

## *His Last Christmas Gift*

### Book Club Discussion Debra Borchert

1. Father Mateo gives Claire an unusual penance. Do you think her meeting with Sister Georgette helped Claire more than saying prayers for penance?
2. Claire realizes how kind and protective the nuns at her convent school were, in retrospect. Have you ever realized that someone in your childhood gave you a great and unexpected kindness?
3. The holidays can be bittersweet. Do unexpected feelings ever pop up amidst celebrations for you?
4. Do you have any coping strategies for handling sorrow and grief, for yourself and others, when celebrating the holidays?
5. When one keeps secrets to protect a loved one, is that a betrayal?
6. If you unknowingly lie to yourself, to protect yourself from knowing the truth, is that lying?
7. Have you ever realized something you've been telling yourself is not true?
8. Claire travels across the world to tell Luca's mom that he may have inherited a fatal disease—because Claire could not live with herself knowing she might be able to save the child's life. Is there a moral obligation to protect a person who doesn't know the risk?
9. What do you think Marti's greatest gift is to Claire?
10. When a person is experiencing a painful memory, what do you do to help the person?
11. If you are in pain, what do you appreciate most?
12. I learned a lovely Christmas tradition from a friend who always had her children leave carrots for Santa's reindeer on the plate of cookies they put out for Santa. She and her husband nibbled the carrots and cookies and left crumbs before they went to bed. Do you have a special holiday tradition?

