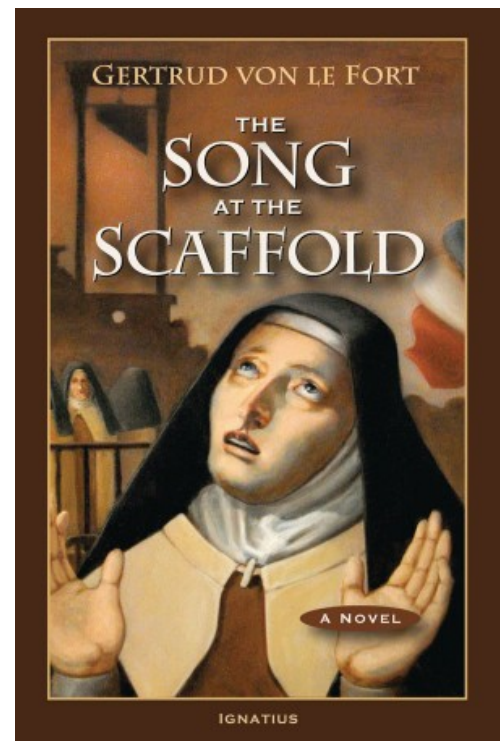


Discussion Questions for *The Song at the Scaffold*

1. Describe the character of Blanche de la Force. How did faith help her through her fears at the beginning?
2. Describe the character of Sister Marie de l'Incarnation. Why was she opposed to Blanche's investiture?
3. What did the narrator mean when he wrote of the Carmelite view of sacrifice as the "one to save the many," which Sister Marie de l'Incarnation offers for Blanche?
4. What type of philosophical ideas led to the French Revolution? Can ideas alone be dangerous?
5. What leads to Blanche's nervous breakdown? How were the convents being persecuted?
6. What did Madame Lidoine mean when she asked Blanche if her fear was religious? What is the significance of Blanche's religious name?
7. How did Madame Lidoine and Sister Marie de l'Incarnation differ?
8. What did Blanche do when the other sisters made the vow to offer themselves for martyrdom?
9. How did Blanche's father, the Marquis de la Force, change? What happens to Blanche and her father at the hands of the mob?
10. What happens to the sixteen sisters on the scaffold? What does Blanche do?
11. Discuss Blanche's sacrifice. Do you think her sacrifice meant the most because of her terrible fear, even though it seemed like she had betrayed the sisters and God?
12. Do you think the sister's martyrdom helped to end the Reign of Terror?
13. Why is it ironic that Sister Marie de l'Incarnation did not die with the other sisters?
14. Did this story make you think about what you would do in the face of martyrdom?



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