## **Ex U** Holy Trinity presents "Ex Libris": a noble feature of our parish bulletin. Once per month, we offer a <u>book recommendation</u> to enrich your spiritual reading. Look for <u>spiritual classics</u> and <u>modern selections</u>, too. Will you form a reading group to enjoy our recommendation?

## June 2025 Recommendation: The HELL There Is by Msgr. Charles Pope

*The HELL There Is* by Msgr. Charles Pope is not your average spiritual comfort read. It's a courageous, countercultural call to wake up—before it's too late. In an era when many preachers hesitate, Pope speaks with clarity and conviction: **Hell exists, and people go there.** He doesn't sensationalize, nor does he indulge in gory theatrics. What he offers is something far more frightening: **truth**, plainly spoken.

This isn't fire-and-brimstone for the sake of drama—it's a doctrinal restoration project. With a deep reverence for Scripture, Tradition, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Pope revives what modern ears have ignored or rejected: the finality of judgment, the horror of unrepentance, and the cost of trivializing sin. This book doesn't stroke the ego. It calls the soul to battle.

## **O** Ten Sharp, Soul-Piercing Takeaways — with Catechism Catholic Church References [CCC]:

- Hell Is Real, Not Rhetorical: Hell is not a metaphor nor a medieval myth. It is a reality revealed by Christ Himself. → [CCC 1035]: "The teaching of the Church affirms the existence of hell and its eternity."
- Freedom Means Real Consequences: God respects human freedom so profoundly that He permits us to reject Him—forever. → [CCC 1033]:
   "To die in mortal sin without repenting ... means remaining separated from Him forever."
- Sin Has Eternal Stakes: Sin is not just a mistake or flaw—it is a rupture, a rebellion with eternal consequences. → [CCC 1855–1861]: On mortal sin, its gravity, and its effect on the soul.
- Judgment Is Individual and Unavoidable: Each soul will face personal judgment—no exceptions, no delay. → [CCC 1021–1022]:
  "Each man receives eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death."
- Mercy Must Be Accepted, Not Assumed: God's mercy is oceanic—but it requires repentance. Presumption is its own poison. → [CCC 1847–1848]: "To receive his mercy, we must admit our faults."
- 6. Hell Is Eternal Because the Choice Is Final: The soul's disposition is forever fixed at death. Post-mortem repentance does not exist.  $\rightarrow$  [CCC 1035]: "The chief punishment of hell is eternal separation from God."
- 7. Heaven Is Only Sweet If We Understand Hell's Bitter Reality: The glory of Heaven becomes real when we recognize what we're being saved from. → [CCC 1023-1029]: Heaven is perfect communion with the Trinity—the ultimate good.
- 8. Evangelization Is Urgent Because the Danger Is Real: If hell is likely, then spreading the Gospel isn't optional—it's imperative.  $\rightarrow$  [CCC 849–851]: The missionary mandate is rooted in salvation's necessity.
- 9. Hell Is Isolation, Not Camaraderie: The worst suffering isn't fire—it's separation from the One for whom we were made. → [CCC 1033]: "This state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God ... is called 'hell."
- 10. Fear of Hell Is a Starting Point, Not the Endgame: Holy fear— "the beginning of wisdom" (Prov 9:10)— matures into love but never outgrows reverence. → [CCC 1831, CCC 1828]: Fear of the Lord is a gift of the Spirit; moral life begins in obedience and grows in charity.

Why This Book, and Why Now? Because for too long, Hell has been the doctrine no one dares to preach—either softened, sidestepped, or silenced altogether. Because drifting through the spiritual life half-awake is a risk no soul can afford. Because we need voices like Msgr. Pope's—clear, courageous, and deeply rooted in Scripture, Tradition, and the Catechism. This book isn't comfortable. It's not meant to be. It **pulls a forgotten truth off the theological shelf and places it squarely in your conscience**—not to frighten, but to rouse. It doesn't coddle; it convicts. It doesn't ask, "How do you feel?"—it asks, "Are you ready to face eternity?" Read it with your defenses down and your Catechism nearby. This isn't bedtime reading. It's a spiritual alarm clock. Because hell is real, pretending it isn't will not make it disappear.

