



The One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margot by *Marianne Cronin*

Lent Book Questions

Each week, I'm going to assume you'll read about 70 pages. The groups of questions will reflect this: thus, when you race ahead (as some of you surely will) you might need to move through the questions a little sooner. And you don't need to answer all the questions, just the ones your group likes – or finds most challenging!

Week 1: *Lenni to Seventeen* (3-68)

1. Lenni says of the chapel “I would like it to be a place for answers”. What would your question be?
2. What do you make of Father Arthur's truth? (page 21)
3. What did God say to you in Arthur and Lenni's relationship?
4. We discover who Lenni is in her response to Rose (the temp) and Arthur: how would you describe Lenni?
5. Lenni seems attracted to the parable of the prodigal son even in her misunderstood translation. In light of this, is Lenni running to, or running away? Why?
6. Who can you just *be* with?
7. What emotion or feeling would you give to Lenni's reaction to Margot's memory, that instead of escaping into imagination, she slept for the first time in ages.
8. How have you discovered God in these pages this week?

Week 2: *Lenni and Margot get happy to Lenni (69-141)*

9. What happy memory might you draw?
10. Was Margot's least favourite grandmother Christ-like? Was she a follower of Jesus?
11. Forgiveness or revenge?
12. Lenni uses *Beauty and the Beast* to craft an image of Jesus walking with us as an old beggar woman: where have you seen Jesus in fiction?
13. Margot describes her love for Davey as 'celestial': what word would you use to describe your most precious love?
14. How does – why does – another's story of joy and sorrow bring life and healing to your own?
15. To which of the stories (Margot's or Lenni's) have you most related? Which has spoken most to you?
16. How have you discovered God in these pages this week?

Week 3: *Lenni to Lenni and Margot go for a walk (145-213)*

17. Is it liberation to not be anybody's? "It was sad, but it was also freeing. I was no longer anybody's. A childless mother and a husbandless wife, a parentless daughter with a small inheritance and no fixed address." (147)
18. *Lenni and the Harvest Festival* and *Margot and the Bottle*: who is free and how do they use their freedom?
19. In reading, when did you cry? And when did you laugh?
20. With so many snippets of relationships revealed in the chapters, which has most surprised or shocked you? Which has made you remember one you'd almost forgotten? Which have made you go 'ooh' or 'aah!'?
21. What makes you afraid? Doing the wrong thing? Asking the question you shouldn't ask?
22. Margot asks Lenni if her mother knows she's dying (201): what is it to spare someone pain or do we share our sorrows?
23. The Holy Spirit stirs our hearts in the most profound and beautiful and strange ways. Searching for Jeremy the chicken drew Margot to the depths of her heart. Remembering the fragility and vulnerability of each other, when have you found the Holy Spirit stirring your life to bring you healing?
24. How have you discovered God in these pages this week?

Week 4: *Chickens and stars to Margot and the astronomer* (214-277)

25. A wheelchair becomes the traitor's kiss for Lenni: do we recognise when a kindness disables?
26. Imagine yourself in the Temp's father's position, a dying stranger surrounded by a foreign language. What do you imagine Lenni, in her dying and frailty, brought to him; and he to her?
27. What light is shed on your understanding of the Eucharist on Lenni's experience of Mass with Fr Arthur?
28. How do you know when you're *home*? How do you know when you're not?
29. What is your reaction to Lenni's father?
30. When was the last time you contemplated the awesomeness of creation? Stood outside and star-gazed? Took in the joys around us?
31. Chance encounters with strangers: do they bring you joy or distraction, annoyance or indifference? Margot's with Humphrey and Lenni's with the smoker.
32. How have you discovered God in these pages this week?

Week 5: *My Friend, My Friend to Lenni's last page (278-382)*

33. *Jeremy Davey Star*: what's in a name? Why are names important?
34. "I learned nothing about Jesus from him?" What do you think?
35. Is Pastor Woods Christ-like?
36. Butter or jam? What's your favourite analogy for Jesus?
37. Saying goodbye: when is it a blessing?
38. "Purple is the colour of morning / mourning." What do colours mean to you? Which is most spiritual? Which is holiest; which is least holy?
39. Would you keep those promises? (Lenni's dad and Margot's).
40. How have you discovered God in these pages this week?