



## Before Reading

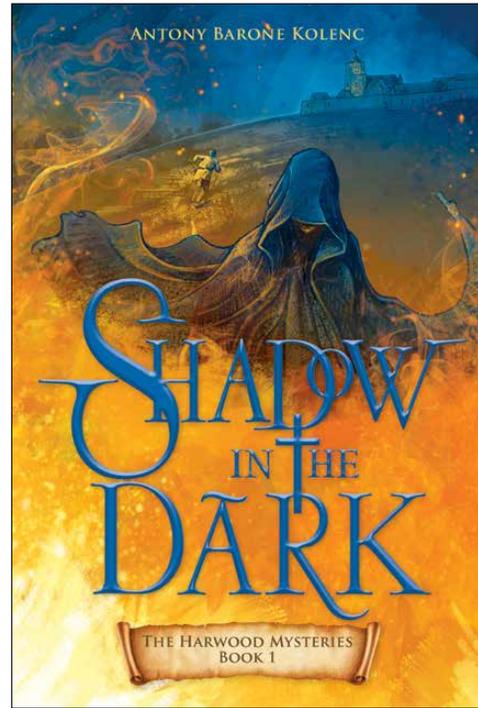
Explore the How to Read Historical Fiction section on page vi. Then do some brief internet research about the role of the Catholic faith in 12th-century England and about life in a typical Benedictine abbey of that time. Watch a video, view illustrations, or read an article to gain some historical context.

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## During Reading

Ask yourself questions such as the following:

- In what ways are children's everyday lives the same in the Middle Ages when compared to yours? In what ways are they different?
  - In what ways are the actions and reactions of young characters like those of kids today? In what ways are they different?
  - How did the Catholic faith of people in the Middle Ages shape their thoughts, words, and actions? What similarities do you notice between their understanding of God and your own?
  - How did the society of the Middle Ages treat vulnerable people? How closely did this treatment reflect the Catholic Church's teaching on caring for others?
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## After Reading

Ask yourself questions such as the following:

- How does your everyday experience of faith resemble that of the book's characters? How does your experience differ from theirs? How do these similarities and differences affect the way you see your faith?
- Many of the book's characters make choices based on their understanding of God's will. What have you been taught about God's will?
- The book shows how serfs and laborers in the Middle Ages were often treated as less valuable than people in other stations in life. Where do you notice similar injustices in modern-day society? What does our faith call us to do about injustice?