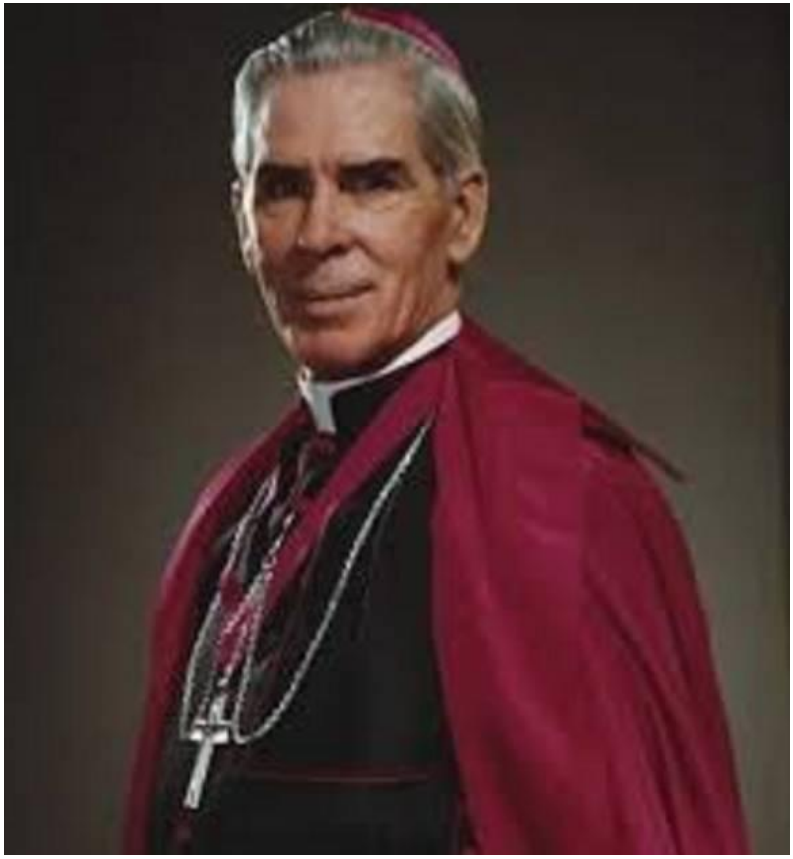


Not all Brilliant People are Holy, Not all Holy People are Brilliant, Bishop Sheen was Both.

A Retreat given by Bishop Sheen in Gary Indiana 1973
(Audio to Text translated by Vito Faraci Jr)

////////////////////////////////// Introduction \\\

My name is Vito Faraci and I happen to be one of many of Bishop Sheen's Fans. Bishop Sheen was not only a priest, but he was also a theologian, philosopher, professor, radio & TV star, and author of at least 66 books. His contributions to this world in education, the spreading of truth, and converting souls are immeasurable. America should take pride for producing this great man.

This little booklet contains just a meager few examples of his brilliance. They are very profound truths that you will probably not hear anywhere else. His knowledge of theology and philosophy, together with his wisdom are obviously exposed. However, there is something else going on here that may not be so obvious. For example, when he analyzes the Nativity Scene, Bishop Sheen reveals to us why only two groups of people find God. The Holy Spirit had revealed this truth to him so that he could pass it on to others.

I really believe his words have had a positive influence in my life by giving me more insight of God, the priesthood, the Catholic Faith, and life itself. And therefore I would like to share a small piece of this beautiful treasure of knowledge and wisdom with everyone. Although the Bishop's words are available on the Internet, and in his books, I thought it a good idea to put together this small and convenient booklet to give people a meager sample of the brilliance of this man of God. The words of the Bishop that follow need to be carefully pondered. In many places he will reveal a huge amount of truth in just one or two short sentences.

In addition, I have included my personal Bishop Sheen story which involves a lecture he gave in 1973 to an audience of priests and nuns, and his death in 1979. I am sure you will find this story very interesting.

As Bishop Sheen would say, "God love you."

If you have any questions, my email address is vfaraci02@gmail.com. Also you may interested in another collection of quotes from Bishop Sheen and other wise people. If you are, go to www.math-philosophy.xyz and click on the beautiful mountain scene image. Then click on one of the subjects (in red) on the left. Then click on each page to advance to the next page.

// Truth \\\
There are two kinds of truths. An outer truth, and an inner truth. An outer truth is something that I master. For example, 2 + 2 = 4. An inner truth is something that masters me.

When a man loves a woman, he has to become worthy of her. The higher her virtue, the more noble her character, the more devoted she is to truth, justice, goodness, the more a man has to aspire to be worthy of her. The history of civilization could actually be written in terms of the level of its women.

If you do not worship God, you worship something, and nine times out of ten it will be yourself. You have a duty to worship God, not because He will be imperfect and unhappy if you do not, but because you will be imperfect and unhappy.

Our Lord affirmed that not human truth in the mind, but a rebirth of the soul, purchased through His death, was essential for being one with Him. This new birth escapes the senses and is known only by its effects on the soul.

Teaching is one of the noblest vocations on earth, for, in the last analysis, the purpose of all education is the knowledge and love of truth.

We can love truth only when it is personal. We can never fall in love with a theorem of geometry or an abstraction. Truth is personal, it is Christ. No one before in history ever identified truth in Himself.

I find among ourselves a reluctance to read great literature on Christ written by non-Catholics. You know, it's a Protestant book, Then we get someone who loves the Blessed Lord, who suffers for the Lord, say, oh, no, it's a Protestant book. Sure, there'll be a mistake in it. But you'll not find as many heresies in it as you'll find in some Catholic magazines every week. And you learn something about the good Lord.

Our Lord affirmed that not human truth in the mind, but a rebirth of the soul, purchased through His death, was essential for being one with Him.

Man is incurably curious.

// Truth Continued \\

This new birth escapes the senses and is known only by its effects on the soul.

Truth is not something we invent. Rather truth is something we discover, like love.

It is easy to find the truth, though it is hard to face it, and harder still to follow it.

The Supreme Christian truth is “Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.”

All fire has two qualities, light and heat. Light is truth. Heat is fire and passion. We have the light, although some of our lights are going out too. We have the light but we lack the heat. It is the enemy that has the heat.

What did our Lord say? “I am the Truth.” We can love truth only when it is personal. We can never fall in love with a theorem of geometry or an abstraction. Truth is personal, it is Christ. No one before in history ever identified truth in Himself.

There are two ways of waking up in the morning. One is to say, 'Good morning, God,' and the other is to say, 'Good God, morning'!

A man may stand for the justice of God, but a woman stands for His Mercy.

Man wants three things; life, knowledge, and love.

The principle of democracy is recognition of the sovereign, inalienable rights of man as a gift from God, the Source of law.

Whenever man attempts to do what he knows to be the Master's will, a power will be given him equal to the duty.

Knowing belongs to man's intellect or reason; loving belongs to his will. The object of the intellect is truth; the object of the will is goodness or love.

// Wisdom \\\

Civilization is always in danger when those who have never learned to obey are given the right to command.

If you do not live what you believe, you will end up believing what you live.

Freedom does not mean that right to do whatever we please, but rather to do as we ought. The right to do whatever we please reduces freedom to a physical power and forgets that freedom is a moral power.

Live each day as you would climb a mountain. An occasional glance toward the summit keeps the goal in mind, but many beautiful scenes are to be observed from each new vantage point. So climb slowly, enjoying each passing moment; and then the view from the summit will serve a more rewarding climax for your journey.

If I were not a Catholic, and were looking for the true Church in the world today, I would look for the one Church which did not get along well with the world; in other words, I would look for the Church which the world hated.

Knowledge is acquired, wisdom is infused.

When you are getting kicked from the rear it means you are in front.

Worldly wisdom comes from where we expect it, in the best-sellers, the "standard brands" and the universities. Divine Wisdom comes from the unsuspected quarters, which the world holds in derision.

If you know Christ, it does not matter if you know nothing else; but if you know not Christ, it is as nothing to know everything else.

Head knowledge is worthless, unless accompanied by submission of the will and right action.

Many souls fail to find God because they want a religion which will remake society without remaking themselves.

//////////////////////////////////// Wisdom Continued \\
Now, the difference that we find among people in the Church too, and the difference in the world is not a generation gap. No, that is not very serious a generation gap. There is a spirit gap. Those who have the spirit of Christ, and those who have not.
Comment – Recall one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is wisdom. Therefore one may conclude that if there is no Holy Spirit, then there is no wisdom. Furthermore one can deduce from these words of Bishop Sheen, "There is a wisdom gap. Those who have the wisdom of Christ, and those who have not." This may explain all the craziness going on in the world today. It is as simple and profound as that.

We are not to be wise according to the world. The world thinks it has wisdom.

We lose our souls not only by the evil we do but also by the good we leave undone.

A smile is laughter's whisper and has its roots in the soul.

Pleasure is of the body, joy is of the mind and heart.

It doesn't take much time to become a saint, only much love.

What happens to us is not as important, but rather how we react to what happens.

The real test of a Christian is not how much he loves his friends, but how much he loves his enemies.

Most of us do not like to look inside ourselves for the same reason we don't like to open a letter that has bad news.

Most commit the same mistake with God that they do with their friends: they do all the talking.

By finding others who apparently are more evil than we, we falsely believe that we are somehow better than the rest of men.

The new atheism is not of the intellect, but of the will; it is an act of free and eager rejection of morality and its demands. It starts with the affirmation of self and the denial of the moral law.

Who is going to save our church? Not our Bishops, not our priests and religious. It is up to you the people. You have the minds, the eyes, the ears to save the Church. Your mission is to see that your priests act like priests, your bishops like bishops, and your religious act like religious.

A teacher who cannot explain any abstract subject to a child does not himself thoroughly understand his subject; if he does not attempt to break down his knowledge to fit the child's mind, he does not understand teaching.

The wicked fear the good, because the good are a constant reproach to their consciences.

One would not generally put garbage into the stomach, but too often one will put garbage into the mind.

From my experience it is always well never to pay attention to what people say, but rather why they say it.

There are angels near you to guide you and protect you, if you would but invoke them.

The better we become, the less conscious we are of our goodness. If anyone admits to being a saint, he is close to being a devil.

Our modern world has produced a generation of rich politicians who talk about love of the poor, but never prove it in action.

No man hates God without first hating himself.

To demand love is to lose love. A selfish heart creates its own vacuum.

Counsel involving right and wrong should never be sought from a man who does not say his prayers.

//////////////////////////////////// Wisdom Continued \\

God has given different gifts for different people. There is no basis for feeling inferior to another who has a different gift. Once it is realized that we shall be judged by the gift we have received, rather than the gift we have not, one is completely delivered from a false sense of inferiority.

Any book which inspires us to lead a better life is a good book.

Nothing ever happens in the world that does not happen first inside human hearts.

Why are those who are notoriously undisciplined and unmoral also most contemptuous of religion and morality? They are trying to solace their own unhappy lives by pulling the happy down to their own abysmal depths.

A woman gets angry when a man denies his faults, because she knew them all along. His lying mocks her affection; it is the deceit that angers her more than the faults.

When a child is given to his parents, a crown is made for that child in Heaven, and woe to the parents who raise a child without consciousness of that eternal crown!

Never forget that there are only two philosophies to rule your life: the one of the cross, which starts with the fast and ends with the feast. The other of Satan, which starts with the feast and ends with the headache.

Too many people get credit for being good, when they are only being passive. They are too often praised for being broadminded when they are so broadminded they can never make up their minds about anything.

Books are the most wonderful friends in the world. When you meet them and pick them up, they are always ready to give you a few ideas. When you put them down, they never get mad; when you take them up again, they seem to enrich you all the more.

Science is not wisdom.

When we die to something, something comes alive within us. If we die to self, charity comes alive; if we die to pride, service comes alive; if we die to lust, reverence for personality comes alive; if we die to anger, love comes alive.

The Rosary is the best therapy for these distraught, unhappy, fearful, and frustrated souls, precisely because it involves the simultaneous use of three powers: the physical, the vocal, and the spiritual, and in that order.

Pride is the king of vices...it is the first of the pallbearers of the soul...other vices destroy only their opposite virtues, as wantonness destroys chastity; greed destroys temperance; anger destroys gentleness; but pride destroys all virtues.

Criticism of others is thus an oblique form of self-commendation. We think we make the picture hang straight on our wall by telling our neighbors that all his pictures are crooked.

Patience is power. Patience is not an absence of action; rather it is "timing" it waits on the right time to act, for the right principles and in the right way.

Once you have surrendered yourself, you make yourself receptive. In receiving from God, you are perfected and completed.

Jealousy is the tribute mediocrity pays to genius.

The danger today is in believing there are no sick people, there is only a sick society.

The egocentric is always frustrated, simply because the condition of self-perfection is self-surrender. There must be a willingness to die to the lower part of self, before there can be a birth to the nobler.

Why is it that any time we speak of temptation we always speak of temptation as something that inclines us to wrong? We have more temptations to become good than we do to become bad.

In every friendship hearts grow and entwine themselves together, so that the two hearts seem to make only one heart with only a common thought. That is why separation is so painful; it is not so much two hearts separating, but one being torn asunder.

Everyone has a capacity for God.

Love is a mutual self-giving which ends in self-recovery.

Democracy cannot survive where there is such uniformity that everyone wears exactly the same intellectual uniform or point of view. Democracy implies diversity of outlook, a variety of points of view on politics, economics, and world affairs. Hence the educational ideal is not uniformity but unity, for unity allows diversity of points of view regarding the good means to a good end.

Unless souls are saved, nothing is saved; there can be no world peace unless there is soul peace. World wars are only projections of the conflicts waged inside the souls of men and women, for nothing happens in the external world that has not first happened within a soul.

The Rosary is the book of the blind, where souls see and there enact the greatest drama of love the world has ever known; it is the book of the simple, which initiates them into mysteries and knowledge more satisfying than the education of other men.

Let those who think that the Church pays too much attention to Mary give heed to the fact that Our Blessed Lord Himself gave ten times as much of His life to her as He gave to His Apostles.

One of the greatest disasters that happened to modern civilization was for democracy to inscribe "liberty" on its banners instead of "justice." Because "liberty" was considered the ideal it was not long until some men interpreted it as meaning "freedom from justice"; then when religion and decent government attempted to bring them back to justice, organized into "freedom groups" they protested that their constitutional and natural rights were being violated.

////////////////////////////////////// Evil / Devil \\\

The refusal to take sides on great moral issues is itself a decision. It is a silent acquiescence to evil. The Tragedy of our time is that those who still believe in honesty lack fire and conviction, while those who believe in dishonesty are full of passionate conviction.

Very few people believe in the devil these days, which suits the devil very well. He is always helping to circulate the news of his own death. The essence of God is existence, and He defines Himself as: 'I am Who am.' The essence of the devil is the lie, and he defines himself as: 'I am who am not.' Satan has very little trouble with those who do not believe in him; they are already on his side.

It is a characteristic of any decaying civilization that the great masses of the people are unconscious of the tragedy. Humanity in a crisis is generally insensitive to the gravity of the times in which it lives. Men do not want to believe their own times are wicked, partly because it involves too much self-accusation and principally because they have no standards outside of themselves by which to measure their times.

Gods' definition of Himself is "I AM WHO AM.", the devils' definition of himself is "I am who am not." Those people who do not believe in the devil, are already controlled by him.

Evil can tolerate mediocrity, but not supreme goodness.

We are either domesticating the devil or denying his existence. The devil is most powerful when he has people believing he does not exist.

The devil is running things down here and is doing a damn good job.

Evil is thus a kind of parasite on goodness. If there were no good by which to measure things, evil could not exist. Men sometimes forget this, and say, there is so much evil in the world that there cannot be a God. They are forgetting that, if there were no God, they would have no way of distinguishing evil from goodness. The very concept of evil admits and recognizes a Standard, a Whole, a Rule, an Order. Nobody would say that his automobile was out of order if he did not have a conception of how an automobile ought to run.

Since evil is nothing positive, there can be no principle of evil. It has no meaning expect in reference to something good.

What is discovered may be abused, but that does not mean the discovery was evil.

We do not talk about the devil unless he becomes the hero of dramas and movies and novels. But we who have the faith are silent about him.

In temptation or in sin, Christ always seems as our opponent, He is in the way. He disturbs. The devil, he is our friend. After we sin, the Lord is the friend and the devil the accuser.

The evil in the world must not make me doubt the existence of God. There could be no evil if there were no God. Before there can be a whole in a uniform, there must be a uniform; before there is death, there must be life; before there is error; there must be truth; before there is a crime, there must be liberty and law; before there is a war, there must be peace; before there is a devil, there must be a God, rebellion against whom made the devil.

Wars come from egotism and selfishness. Every macrocosmic or world war has its origin in microcosmic wars going on inside millions and millions of individuals.

Communism is the final logic of the dehumanization of man.

Communism is an aggressive religion of the species.

Evil may have its hour, but God will have His day.

You are going to be facing in the years to come and increased openness of Satanism. (Bishop Sheen said this in 1973)

All badness is spoiled goodness. A bad apple is a good apple that became rotten. Because evil has no capital of its own, it is a parasite that feeds on goodness.

// Suffering \\

God does not always spare the good from grief. The Father spared not the Son, and the Son spared not the mother.

There is a law written across the universe, that no one shall be crowned unless he has first struggled.

Ice deserves no credit for being cold, nor fire for being hot; it is only those who have the possibility of choice that can be praised for their acts. It is through temptation and its strain that the depths of character are revealed.

It is part of the discipline of God to make His loved ones perfect through trial and suffering. Only by carrying the Cross can one reach the Resurrection.

All unhappiness (when there is no immediate cause for sorrow) comes from excessive concentration on the past or from extreme preoccupation with the future.

Now sometimes the innocent suffer. Sometimes the guilty suffer. Whenever the innocent suffer and they do, they are related to Christ the priest. Whenever the guilty suffer, they are related to Christ the victim.

We have to have a Christ like interest in the sufferings of the world, if we ourselves are not suffering.

Love does not kill pain, but love makes it bearable.

We are living in days of testing. Every now and then God will test. We are being tested today by worldliness, and many are falling away. Are we to be worried about this? No. Believe me, it's easy to go float down the stream of the world. Dead bodies can float downstream. But it takes a live body with a lot of courage and grit to swim against the current. And that's why these days are great. We can stand up and be counted.

Unless there is a Good Friday in your life, there can be no Easter Sunday.

Sometimes the only way the good Lord can get into some hearts is to break them.

// Humility \\\

The humble, simple souls, who are little enough to see the bigness of God in the littleness of a Babe, are therefore the only ones who will ever understand the reason of His visitation. He came to this poor earth of ours to carry on an exchange; to say to us, as only the Good God could say: 'you give me your humanity, and I will give you my Divinity; you give me your time, and I will give you My eternity; you give me your broken heart, and I will give you Love; you give me your nothingness, and I will give you My all.

Our happiest times are those in which we forget ourselves, usually in being kind to someone else. That tiny moment of self-abdication is an act of true humility: the man who loses himself finds himself and finds his happiness.

Two classes of people make up the world; those who have found God, and those who are looking for Him thirsting, hungering, seeking! And the great sinners come closer to Him than the proud intellectuals! Pride swells and inflates the ego; gross sinners are depressed, deflated and empty. They, therefore, have no room for God. God prefers a loving sinner to a loveless "saint". Love can be trained; pride cannot. The man who thinks that he knows will rarely find truth; the man who knows he is a miserable, unhappy sinner, like the woman at the well, is closer to peace, joy, and salvation than he knows.

Jesus was born in a manger. Only two classes of people found the Babe; the shepherds and the Wise Men; the simple and the learned; those who knew that they knew nothing, and those who knew that they did not know everything. Not even God can tell the proud anything! Only the humble can find God!

The foundation of obedience to man, He taught, is obedience to God. The elders who serve not God find that the young serve them not.

The only difference between a sinner and a saint is found in their attitude toward sin, the one persisting in them; the other weeping bitterly.

The proud man counts his newspaper clippings; the humble, his blessings.

Because Jesus was born in a cave, all who wish to see Him must stoop. To stoop is the mark of humility. The proud refuse to stoop and, therefore, they miss Divinity.

Humility is not something that is directly cultivated, otherwise one becomes proud of his humility. It is a by-product, the more Christ is in the soul, the less the "I" weighs it down.

Two kinds of people: sinners who consider themselves sinners, and sinners who consider themselves just.

It's impossible to lose your footing when you're on your knees.

We're not acquiring humility. We love Him then humility follows.

No man is good unless he is humble; and humility is recognition of truth concerning himself. A man who thinks he is greater than he actually is is not humble, but a vain and boastful fool.

Pride is the child of ignorance, humility the offspring of knowledge.

No man discovers anything big unless he makes himself small.

The good repent on knowing their sin; the evil become angry when discovered.

Far better it is for you to say: "I am a sinner," than to say: "I have no need of religion." The empty can be filled, but the self-intoxicated have no room for God.

Hearing nuns' confessions is like being stoned to death with popcorn.

Our happiest times are those in which we forget ourselves, usually in being kind to someone else. That tiny moment of self-abdication is an act of true humility: the man who loses himself finds himself and finds his happiness.

// Sin \\

Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.

There is no word more "dangerous" than liberalism, because to oppose it is the new "unforgivable sin."

The nearer Christ comes to a heart, the more it becomes conscious of its guilt; it will then either ask for His mercy and find peace, or else it will turn against Him because it is not yet ready to give up its sinfulness. Thus He will separate the good from the bad.

Sin is not the worst thing in the world. The worst thing in the world is the denial of sin. The denial of sin is the unforgivable sin, for it makes redemption impossible.

Our Lord will not take those who justify their own guilt, because that's the unforgivable sin. One makes sin unpardonable.

We are living in the first age in history that has denied the reality of sin.

It used to be that only us Catholics believed in the Immaculate Conception of Mary. Nowadays everyone believes that he is immaculately conceived. There is no sin.

Whenever there is even a sin in our part, we are continuing the persecution of Christ.

There isn't a single person in the world who does not feel it within himself the triple conflict of original sin, pride, lust, and avarice.

The sin of the young is lust. The sin of middle age is power. The sin of the old is avarice, kind of an economic immortality.

Before the sin, Satan assures us that it is of no consequence; after we sin, he persuades us that it is unforgivable.

Very harmful effects can follow accepting the philosophy which denies personal guilt or sin and thereby makes everyone nice.

////////////////////////////////////// Love / Hate \\\

God does not love us because we are valuable. We are valuable because God loves us.

The greatest love story of all time is contained in a tiny white Host.

You must remember to love people and use things, rather than to love things and use people.

There are not one hundred people in the United States who hate The Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they wrongly perceive the Catholic Church to be.

Today (1950), the hatred of the Moslem countries against the West is becoming hatred against Christianity itself. Although the statesmen have not yet taken it into account, there is still grave danger that the temporal power of Islam may return and, with it, the menace that it may shake off a West which has ceased to be Christian, and affirm itself as a great anti-Christian world Power.

We can't work well, we can't live well unless we're in love. Nobody can.

Anyone who is in love never says enough, gives himself totally and completely.

We become like that which we love. If we love what is base, we become base; but if we love what is noble, we become noble.

The world would hate the Lord’s followers, not because of evil in their lives, but because of the absence of evil in the followers.

The day that man forgets that love is identical with sacrifice, he will ask how a God of love could demand mortification and self-denial.

Charity is to be measured, not by what one has given away, but by what one has left.

You are infinitely precious because you are loved by God.

Home

////////////////////////////////// Love / Hate Continued \\\

It takes three to make love, not two: you, your spouse, and God.

The difference between the love of a man and the love of a woman is that a man will always give reasons for loving, but a woman gives no reasons for loving.

For a woman, love is its own reason. "I love you because I love you.

Broadmindedness, when it means indifference to right and wrong, eventually ends in a hatred of what is right.

Say to yourself over and over again regardless of what happens: “God loves me!” And then add: “And I will try to love Him!

Love itself starts with the desire for something good.

As our Lord said, "Where your treasure is, there is your heart also." Hence the least love of God is worth more than the knowledge of all created things.

////////////////////////////////////// Right & Wrong \\\

America, it is said, is suffering from intolerance - it is not. It is suffering from tolerance. Tolerance of right and wrong, truth and error, virtue and evil, Christ and chaos. Our country is not nearly so overrun with the bigoted as it is overrun with the broadminded.

Moral principles do not depend on a majority vote. Wrong is wrong, even if everybody is wrong. Right is right, even if nobody is right.

The world is rapidly being divided into two camps, the comradeship of anti-Christ and the brotherhood of Christ. The lines between these two are being drawn. How long the battle will be we know not whether swords will have to be unsheathed we know not whether blood will have to be shed we know not whether it will be an armed conflict we know not. But in a conflict between truth and darkness, truth cannot lose.

Modern man has so long preached a doctrine of false tolerance; he has so long believed that right and wrong were only differences in a point of view, that now when evil works itself out in practice he is paralyzed to do anything against it.

The world cannot tolerate the extremely bad and the extremely good. The world is content with mediocrity.

The Child would create terrible strife between good and evil, stripping the masks from each, thus provoking a terrible hatred. He would be at once a stumbling block, a sword that would divide evil from good, and a touchstone that would reveal the motives and dispositions of human hearts. Men would no longer be the same once they had heard His name and learned of His life. They would be compelled either to accept Him, or reject Him. About Him there would be no such thing as compromise: only acceptance or rejection, resurrection or death. He would, by His very nature, make men reveal their secret attitudes toward God. His mission would be not to put souls on trial, but to redeem them; and yet, because their souls were sinful, some men would detest His coming.

Whenever man attempts to do what he knows to be the Master’s will. A power will be given him equal to the duty.

// Prayer \\\

Prayer begins by talking to God, but it ends by listening to Him. In the face of Absolute Truth, silence is the soul's language.

Neither theological knowledge nor social action alone is enough to keep us in love with Christ unless both are preceded by a personal encounter with Him. Theological insights are gained not only from between two covers of a book, but from two bent knees before an altar. The Holy Hour becomes like an oxygen tank to revive the breath of the Holy Spirit in the midst of the foul and fetid atmosphere of the world.

Fasting detaches you from this world. Prayer reattaches you to the next world.

It is not particularly difficult to find thousands who will spend two or three hours a day in exercising, but if you ask them to bend their knees to God in five minutes of prayer they protest that it is too long.

In vocal prayer we go to God on foot. In meditation we go to God on horseback. In contemplation we go to God in a jet.

The mark of the Christian is the willingness to look for the Divine in the flesh of a babe in a crib, the continuing Christ under the appearance of bread on an altar, and a meditation and a prayer on a string of beads.

Counsel involving right and wrong should never be sought from a man who does not say his prayers.

It is a long established principle of the Church never to completely drop from her public worship any ceremony, object or prayer which once occupied a place in that worship.

No soul ever fell away from God without giving up prayer.

//// The Fall & Rise of Peter (Taken from a 1973 Retreat for Priests and Nuns) \\\\

1) Five Steps of the Fall – Neglect of Prayer
Now we come to the five steps by which Peter falls. And then we come to the three steps by which he recovers himself. We are now in the upper room. You remember this story of the seating. You also remember Peter saying during the dinner, when our Lord said, “One of you is to betray me.” Peter said, “Though everyone else betray you, I will not.” And our Lord answered, “Before the cock crows, thou wilt deny me thrice.” The Lord sings goes into the garden. He says to Simon Peter and the other two, “Watch and pray. Watch. Look out for the external environment, there's a lot of temptation in it. That's your horizontal relationship. Pray, keep in contact with the Father.” What was the first step in the fall of Peter? The first step in the fall of any of us. What is it? Neglect of prayer. Did Peter pray? No, he slept. Imagine, he slept while our Lord was undergoing the agony. Three times the Lord came back and found him asleep. No prayer. Giving up the breviary, prayer, meditation, seems not very much. It's only the beginning.

2) Second Step - Substitution of Action for Prayer
And it leads to the second stage and that's the stage in which so many of us are. When Judas let his band into the Garden to arrest our Lord what did Peter do? In the upper room he had two swords. Now when the band comes down to arrest our Blessed Lord, Peter substitutes action for prayer, and he takes one of the two swords he had, and as a swordsman he proves to be an excellent fisherman. But the best that he can do it is to swing it wildly and hack off the ear of the servant of the high priest. And our Lord said, “Put that back into its scabbard.” as He's saying today, “Put down that dynamite. You priests with guns slung over your shoulder, put them down. You're active because you're not prayerful, and if you're prayerful you'd have a different kind of action.” The second step of the fall.

3) Third Step - Following Jesus Far Off
The Gospel tells us he followed Jesus far off. Our Lord was led up the hill to the courtroom of Anus and Caiaphas, and it is very likely that John went with the Lord. But Peter dragged his feet. He could see our Lord up at the top of the hill. When he was perhaps halfway up, he followed Jesus far off. That's our third stage. Reverence for Mass, Blessed Sacrament, reading of the Word of God. We keep the name. He's our silent partner.

We have our eyes on Him. We will bring up his name whenever it's convenient, but we just follow Jesus far off.

4) Fourth Step - Creature Comforts
Remember, it's a cold March night. Our Blessed Lord is led into the courtroom of Anus and Caiaphas. In this tremendous courtyard Peter gains entry and James gains entry through John. Now, John might have been a friend of the high priest or the Zebedee Fishing Company supplied fish to the high priest, and so John was known. But at any rate, John let Peter in. There's a fire in the courtyard. And this is one of the finest descriptions in a few words of what happens to a soul. It is the fourth stage of Peter, creature comforts. What does he do? He warms himself, by a fire. It's cold outside. And so we have to have extra creature comforts. After all, we have to take care of our body and we must enjoy life. So he makes himself comfortable by the fire.

5) Fifth Step - Involvement with the Opposite Sex
After neglect a prayer, after the substitution of action for prayer, after following Jesus far off, after creature comforts, there comes now feminine company. He gets involved with three girls. And as they look at him in this fire, they can tell very well that he doesn't belong in Judea. His ruddy face of his smacks of the sea. And then his accent gave him away. And here we reached the stage where we at first do not completely deny the Lord, but we do not like to be too identified with Him. We're not spiritual enough. So one girl after another comes up and asks him if he had not been with that man in there. And another girl comes out. He's getting a little hot under the collar. This is uncomfortable. Finally, when you're out someplace and not acting like a priest, and someone comes up and “Aren't you really a priest? Aren't you really a nun?” They get mad when you say that to them. And Peter got mad. So finally when the girl said, “So you've been with him.” He said, “I don't even know the man.” And he began to curse and swear whenever his views got tangled. Before he met our Blessed Lord, he cursed and swore, but then he gave it up in company with the Lord. Now he has an atavistic throwback, and it lets out a whole volume of oaths. “I don't know the man.” Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And that's the way we go down, all of us.

1) First Step in the Return - Cock Crow or Gallicinium

And that is the end unless there is a turning. And there now is a turning. We come now to the three steps by which he returns. The first step was the crowing of the cock. Now, this might have been a rooster, but it need not have been, because the Romans, who occupied that land, had night shifts from nine to twelve, twelve to three, three to six. The shift at 3 o'clock was called the Gallicinium, which means cock crow. So it might have been a rooster or it might have been the Gallicinium. The trumpet. It makes no difference what begins to bring us back. See how God uses all kinds of graces, is something from the outside world. Maybe we're being found out. Maybe a first mass-card turns up, maybe a picture of us when we wore the habit. Maybe we run into somebody who said, "Well, this wasn't your husband ten years ago, was it?" "Glory be to God, did you have these children?" Some things in the outside world. Cock crow in the air, the first step.

2) Second Step in the Return - The Lord Turns to Us

The second step and how beautiful it is. How beautiful. Our Blessed Lord is just now coming out of this midnight trial. Now, if you were there before that fire and had done what Peter had done, and we all do it in varying degrees, what would you have done when the Lord came out? I know what I would have done. I would have turned my back. I couldn't see him. When we're going down, we don't want to see Christ. We don't want to hear about him. So Peter turned his back. And then what does the Gospel say? The priest will remember it in the Vulgate, two words, Conversus Dominus. When Peter turned his back, the Lord walked slowly behind him. And then when He got in front of him, he turned. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Judas got the lips. Peter got the eyes. The Lord is always willing to take us back.

3) Third Step in the Return - Deep Repentance (Power Goes Out)

And the third stage, he went out and wept bitterly. Tradition has it that there were furrows in his cheeks from the tears that he shed, for denying the Lord. And this is the true spiritual attitude for sorrow. It is never in relationship to anything in this world. It is always in relationship to the cross, that's sorrow. When we look at the cross, we see our own autobiography. The skin is the parchment, the nail is the pen, the blood is

////////////////////////// The Fall & Rise of Peter Continued \\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\
the ink. And in every part of that body I can read my life. That is sorrow. And the Lord will take anyone who turns to Him, but he will not take those who justify their own guilt, because that's the unforgivable sin. One makes sin unpardonable. And all through the Christian life you are at a tremendous disadvantage in the dark because you have.

//////////////// Bishop Sheen's Commission from Pope Pius XI \\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\
During a private audience with Sheen in 1934, Pius XI told Sheen to study Karl Marx and Communism, and to expose their fallacies when speaking in public. The pontiff advised Sheen to speak on Communism "at every opportunity" and to never cease to "warn Americans of its dangers." Loyal to his pope and his Church, Sheen heeded the request. The American priest dove into an extensive study of Marx, Lenin, Communism, Stalin, and the Bolsheviks. The subject became a core element of his mission, message, and outreach. Sheen read and spoke several languages, thus finding in Marx's most obscure writings various untranslated tidbits and introducing them into the English world. Among the more telling quotations from Marx was this one: "Communism begins where atheism begins." Marx was not first a Communist and then an atheist. He was first an atheist, then a Communist. Communism was merely the political expression of his atheism. As he hated God, so would he hate those who would own property. Sheen added: "In order to understand the Communists' idea of truth, we have to substitute the philosophy of Communism for God; in other words, the ultimate origin of truth is in their Party, which falls heir to the philosophy of Marx and Lenin."

//////// Bishop Sheen's Cause for Canonization (from Internet 2023) \\\\\\\
A saint is someone recognized by the Catholic Church as having lived a life of holiness and virtue and who now resides in Heaven. There are four steps in the process of canonization, or being officially recognized as a saint.

An individual can be named a "Servant of God" beginning five years after his or her death. This process is begun by the Bishop of the diocese where the individual died. As long as Rome and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith have no objection, the Cause for Beatification and Canonization is opened.

Fulton Sheen's cause for canonization was opened in the Diocese of Peoria, IL in 2002.

The next step involves significant research into the life of the Servant of God. The Catholic Church seeks to understand the life and virtues of the individual through testimonials and public or personal writings. The Diocesan tribunal and Bishop seek to determine if the individual did, in fact, live a life of holiness and virtue. All findings are presented to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. They vote affirmatively or negatively on the cause. Ultimately the Pope makes the final decision. This individual is now known as a "Venerable Servant, or simply Venerable."

Pope Benedict XVI determined that Archbishop Fulton Sheen is Venerable on June 28, 2012.

The third step in the path of canonization involves a miracle. This shows the Venerable individual's union and cooperation with God. The miracle can take place in any diocese - not just the diocese that initially opened the cause for canonization. If a miracle appears to have occurred, then significant research and investigation ensues to make sure there is not a natural, scientific reason this could have occurred. The vast majority of miracles are medical because these cases are typically well-documented in terms of disease, treatment, and healing. The Congregation for the Causes of the Saints again thoroughly reviews the reported miracle, votes, and passes it along to the Pope who makes the ultimate decision. Upon approval, the individual is now known as "Blessed.", A public

//////// Bishop Sheen's Cause for Canonization (continued) \\\\\\\
beautification through veneration typically occurs in the diocese closely affiliated with that individual's life. Catholics are now able to privately venerate this individual.

What miracle is attributed to Fulton Sheen? On September 16, 2010 James Fulton Engstrom was declared stillborn. His mother, Bonnie Engstrom, immediately began praying for the intercession of Fulton Sheen, to whom she had been praying the entirety of her pregnancy. Born at home, the young James was rushed to the hospital and doctors determined he could not be revived. 61 minutes after birth his heart began to beat. Despite all the odds, the baby made a full recovery and continues to thrive today. There is no medical explanation for his survival.

Medical experts who advise the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints approved this miracle and attributed it to Venerable Fulton Sheen on March 6, 2014. The Congregation approved it on June 17, 2014.

Unfortunately due to a legal dispute between the Diocese of Peoria and the Archdiocese of New York regarding Sheen's final resting place, the cause was stalled for several years. This was resolved in 2019 and his cause officially reopened. Pope Francis officially attributed the miraculous life of James Fulton Engstrom to Sheen's intercession on July 6, 2019. He is currently Venerable Fulton Sheen.

The fourth and final step in the process of canonization is essentially a repeat of the third, just with a second miracle. It's important that the papal declaration of sainthood is not what makes an individual a saint. The Pope simply declares that there is sufficient evidence that the individual is in Heaven with God and lived a life worthy of imitation by Catholics.

Here is an interview on YouTube with Msgr. Jason Gray the Executive Director of the Bishop Sheen Foundation with Raymond Arroyo of EWTN on August 24, 2023.revealing some more details.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKIGU20sGCo

////////////////////////////// My Personal Bishop Sheen Story \\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\

My story begins around 1974 or 1975 when I bought a set of cassette tape recordings of a 1973 Bishop Sheen Retreat given in Gary Indiana. In one of his talks, Bishop Sheen said in his exact words, "I pray every single day that I will drop dead at 80 in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament on any feast of Our Lady or on a Saturday." For whatever reason, that statement stuck in my head. As you may know Bishop Sheen died Dec 9, 1979 which was a Sunday. At that time I was living in California in the Los Angeles suburbs. Early in the morning of Dec 10, which was a Monday, I clearly remember walking by a newsstand in the city of LA. This was abnormal for me because a normal weekday morning for me meant having breakfast at home, getting in the car, and driving straight to work which was located in the city of Irvine and not LA. I cannot recall the reason why this Monday was different. Anyway as I was walking by this newsstand, I happened to see the front page of a newspaper called the "Register" which was a popular newspaper in the LA area. On the front page was a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe side by side with a picture of Bishop Sheen. As best as I can recall, the two pictures took up the entire front page. The caption under the Bishop stated that he had died the day before. I do not recall exactly what the Blessed Mother's caption was, but I am sure it had something to do with Her Guadalupe Apparition Feast Day. Seeing this front page, and recalling the Bishop's prayer, I immediately connected the dots and put two and two together and concluded that God had granted the Bishop's wish for dying on a Feast Day of Our Lady which had to be Dec.9. It dawned on me a little later that the Catholic appointed Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe is Dec 12 and not Dec 9. So I then proceeded to do some research to determine the reason for the apparent disconnect. Here is what my search revealed. Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego a total of four times in 1531. The first two apparitions occurred on Dec 9 and the last one occurred on Dec 12. Also on Dec 12 the miracle of the appearance of Our Lady's image on Juan Diego's tilma occurred. So I assume that is the reason why the Catholic Church decided to make Dec 12 the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe as opposed to Dec 9. However, we must keep in mind that Dec 9 remains a special day because of the fact that it is the day of the first recorded apparition of Our Lady in America.

Bishop Sheen lived in a three room apartment in New York City where he was found dead on Dec 9. In that apartment, he had a bedroom, a study,

////////////////////// My Personal Bishop Sheen Story Continued \\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\
and in between the two rooms a chapel that housed the Blessed Sacrament. Bishop Sheen said he prayed one hour a day for 54 years before it, a devotion he recommended to all his fellow priests. He said he must have passed that chapel 100 to 200 times a day.
Here is an excerpt from Wikipedia which is an important part of my story.

Excerpt from Wikipedia:
"Soon after an open-heart surgery at Lenox Hill Hospital, Sheen died on December 9, 1979, in his private chapel in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. "

So it looks like the Good Lord granted two of the Bishop's wishes, namely dying on Our Lady's Feast Day and in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Anyway getting back to my story, I bought the Register newspaper, took it home, and placed it in my file cabinet for safe keeping. Two years later in 1981, my family and I moved back to New York. I remember that move-in day in New York when the moving van came to deliver our furniture. It was a very large van and was packed with other people's furniture alongside of mine. I got involved with quick and hectic unloading of the truck, and the act of marking off a checklist either had skipped my mind or became impossible. Long story short, all our belongings were delivered safe and sound except for my file cabinet. It was a day or two after that I realized that my file cabinet was missing. I suspected that it was mistakenly mixed in with other people's furniture on the truck. I called the moving company, explained the situation but had no luck. My file cabinet was gone. That was a very sad day for me. I recall caring little for anything in that file cabinet, except for the newspaper with the pictures of the Bishop together with Our Lady. Soon after, I made several phone calls to the Register asking for a copy of that beautiful front page. That exercise got me nowhere. After a while I gave up the search and sadly accepted my loss. As time went on, I often wondered why the Good Lord allowed me to lose that newspaper. Then in 2019, 38 years later, I presented my Bishop Sheen story at a KofC meeting. I sadly explained why I did not have a copy of that Register front page to show them. That was a very important piece of my story. At that meeting, one of the Knights said to me, "You've been searching in the wrong places." At our next meeting he gave me a phone number to call. Lo and behold that phone call and $25 later produced good fruit. I received an electronic copy of a front page of a

////////////////////// My Personal Bishop Sheen Story Continued \\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\
Register Newspaper dated Dec. 10, 1979 the day after Bishop Sheen passed away. However, it was not the same front page that I remember. I was told that the copy that I received must have been that of a different edition. So I performed another search for some other Dec 10 Register Edition, but had no luck. However, the front page that I did receive dated Dec 10 does have a picture of the Bishop together with Our Lady which provides sufficient support for my personal story. I will always be grateful to that member of the KofC who helped me find this newspaper page.

Note: This is not the front page I remember, but good enough to support my story.



Fran's Auction Nets $5,000 To Rebuild Charred Brothel
Page A3

Rams Wallop Falcons, 34-13, Win 7th Straight Division Title
Page C1

It's Monday, December 10, 1979

The Register

METROPOLITAN ORANGE COUNTY'S MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPER

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

U.S. Seeks World Court Iran Ruling

Iran Backs Off On Trial Threats

Archbishop Sheen

NY Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Dead At Age 84

Brown Slogan, Finances Differ

Oil Firms Gave $100,000 To Man They 'Fear Most'

Gas Supplies Reported Near Shortage Point

Heavy Fog; Highs 60-65

Inside Today's Register

Here are just a few of the dozens of **Bishop Sheen Quotes** taken from this Retreat that need to get out into the world and to be carefully read, understood, and remembered. They are very profound truths that you may not hear anywhere else. It would be wise to ponder them carefully. Keep in mind he said these things back in 1973 when social order was relatively calm compared to what it is today.

- Sin is not the worst thing in the world. The worst thing in the world is the denial of sin.
- We have almost forgotten that we are in a great mortal combat, the battle of the forces of good and the forces of evil.
- We are living in the first age in history that has denied the reality of sin.
- It used to be that we Catholics alone believed in the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Mother. Today everyone believes he has immaculately conceived. There is no sin.
- The devil is running things down here and is doing a damn good job.
- The devil is most powerful when he has people believing he does not exist.
- Satan has very little trouble with those who do not believe in him; they are already on his side.
- We are no longer living in a Christian culture. Our courts have illegalized praying in school. They have legalized King Herod in the slaughter of the innocence, the breakdown of the Christian family, gross immorality, the destruction of minds by drugs.
- The difference in the world is not a generation gap. That is not so serious. There is a spirit gap. Those who have the spirit of Christ and those who have not.
- There are only two ways in the world in which we will ever become wise. And one is by great prayerfulness and by great sacrifices, the only two ways.
- Knowledge, atheism, and agnosticism are acquired, wisdom is infused.
- If the Church were as perfect as you and I wanted it to be, there wouldn't be any room in it for you and me.
- And so we are being tested today by worldliness, and many are falling away. Are we to be worried about this? No

Bishop Sheen CDs can be found on-line, and his “Life is Worth Living” TV Shows can be found on YouTube, all of which are chock full of knowledge, wisdom, and truth. Also on YouTube, do a search for “My Personal Bishop Sheen Story”.