

**St. Therese Adult Study Series**  
**The Religion of the Day with Father Andrie**

Reflection Questions for Chapter 3

For the next session on March 26<sup>th</sup>, please read Chapter 3, pages 53-66 in *The Religion of the Day* book. Begin with this or another prayer of your choice:

*"Blessed Virgin Mary, Please be with me as I pray: Even when I don't understand, Let God's will be done through me; If I lose sight of Jesus, May my searching lead me nearer to Him; When people I love are suffering, I ask that love help them through; During this penitential time of Lent, May prayer and sacrifice increase my faith. Because your Son lived and died to conquer sin, Let hope and forgiveness dwell in me. Amen.*

<https://www.heartofthenation.org/daily-prayers> Your reflections will be shared **March 26<sup>th</sup>** in your small group. Your group may not get to all the questions. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you to those questions most important for your group.

**1. Worldhistory.org defines Gnosticism as "the belief that human beings contain a piece of God (the highest good or a divine spark) within themselves, which has fallen from the immaterial world into the bodies of humans. All physical matter is subject to decay, rotting, and death. Those bodies and the material world, created by an inferior being, are therefore evil. Trapped in the material world, but ignorant of its status, the pieces of God require knowledge (gnosis) to inform them of their true status. That knowledge must come from outside the material world, and the agent who brings it is the savior or redeemer. Our author says that second-century Christian apologists viewed Gnosticism "as the greatest threat facing the Church's life." What did he say were the two qualities of ancient Gnosticism? Why do you think that the Gnostic attitude "does not depend on passing on a tradition" but rises "of itself out of the soil of Christian belief.?" (pp. 54-55)**

**2. The author states that Gnosticism is "inherently parasitic like a virus, or it "is a derivative (imitative or something based on another source) rather than original." (p 57) Where have you seen this today? In history? (p 58-59)**

**3. What did Jesus say that clarified that secular authority did not "extend to the inner life of the soul?" (p 61) How would you describe this distinction between two kingdoms? (Mt 22:21) What then do we owe to God?**

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**4. Compare the "left" and "right" in America as he described below (p 63).  
LEFT RIGHT**

**5. Today, our political arena is overflowing with events of what the media wants us to believe are of epic importance. What steps are you taking to protect yourself from being sucked into the battleground of the political landscape and instead recognizing the health of your soul is most important?**

**6. The rise of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD) is typically focused on youth. The five core tenets define it very well. (p 64-65) The author gives two main reasons why MTD is "so prone to the embrace of neo-Gnostic beliefs." What do you think?**

**7. How do you see social media promoting MTD in our youth? What can be done to circumvent this trend?**

**8. There is no question that parents at home are the biggest influence on their teenagers. Prince of Peace Catholic Community posted these statistics:**

- Over 70% of Catholic teenagers hold similar beliefs to their parents...regardless of whether those beliefs are in line with official Catholic teaching
- Of the parents who indicate their faith is extremely important in their daily lives, 67% of their teens said the same.
- Of the middle-of-the-road parents who claim their faith is only somewhat important in their lives, 61% of their teens said the same.
- Of the parents who report that faith is NOT important to their daily lives, 47% of their children shared the same attitude and only 2% of their teens stated faith was extremely important.

**What can we do to help parents?**

**What else stood out for you in this chapter?**

Close with Romans 8:38-39: *"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*