

The Father Tim Novels Book I: *Home to Holly Springs*

1. Which of the two men, Jim Houck or Father Tim, do you think benefited more from the truth about what happened between their fathers: Father Tim learning the truth about what happened or Jim finally being able to tell him the truth?
2. What do you think Matthew Kavanagh's last words meant?
3. Father Tim is surprised that the courthouse was as large as he remembered it. Discuss times you revisited places from your childhood only to discover that things were different than you recalled.
4. When young Timothy Kavanagh uses a racist epithet, he's told to read First Corinthians 12:13, which says, "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink." How do you think it was so easy for people to profess their Christianity while still embracing racism?
5. Father Tim reflects that since returning to Holly Springs, "his own bear had lumbered up to the wagon." Discuss what he meant. With what other bears are the characters in this book struggling?
6. Discuss the instances in *Home to Holly Springs* where the sins of the father are passed on to the son. Father Tim's father was a distant and strict person prone to bouts of depression. Why do you think Father Tim's parenting style wasn't negatively affected by how his father treated him?
7. Father Tim wanted to ask his dad, "Why do you hate me?" How do you think he would have reacted if the question had been posed?
8. As in Jan Karon's previous novels, food and fellowship go hand in hand. Discuss a few examples in the book where events and people are directly tied to food. What are the foods that you associate with childhood memories or other specific times in your life? Have you carried on those traditions?
9. Several people in the book say it's a must to see Graceland before one dies. What are your must-visit destinations?
10. Do you think the favor Peggy asks of Father Tim is selfish? What would you have done if you were in Father Tim's shoes?