

The Degrees of Knowledge (The Collected Works of Jacques Maritain, Vol. 7)

By Jacques Maritain

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Distinguer pour unir, ou Les degrés du savoir was first published in 1932 by Jacques Maritain. In this new translation of *The Degrees of Knowledge*, Ralph McInerny attempts a more careful expression of Maritain's original masterpiece than previous translations. Maritain proposes a hierarchy of the forms of knowledge by discussing the degrees of rational and suprarational understanding. Nine appendices, some longer than the chapters of the book, advance Maritain's thought, often by taking on criticism of earlier editions of the work. Rightly called Maritain's cardinal work, *The Degrees of Knowledge* is a magnificent and sagacious achievement.

Jacques Maritain's masterpiece proposes a hierarchy of forms of knowledge that culminate in mystical experience and wisdom, which is a gift of the Holy Ghost. Maritain argues that the intellectual life is meant to be complemented by the spiritual life and should culminate in sanctity.

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Review

"One can open *The Degrees of Knowledge* to almost any page and discover there something worth thinking about." —*Pastoral Life*

"*The Degrees of Knowledge* represents one of the most complete articulations of Maritain's incorporation of the thinking of Saint Thomas Aquinas into his work." —*The Library Quarterly*

"The Degrees of Knowledge remains interesting and valuable because it deals with a theme that is characteristic of, but antedates, much of postmodern thought—i.e., the critique of 'modern epistemology.' *--études maritainiennes*

Language Notes
Text: English (translation)
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About the Author

RALPH MCINERNY (1929–2010) was Michael P. Grace Professor of Medieval Studies and director emeritus of the Jacques Maritain Center, University of Notre Dame. He was the author of numerous works in philosophy, literature, fiction, and journalism, including *The Very Rich Hours of Jacques Maritain, Characters in Search of Their Author,* and his autobiography, *I Alone Have Escaped to Tell You,* all published by the University of Notre Dame Press.

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