

The Paschal Mystery – Part Two
(CC 624-682)

CC 624 - “By the grace of God” Jesus tasted death “for every one.” In his plan of salvation, God ordained that his Son should not only “die for our sins” but should also “taste death,” experience the condition of death, the separation of his soul from his body, between the time he expired on the cross and the time he was raised from the dead.

CC 627 – Christ’s death was a real death in that it put an end to his earthly human existence. But because of the union his body retained with the person of the son, his was not a mortal corpse like others, for “divine power preserved Christ’s body from corruption.”

CC 628 - Baptism, the original and full sign of which is immersion, efficaciously signifies the descent into the tomb by the Christian who dies to sin with Christ in order to live a new life. “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”

Article #5 “He descended into Hell, on the third day He rose again ...”

Sheol – abode of the dead

Christ descended to Hell, not HELL, but Sheol

CC 633 – Scripture calls the abode of the dead, to which the dead Christ went down, “hell” – Sheol in Hebrew or Hades in Greek – because those who are there are deprived of the vision of God. Such is the case for all the dead, whether evil or righteous, while they await the redeemer: which does not mean that their lot is identical, as Jesus shows through the parable of the poor man Lazarus who was received into “Abraham’s bosom”: “It is precisely these holy souls, who awaited their Savior in Abraham’s bosom, whom Christ the Lord delivered when he descended into hell.” Jesus did not descend into hell to deliver the damned, nor to destroy the hell of damnation, but to free the just who had gone before him.

CC 634 – “The gospel was preached even to the dead.” The descent into hell brings the Gospel message of salvation to complete fulfillment. This is the last phase of Jesus’ messianic mission, a phase which is condensed in time but vast in its real significance: the spread of Christ’s redemptive work to all men of all times and all places, for all who are saved have been made sharers in the redemption.

Christ rose from the dead

CC 639 - The mystery of Christ’s resurrection is a real event, with manifestations that were historically verified, as the New Testament bears witness. In about a.d. 56, St. Paul could already write to the Corinthians: “I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve ... The Apostle speaks here of the living tradition of the Resurrection ...

CC 643 – Given all these testimonies, Christ’s Resurrection cannot be interpreted as something outside the physical order, and it is impossible not to acknowledge it as an historical fact. It is clear from the facts that the disciples’ faith was drastically put to the test by their master’s Passion and death on the cross, which he had foretold.

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CC 644 - Even when faced with the reality of the risen Jesus the disciples are still doubtful, so impossible did the things seem ... Therefore the hypothesis that the Resurrection was produced by the apostles' faith (or credulity) will not hold up. On the contrary their faith in the Resurrection was born, under the action of divine grace, from their direct experience of the reality of the risen Jesus.

CC 645 - ... the risen body in which he appears to them is the same body that had been tortured and crucified, for it still bears the traces of his passion. Yet at the same time this authentic, real body possesses the new properties of a glorious body: not limited by space and time but able to be present how and when he will; for Christ's humanity can no longer be confined to earth and belongs henceforth only to the Father's divine realm. For this reason too the risen Jesus enjoys the sovereign freedom of appearing as he wishes: in the guise of a gardener or in other forms familiar to his disciples, precisely to awaken their faith.

CC 648 – Christ's Resurrection is an object of faith in that it is a transcendent intervention of God himself in creation and history ... The Father's power "raised up" Christ his Son and by doing so perfectly introduced his Son's humanity, including his body, into the Trinity ...

CC 651 and 1 Corinthians 15:12-19 - "But if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then empty [too] is our preaching; empty, too, your faith. Then we are also false witnesses to God, because we testified against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable people of all.

CC 653 – The truth of Jesus' divinity is confirmed by his Resurrection. ...

CC 654 – The Paschal mystery has two aspects: **by his death**, Christ liberates us from sin; **by his Resurrection**, he opens for us the way to a new life. ...

Article #6 "He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father"

There is a judgment!

Article #7 "From thence He will come again to judge the living and the dead"

CC 675 – Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of the believers. The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh.