

WORLD YOUTH ALLIANCE BOOK LIST

Man and the State

By Jacques Maritain

Jacques Maritain is one of the preeminent scholars on modern ideas of the relation between the person and the state. This collection of essays examines the place and role of the state, the development of the idea of human rights, and the need for international dialogue. What form should this international cooperation take? What institutions are necessary for this cooperation? *Man and the State* is one of the first explorations of the links in our modern concept of statehood, human rights, and the inalienable dignity of the person.

About Jacques Maritain

Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), French philosopher and political thinker, was one of the principal exponents of Thomism in the twentieth century and an influential interpreter of the thought of St Thomas Aquinas. Jacques studied at the Lycée Henri IV (1898-99) and at the Sorbonne, where he prepared a license in philosophy (1900-1901) and in the natural sciences (1901-1902). Jacques married in 1904. Soon after, through the influence of the writer Léon Bloy, he and his wife sought baptism in the Roman Catholic Church (1906). He became a prominent figure of Catholic thought, writing several books on political philosophy. He moved to the United States in 1940 and taught at Princeton and Columbia. In 1960 Maritain returned to France. Following his wife's death later that year, Maritain moved to Toulouse, where he lived with a religious order, the Little Brothers of Jesus. He continued writing during this time. He died in Toulouse on April 28, 1973.

Guide questions for discussion groups

The following questions relate specifically to Chapter 4. It is not necessary to read the other chapters to discuss these questions.

- Discuss how it is possible for persons of different cultures, backgrounds and/or faiths are able to agree on basic human rights but not on why these exist.

- How or why is this important (especially in relation to government, the UN and leaders of world politics)?
- Is recognition of intrinsic human dignity necessary to sustain efforts to protect human rights?