

“Introduction: Go to Heaven

1. Fulton Sheen mentions that both Heaven and Hell begin here but do not end here. Do you agree with this? If neither end here, where do they end and why? (Pg. 10)
2. What distinctions does the Venerable Fulton Sheen make between Heaven and Hell? (pg. 9)
3. According to Venerable Sheen, are Heaven and Hell distant from our current lives? How much say do we have in going to Heaven or Hell? (pgs. 9 and 10)

Chapter 1: The First Faint Summons to Heaven

Mark 5:4-9

John 3:20-21, 5:39-42

Genesis 4:9,14

Titus 1:16

Hebrews 2:3

Eccles 1:8

Revelation 3:16

Surfeits (surf-its): an excessive, overabundant supply of something, often causing disgust or sickness through overindulgence.

Ennui: a feeling of weariness and dissatisfaction : boredom

Léon Bloy: Bloy was a French Catholic novelist, essayist, pamphleteer, and polemicist renowned for his fierce defense of Catholicism, uncompromising critique of bourgeois materialism, and advocacy of redemptive suffering and poverty. Known as the “Pilgrim of the Absolute” and “Ungrateful Beggar,” he authored works such as *Le Désespéré*, *La Femme pauvre*, and *Le Salut par les Juifs*. He influenced thinkers like Jacques Maritain and Pope Francis and remains celebrated for his prophetic intensity and aphoristic prose.

Ernest Psichari: a French writer and soldier whose works combine militaristic sentiments with a semimystical religious devotion.

Jacques Maritain: He was a French Catholic philosopher and leading 20th-century proponent of neo-Thomism, known for reviving the thought of Thomas Aquinas and integrating it with modern concerns. Author of over 60 works, he influenced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, advocated Christian democracy, and contributed to Vatican II. His ideas spanned metaphysics, political theory, aesthetics, and the philosophy of science.

Paul Claudel: Paul Claudel was a French poet, dramatist and diplomat, and the younger brother of the sculptor Camille Claudel. He is most famous for his verse dramas, which often convey his devout Catholicism, and for institutionalizing his sister.

1. Where is man's focus now? How do you see it in your own lives and even in yourself? (pgs. 11-12)
2. What are you a mental and/or spiritual prisoner to? (pg. 12, 17)
3. What are the three alienations mentioned by Venerable Sheen? (pgs. 12-15)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
4. Can you live with yourself? Are you at peace with yourself? (pg. 14)
5. What, according to Venerable Sheen, is the reason for humanity's anxiety? (pgs. 18-20)
6. "It is easy to find truth; it is hard to face it, and harder still to follow it." How true is this statement, especially in light of St. Augustine's Confessions (or those that are familiar with it)? (pgs. 24-25)

7. What two factors influence belief? (pgs. 25-27)
 - a.
 - b.
8. Are we slow to judge ourselves? If we are, what effect does it have on us and on society? (pgs. 27-28)
9. Why is outside coaxing and arguments often ineffectual to convince others to live a better life? What works better? Do you have an example of this in your own life? (pgs. 28-30)
10. What is Venerable Sheen telling us in the paragraph on page 30 beginning “Almost everyone today wants religion...”?
11. Why would someone call religion a “crutch”? Why isn’t it? (Pg. 31-32)
12. What songs have you heard in the darkness? (pg.31)
13. What do you think of Pascal’s quote on page 33?

14. What are the two doors to the soul that God can enter?

- a.
- b.

15. What are the first faint summons to Heaven?

Chapter 2: Christ Helps Our Minds and Wills

John 1:14

Luke 6:24-26

Matthew 5:32

Matthew 19:16, 20, 21, 22

Mark 10:9

Mark 10:18, 23-25

(Plain of) Esdralon: lowland in northern Israel, dividing the hilly areas of Galilee in the north and Samaria in the south. Greek derivation of the Hebrew Yizre'el, meaning "God will sow" or "May God make fruitful."

Buddha: Siddhartha Gautama, most commonly referred to as the Buddha (lit. 'the awakened one'), was a wandering ascetic and religious teacher who lived in the eastern Indo-Gangetic Plains during the 6th or 5th century BCE and founded Buddhism. According to Buddhist legends, he was born in Lumbini, in what is now Nepal to royal parents of the Shakya clan, but renounced his home life to live as a wandering ascetic. After leading a life of mendicancy, asceticism, and meditation, he attained nirvana at Bodh Gaya in what is now Bihar, India. The Buddha then wandered through the lower Indo-Gangetic Plain, teaching and building a monastic order (sangha). Buddhist tradition holds he died in Kushinagar (in modern day Uttar Pradesh, India) and reached parinirvana ("final release from conditioned existence").

Mohammed: Muhammad (c. 570 CE – 8 June 632 CE)¹ was an Arab religious, military and political leader, and the founder of Islam. According to Islam, he was the final prophet of God who was divinely inspired to preach and confirm the monotheistic teachings of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and other prophets in Islam. He is believed by Muslims to be the Seal of the Prophets, and along with the Quran, his teachings and normative examples form the basis for Islamic religious belief.

Confucius: Confucius was a Chinese philosopher, teacher, and political theorist of the Spring and Autumn period whose ideas shaped East Asian civilization for over two millennia. Born Kong Qiu in 551 BCE, he emphasized virtues like ren (benevolence), li (ritual propriety), and filial piety, advocating moral governance and self-cultivation. Compiled in the Analects, his teachings became the foundation of Confucianism, influencing ethics, politics, and education across China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

Lao-tze (lao-tsoo): legendary Chinese philosopher considered to be the author of the Tao Te Ching, one of the foundational texts of Taoism. Lived (possibly) during the 6th century BC.

Escutcheon (is-kuhtch-in): 1: a defined area on which armorial bearings are displayed and which usually consists of a shield 2: a protective or ornamental plate or flange (as around a keyhole) 3: the part of a ship's stern on which the name is displayed

Hypostatically (hypo-static-ly): the substance or essential nature of an individual

Ersatz (ur-satz): being a usually artificial and inferior substitute or imitation

1. How does Venerable Sheen define the relationship between our earthly actions and our eternal soul?
2. According to Venerable Sheen, what is the cause of conflict? Do you agree? (pgs. 37-38)
3. What are two facts of human nature? (pgs. 37-39)
 - a.
 - b.
4. What do you think of the analogy of the orchestra? How does that influence the way you see free will and God's action above and within it? (pgs. 38-40)
5. "This new man must be a man; otherwise God would not be acting in the name of mankind." Reflect on this. What does it mean? (pg. 41)

6. What tests can be used to measure gods/prophets? (pgs. 42-43)
7. Why is Christ not just a “good man”? (pgs. 47-48)
8. Reflect on “He could teach the lesson of the Cross as payment for sin; He had to take it.” (Pg. 51)
9. “Those who call black black and white white are sentenced for intolerance. Only the grays live.” Is this true today? In what way? How do we as Catholics approach this mentality? (pgs. 54-55)
10. What is the difference between internal and external freedom? How do these freedoms relate to the love of God? (pgs. 55-57)
11. Are we responsible for society’s ills? Why or why not? What are things that we turn a blind eye to and think that they are “not our responsibility) (pgs. 57-59)
12. What is the “gravest of sins”? (Pg. 61)
13. How does Christ help our minds and wills?

Chapter 3: Grace and Faith in Christian Life

1 John 3:2	1 Corinthians 1:25	Ephesians 4:5
Matthew 11:28	Mark 10:15	John 15:19-20
Matthew 16:17	1 John 5:9-10	Philemon 2:5
Luke 10:21	Ephesians 2:8	Romans 8:38-39

Sorokin: Pitirim Alexandrovich Sorokin was a Russian American sociologist and political activist, who contributed to the social cycle theory. Moving to the United States, he became a professor of sociology at the University of Minnesota in 1924, and, in 1930, he was hired as head of the newly formed department of sociology at Harvard University. Sorokin's magnum opus is regarded by many to be *Social and Cultural Dynamics*. He classifies societies according to their 'cultural mentality'. This can be "ideational" (reality is spiritual and immaterial), "sensate" (truth is material and all things are in flux), or "idealistic" (a synthesis of the two). He suggested that significant civilizations evolve from a conceptual to an idealistic, and eventually to a sensate mentality. Each of these phases of cultural development not only seeks to describe the nature of reality, but also stipulates the nature of human needs and goals to be satisfied, the extent to which they should be satisfied, and the methods of satisfaction. Sorokin has interpreted the contemporary Western civilization as a sensate civilization, dedicated to technological progress and prophesied its fall into decadence and the emergence of a new ideational or idealistic era.

Omne vivum ex vivo (om-neh VEE-vum ex VEE-vo): "all life comes from life" and is a foundational principle in microbiology and biology. It asserts that living organisms can only originate from other living organisms, directly opposing the ancient idea of spontaneous generation, which suggested that life could arise from nonliving matter such as mud, decaying flesh, or other inanimate substances

Exigencies: an urgent need or demand

Copiosa apud eum redemptio (cop-ee-Oh-sa ah-pooed eh-oom re-demp-SEE-o: The Latin phrase "Copiosa apud eum redemptio" translates directly into English as "With Him is Plentiful Redemption"

Charles Peguy (Peg-ee): was a French poet, essayist, and editor. His two main philosophies were socialism and nationalism; by 1908 at the latest, after years of uneasy agnosticism, he had become a believing (but generally non-practicing) Catholic. From that time, Catholicism strongly influenced his works.

Nescience (ne-shee-ance): lack of knowledge or awareness : ignorance

Toscanini: Arturo Toscanini was an Italian conductor celebrated for his intensity, perfectionism, and photographic memory, hailed as one of the greatest maestros of the early 20th century.

1. What is the definition of humility? (pg. 86) Is that different from what you thought? How does this definition of humility change you?
2. What does humility do to faith? What does Pride do to faith? (Pg. 85)
3. How does the natural law and divine law interact with each other? (pgs. 64-65)
4. What three levels can man live on? (pg. 67)
5. Why is reason alone not enough to get us out of “this mess”? (pgs. 86-87)

Chapter 4: Christ's Office as Teacher, King, and Priest

John 21:25	John 17:21	Genesis 12:3
Matthew 28:18	John 10:16	Genesis 35:10
John 19:11	John 15:19	Exodus 6:7
John 16:7,8,13	Luke 10:16	Matthew 16:13, 14, 15, 16, 17-19
John 15:5	Matthew 18:18	Matthew 20:25-27
Mark 4:28, 29	John 20:23	John 8:32

Mindszenty: József Mindszenty (29 March 1892 – 6 May 1975) was a Hungarian cardinal of the Catholic Church who served as Archbishop of Esztergom and leader of the Catholic Church in Hungary from 1945 to 1973. He opposed fascism and communism in Hungary.

1. "Our faith is first and foremost in Christ, living in His Mystical Body, and then only secondly in explicit beliefs." Do we live our Faith this way? How? (pg. 119)
2. How do we become one with Christ? (pgs. 98-104)
3. "I am only lifting myself with my own bootstraps." How many times have you heard this? Can you? (pg. 105)
4. What are three things that you need to be happy? Do the three things that the Venerable Sheen writes on page 105 make sense? Does your list or his make more sense?

5. What is referred to when we speak of the new Body of Christ? Where do we fit in within this body? (pgs. 106-112)
6. What two facts are uncovered about revealed religion? (pg.112)
 - a.
 - b.
7. What is one purpose of God taking away a name and replacing it with one chosen by Him (Abraham, Jacob, etc.)? (pgs. 112-113)
8. What does qahal mean and why is it significant? (pgs. 114-115)
9. "Our faith is first and foremost in Christ, living in His Mystical Body, and then only secondly in explicit beliefs." Do we live our faith in this way? How? (pg. 119)
10. "The devil has pretty well convinced some of his subjects that they should not accept the authority of Christ, because they would be weakening their reason." Can you give some instances where this happens? What are some common beliefs that run counter to our Christianity? (pg. 121)

Chapter 5: Christian Life Is Struggle

Jas 1:12

Ps 52:7 (51:8-9)

1 Corinthians 13:3

Mark 10:23

Mark 11:26

Heb 10:24

Demagogue (Deh-mah-gog): 1: a political leader who appeals to popular prejudices and who makes false claims and promises in order to gain power 2 history : a leader in ancient times who championed the cause of the common people

John Henry Newman: John Henry Newman was an English theologian, Anglican priest turned Catholic cardinal, and influential 19th-century religious leader. A key figure in the Oxford Movement, he converted to Catholicism in 1845, founded the Birmingham Oratory, and helped establish the Catholic University of Ireland. His works, including *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* and *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, shaped modern theology. Canonized in 2019, he is a Doctor of the Church and patron of Catholic education.

1. Why do we struggle?
2. How did Christ's temptation differ from ours? (pg. 123-124)
3. How does Venerable Sheen describe "mortification" or "immolation" in the natural world? How does it relate to human suffering? (pgs. 125-127)
4. "God himself designed to become a sharer in our humanity in order that we might share in His divinity...The common denominator between Him and us is His human nature...if we are to have our life ennobled, then we must in some way enter into the life of Christ." How does this change the way you look at your own humanity? At the humanity of others? (pg. 128)

5. What are some modern ways of speaking about love? How does how we speak of love now reflect on society as a whole, and how does it relate to how Venerable Sheen describes love? (pg. 129)
6. What does it mean to share in the folly of Christ? (pgs. 131-133)
7. Does the “Doctrine of the Cross” or even God forbid enjoyment in our lives? What must we be careful about regarding joy and pleasure in this world? (pgs. 133-134)
8. How do you define freedom?
9. “But detachment, properly practiced, is only a means of attachment to God.” What does this mean? (pg. 135)
10. Why does forgiveness alone not wipe away sins? (pg. 136-137)
11. Is there anything different in the way that Venerable Sheen approaches the Seven Deadly Sins? (pgs. 137-144)
12. Why is it important to know who you are? (pgs. 144-148)

Chapter 6: Christian Marriage and Love

Matthew 5:28

Luke 1:34

Romans 5:3-5

Luke 1:35

Galatians 6:2

1 Corinthians 7:14

Genesis 4:1

Matthew 16:24, 25

Sublimation: 1a: sublime sense 1b: archaic : to improve or refine as if by subliming; 2: to divert the expression of (an instinctual desire or impulse) from its unacceptable form to one that is considered more socially or culturally acceptable

Fait accompli(Fatea-com-plee): “Fait accompli” translates to “an accomplished fact” in English, referring to something that has already happened and cannot be changed.

Non horruisti Virginis uterum (non– hor-ruh-see-tsee – Vee-rin-jeez – oo-ter-um): “did not the Virgin’s womb tremble” from the Te Deum

Ontological: 1: of or relating to ontology (a branch of metaphysics concerned with the nature and relations of being or a particular theory about the nature of being or the kinds of things that have existence); 2: relating to or based upon being or existence

Concupiscence (con-CUE-pa-sense): Strong desire, especially sexual desire

1. “The greatest illusion of lovers is to believe that the intensity of their sexual attraction is the guarantee of the perpetuity of their love.” How does this compare to the Screwtape Letters (if you happened to read it)? (pg. 150)
2. “Mystery” as a concept is not new to Catholicism. Venerable Fulton Sheen speaks of sexuality and love as mystery. How has your sense of “mystery” changed? (pgs. 151, 154-159)
3. You may have heard of the “dark night of the soul.” But have you heard of the “dark night of the body”? What does Venerable Sheen see as the purpose and remedy of this dark night? Do you think this only applies to those who are married?(pgs. 163-165)

Chapter 7: Prayer and Meditation

Matthew 5:45

Matthew 6:21

Matthew 6:34

Matthew 6:32

Matthew 6:7

Hebrews 5:8

Temporal: 1a: of or relating to time as opposed to eternity, b: of or relating to earthly life, c: lay or secular rather than clerical or sacred; 2: of or relating to grammatical tense or a distinction of time; 3a: of or relating to time as distinguished from space, b: of or relating to the sequence of time or to a particular time : chronological

Amor pondus meum(ah-more pon-duce may-uhm): “Love is my gravitation” or “love is my burden.” Similar to “Amor meus pondus meum”, attributed to St. Augustine of Hippo. It expresses the idea that love is not light or airy, but something heavy, burdensome, and grounding — a force that pulls us down, slows us, and anchors us in reality. In Augustine’s writings, love (caritas) is portrayed as a weight that shapes human existence. It reflects his belief that love is not merely an emotion but a sacred, all-encompassing force that draws us toward God and toward others, even at the cost of our comfort or ease.

Curé of Ars: The Cure of Ars refers to Saint John Vianney, a French priest renowned for his holiness, dedication to the confessional, and transformative impact on his parish in Ars, France.

Ideomotor (id-yee-ah-motor): not reflex but motivated by an idea.

1. What are two gifts of prayer? Why is it important that we are aware of these two gifts? (pg. 168)

2. What is the purpose of prayer? (pg. 169)

3. What is the difference between prayer of petition, of intercession, and of abandonment? Which do you feel you practice more frequently? (pg. 169)

4. Why is it harder for God to give himself to those who only think of themselves? (pg. 169)

5. What is your center? What should your center be? (pgs. 169-170)
6. What is meditation and what does it do to us? (pgs. 170-171)
7. Why aren't our prayers sometimes heard? When were your prayers not heard? How do you look back on it? (Pg. 172)
8. "If our thoughts are bad, our actions will also be bad." Is this true? (pg. 172)
9. "Political, social, and economic injustices are, first, psychic evils-they originate in the mind. They become social evils because of the intensity of the thought that begot them." Think of an injustice in this world then apply it to this quote. Does it work? (pgs. 172-173)
10. How does prayer and meditation affect our physical, mental, and spiritual health? (pg. 174)
11. How can we foster a better prayer life?
12. How do prayer and meditation help us go to Heaven?

Chapter 8: Love of God and Resignation to His Will

Romans 8:32

John 13:27

Romans 8:28

Luke 22:53

Colossians 4:18

Proverbs 12:21

Acts 2:22-24

Ephesians 5:20

John 16: 22-24

Matthew 7:21

Job 1:21

1 Thessalonians 4:3

Maria festinans (Fes-tin-ans): - Mary hurries

1. What are the three characteristics of the love of God? (Pgs. 177-179)

2. “Sorrow remarries the soul to God.” What does this mean? How do you feel about this? (pg. 178)

3. “Religion does not seem pleasant to those who have never climbed high enough, by a renunciation of selfishness, to glimpse its vistas; but a divine religion with the Holy Eucharist is much more pleasant to those who experience it than the world is pleasant to those who sin in it.” Is this true? Have you encountered this? (pg. 179)

4. What is society’s version of “true love”? What is real love? (pg. 179)

5. Being empty is often thought of as a bad thing. Why is this? If being empty is bad, then why are we asked to “empty our hearts”? What is the difference? (pg. 180)

6. What is the difference between the dictionary definition of "obedience," or society's definition and the definition given on page 180? What are the implications of these definitions to our lives?
7. "Our Lord spent three hours in redeeming, three years in teaching, and thirty years in obeying, in order that a rebellious, proud, and diabolically independent world might learn the value of obedience." Reflect on this passage and the role of obedience in our own lives. Do we struggle with it, do we surrender to it? Who are we obedient to in our lives and how do we show it? Does this obedience bring us closer or farther from God? (pg. 180)
8. "The parent is to the child God's representative; and in order that parents may not have a responsibility that will be too heavy for them, God gives each child a soul, as so much clay which their hands can mold in the way of truth and love. Whenever a child is given to parents, a crown is made for it in heaven; and woe to those parents if that child is not reared with a sense of responsibility to acquire that crown!" Reflect on this. Why would Venerable Sheen mention this in a chapter on love and resignation of the will? What does this have to do with obedience? (pg. 181)
9. "The difference between people who never get the breaks and those who make every now an occasion for thanking God is this: the latter live in an area of love greater than their desire to 'have it their way.'" Which kind of person are you? Which way of thinking is more helpful in life? (pg. 182)

10. "The bearing of Christ is inseparable from the service of Christ." What does this mean? (pg. 183)
11. What do we need to become saints? (pgs. 183-187)
12. What is the definition of a saint? (pg. 187)
13. What are some examples of things or instances that can be used for sanctification? (pgs. 186-188)
14. "God does not keep record of your deeds. You do your own bookkeeping. Your conscience takes your own dictation. God knows all things by merely looking into Himself, not by reading over your shoulder." What does this mean? Do you feel like it is true for you? (pgs. 189-190)
15. Reflect on the following: "While God has given to each of us the power to act, He has left us free to exercise the power. Why then blame God when we abuse our freedom? God will not destroy your freedom. Hell is the eternal guarantee of our freedom to rebel, or of the power to make fools out of ourselves." Why do we blame God for a lack of freedom? (pgs. 190-191)

16. Why does God permit evil? (pgs. 191-194)

17. “God does not will the sin of those who hate you, but He does will your humiliation.” Reflect on this. What do you think? What does this mean? (pg. 195)

18. What is your center? Is it working? (pg. 196)

Chapter 9: The Role of Mary in the Church

Coventry Patmore: was an English poet and critic best known for *The Angel in the House* (1854–1862), a verse narrative idealizing Victorian domestic life. Associated with the Pre-Raphaelites, he worked at the British Museum for nearly two decades. Later, after converting to Catholicism, he produced his acclaimed mystical odes *The Unknown Eros* (1877). His essays and metrically innovative work influenced contemporaries like Gerard Manley Hopkins.

Double standard: a rule or principle which is unfairly applied in different ways to different people or groups.

1. “All human love is an initiation into the eternal. Some find the ideal in substance without passing through the shadow.” What does this mean? What does it have to do with Mary? (pg. 199)

2. “St. Paul tells us that we were predestined, before the foundations of the world were laid, to become the sons of God. But some of us will not fulfill that hope.” What are the implications for this, especially for those that do not fulfill that hope? Again, how do you think this relates to Mary? (pg. 200)
3. What do you think about the description of women and spirituality on pages 201 and 202? Do you agree with this?
4. “The so-called ‘double standard’, which does not exist and which has no ethical foundation, is actually based on the unconscious impulse of man to regard woman as the preserver of ideals, even when he fails to live up to them.” What do you think of this? (pg. 202)
5. “‘I know not man.’ This meant not only that she was untaught by pleasures; it also implied that she had so brought her soul to focus on inwardness that she was a virgin, not only through the absence of man, but through the Presence of God.” Reflect on this. What deeper meaning can you glean from this and from what we have learned about Mary so far? (pgs. 203-204)

Chapter 10: Suffering and Consolation

Luke 23:34, 40-41

Matthew 18: 21-35

Matthew 5:7

Luke 13: 6-9

Titus 3:3

Luke 6:37, 38

Matthew 7:1

Acts 7: 60

Matthew 5:44-47

Calumniate (kah-LUHM-nee-ate): make false and defamatory statements about

1. What are some reasons for forgiving those who we don't want to forgive? Which reason do you think is hardest to live by? (pg. 210-211)
2. Have you ever meditated on pain from the perspective of the two thieves at Calvary? How does this change in perspective change your perspective on pain? (pgs. 212-215)
3. What could forgiveness of those that hurt us do for others? What can forgiveness do for ourselves? What can it do for the world? (pg. 214)
4. "Pain in itself is not unbearable; it is the failure to understand its meaning that is unbearable." Is this true? (pg. 215)

5. How are pain and sacrifice defined in this chapter? Is it different from how you would have defined it? Which definition do you prefer? (pg. 216)
6. Reflect on God and Pain on page 217. What if God took away pain here on earth? Would that ultimately be a good or bad thing?
7. Why does God not usually grant our material requests? (pg. 218)
8. Reflect on pages 222-224. Do you think that this is one of the reasons there may be so few vocations now?
9. Reflect on “But by a peculiar paradox, though innocence hates sin, because it alone knows its gravity, it nevertheless loves the sinner.” What does this mean and do you think it is true? (pg. 224)

Chapter 11: Our Final Choice

Vitiated (vih-SHE-ate): spoil or impair the quality or efficiency of

Cupidity (cue-PID-it-ee): greed for money or possessions

Limpid (limp-id): completely clear or from anything that darkens

Demosthenes (di-mos-thuh-nee-z): was a Greek statesman and orator in ancient Athens during the 4th century BC. For a time, Demosthenes made his living as a professional speechwriter (logographer) and a lawyer, writing speeches for use in private legal suits. He went on to devote his most productive years to opposing Macedon's expansion. He idealized his city and strove throughout his life to restore Athens's supremacy and motivate his compatriots against Philip II of Macedon. He sought to preserve his city's freedom and to establish an alliance against Macedon, in an unsuccessful attempt to impede Philip's plans to expand his influence southward, conquering the Greek states.

Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (Jahk benign Boh-sweat): was a 17th-century French bishop, theologian, and renowned orator celebrated for his eloquent sermons, funeral orations, and literary works. A leading advocate of the divine right of kings and Gallican liberties, he served as tutor to King Louis XIV's son and later as Bishop of Meaux. His notable works include Discourse on Universal History and his celebrated Oraisons funèbres, which remain masterpieces of French classical prose

Désiré Félicien François Joseph Mercier : (21 November 1851 – 23 January 1926) was a Belgian Catholic prelate who served as Archbishop of Mechelen from 1906 until his death in 1926 and elevated to the cardinalate in 1907. A Thomist scholar, he had several of his works translated into other European languages. Mercier is noted for his staunch resistance to the German occupation of Belgium during World War I. After the invasion, he distributed a strong pastoral letter, Patriotism and Endurance, to be read in all his churches, urging the people to keep up their spirits.

1. Have you ever thought of the unfairness of the “here and now”? How does the necessity of judgment “even the score”? (pgs. 226-227)
2. What are the three states of being after judgement and how are they different? (pg. 229)
3. How important is Purgatory? Why do we need it? (pgs. 230-233)

4. ... “Where the love of man tempers the injustice of man, for it enables hearts who are left behind to break the barriers of time and death, to convert unspoken words into prayers, unburned incense into sacrifice, unoffered flowers into alms, and undone acts of kindness into help for eternal life.” Have you ever thought of Purgatory in this way? (pg. 233)
5. Have you ever thought of Hell as a demand of love? (pg. 236)
6. We are too often wont to look upon hell as an afterthought in the mind of God and reward it as related to sin in the same way that a spanking is related to an act of disobedience on the part of a child. This is not true.” Is this the way you thought or taught Hell was? (pg. 238)
7. “How can a God of love create a place of everlasting punishment?” (pgs. 239-241)