have you experienced a time in your life when you have felt unable to pray and been in deep questioning regarding the reality of the Divine presence?
 - ❖ How did you navigate such a time?
 - ❖ What was the outcome?
- 6) The Sisters of Belle Coeur were viewed as a radical and heretical community in their day.
 - ❖ Have you ever taken a radical (unconventional) stance in your life for a cause or belief?
 - ❖ If so, how did you express yourself with regard to your beliefs and passion for the cause?

- 7) The sisters of Belle Coeur are *called* by God to live together according to a particular way of life.
- ❖ Have you experienced the feeling of being "called" in some way?
 - ❖ How did your calling manifest in the world?
 - ❖ What do you believe happens within a woman when she denies the "call?"
- 8) Goscelin and her sisters are co-creators with the Divine.
- ❖ How do you interpret this concept?
 - ❖ Describe a time when you felt in sync with the Divine flow of life.
 - ❖ How did the experience grow or change you?
 - ❖ How did you express this opportunity for co-creative unity with the Beloved?
- 9) Pilgrimage is an ongoing theme in the story of *Ink and Honey*.
- ❖ Have you experienced a call to set out on a pilgrimage?
 - ❖ Where is your heart longing to travel?
 - ❖ What would you take with you? What would you leave behind?
 - ❖ What would you hope to discover?
- 10) Prayer is the river that runs through the lives of the sisters of Belle Coeur. They express their praise and petitions to God in myriad ways.
- ❖ Do you have a particular way of expressing prayer?
 - ❖ How does creativity hold the potential to play a sacred role in your life?
 - ❖ What are some new ways you might discover (either individually or in a group setting) to fully express your prayers?
- 11) Nature is very important to the lives of the Sisters of Belle Coeur. They experience day to day living through their senses.
- ❖ How do your senses inform your daily life?
 - ❖ Which sense or senses (touch, taste, hearing, seeing, touching, or intuiting) most influence your way of being in the world?
- 12) *Ink and Honey* is a story of sisterhood, faith, and survival of the human spirit.
- ❖ How do each of these three facets of the story relate to your life or community (circle of women)?
 - ❖ What inspires you to keep growing spiritually and creatively even in life's most challenging moments?

❖ What inspiration do the sisters of Belle Coeur offer for your life today?