

Jan. 16, 2005

The Life and Mission of Christ is a Mystery (CC 512-521; 522-534; 535-560)

Mystery: A divinely revealed truth whose very possibility cannot be rationally conceived before it is revealed and after revelation, whose inner essence cannot be fully understood by the finite mind. The incomprehensibility of revealed mysteries derives from the fact that they are manifestations of God who is infinite and therefore beyond the complete grasp of a created finite intellect. Nevertheless, though incomprehensible, mysteries are intelligible. One of the primary duties of a believer is to prayer, study and experience to grow in faith, to develop an understanding of what God has revealed.

CC 514 and John 20:31 - What is written in the Gospels was set down there "so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name."

Sacrament: a sense perceptible sign (see, touch, hear), which effects what it signifies (washing, regeneration, etc.)

CC 515 - His humanity appeared as "sacrament," that is, the sign and instrument, of his divinity and of the salvation he brings: what was visible in his earthly life leads to the invisible mystery of his divine sonship and redemptive mission.

Characteristics common to Jesus' mysteries

CC 516 - Christ's whole earthly life—his words and deeds, his silences and sufferings, indeed his manner of being and speaking—is *Revelation* of the Father. Jesus can say: "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father," and the Father can say: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" Because our Lord became man in order to do his Father's will, even the least characteristics of his mysteries manifest "God's love . . . among us."

CC 517 - Christ's whole life is a mystery of *redemption*. Redemption comes to us above all through the blood of his cross, but this mystery is at work throughout Christ's entire life:

- already in his Incarnation through which by becoming poor he enriches us with his poverty;
- in his hidden life which by his submission atones for our disobedience;

Submission – obedience to earthly parents

Consecrated – set aside for holiness

- in his word which purifies its hearers;
- in his healings and exorcisms by which "he took our infirmities and bore our diseases";
- and in his Resurrection by which he justifies us.

CC 518 - Christ's whole life is a mystery of recapitulation. All Jesus did, said, and suffered had for its aim restoring fallen man to his original vocation:

When Christ became incarnate and was made man, he recapitulated in himself the long history of mankind and procured for us a 'short cut' to salvation, so that what we had lost in Adam, that is, being in the image and likeness of God, we might recover in Christ Jesus. For this reason Christ experienced all the stages of life, thereby giving communion with God to all men. *St. Irenaeus*

CC 521 - Christ enables us *to live in him* all that he himself lived, and *he lives it in us*.

CC 523 - *St. John the Baptist* is the Lord's immediate precursor or forerunner, sent to prepare his way.

Christmas Mystery

CC 525 - Jesus was born in a humble stable, into a poor family. Simple shepherds were the first witnesses to this event.

CC 526 - To become a child in relation to God is the condition for entering the kingdom.

Bethlehem: house of bread

Laid in a manger: place where lower creatures eat

Mysteries of Jesus' infancy

CC 527 - Jesus' *circumcision*, on the eighth day after his birth, is the sign of his incorporation into Abraham's descendants, into the people of the covenant. It is the sign of his submission to the Law and his deputation to Israel's worship

CC 528 - The *Epiphany* is the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah of Israel, Son of God and Savior of the world. The great feast of Epiphany celebrates the adoration of Jesus by the wise men (*magi*) from the East, together with his baptism in the Jordan and the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee.

CC 529 - The *presentation of Jesus in the temple* shows him to be the firstborn Son who belongs to the Lord. With Simeon and Anna, all Israel awaits its *encounter* with the Savior

Mysteries of Jesus' hidden life

CC 531 - From this whole period it is revealed to us that Jesus was "obedient" to his parents and that he "increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man."

CC 532 - Jesus' obedience to his mother and legal father fulfills the fourth commandment perfectly and was the temporal image of his filial obedience to his Father in heaven.

CC 534 and Luke 2:41-52 - Here Jesus lets us catch a glimpse of the mystery of his total consecration to a mission that flows from his divine sonship: "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's work?" ...
...during the years Jesus remained hidden in the silence of an ordinary life...
Luke "he went home and was submissive to them."

The Mysteries of Jesus' Public Life

CC 536 - The baptism of Jesus is on his part the acceptance and inauguration of his mission as God's suffering Servant...

Already he is anticipating the "baptism" of his bloody death. Already he is coming to "fulfill all righteousness," that is, he is submitting himself entirely to his Father's will: out of love he consents to this baptism of death for the remission of our sins...

Baptism of Jesus, Why? He did not sin. – he did not need a baptism of repentance, he baptized the waters. The waters are made holy – because He sanctified them.

Could Jesus have sinned? No

Keys to the Kingdom

CC 552 - Simon Peter holds the first place in the college of the Twelve; Jesus entrusted a unique mission to him.

CC 553 - Jesus entrusted a specific authority to Peter: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The "power of the keys" designates authority to govern the house of God, which is the Church... The power to "bind and loose" connotes the authority to absolve sins, to pronounce doctrinal judgments, and to make disciplinary decisions in the Church...

Entrance into Jerusalem

Phil. 2:3-11 – “Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vain glory: rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but also everyone for those of others. Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”