

The Creed: What We Believe and Why We Believe It

The Resurrection, Ascension and Glorification of Jesus

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- I. Some preliminary observations about the Resurrection of Jesus
 - A. Paschal Mystery
 1. “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.” (# 654)
 2. St. Paul: “I wish to know Christ and the power flowing from his resurrection; likewise to know how to share in his sufferings by being formed into the pattern of his death. Thus do I hope that I may arrive at resurrection from the dead.” (Philippians 3:10-11)
 - B. An act of God

“Christ’s Resurrection is an object of faith in that it is a transcendent intervention of God himself (the three divine persons act together) in creation and history.” (# 648)
 - C. The New Testament accounts of the Resurrection are the faithful attempt to “express the inexpressible.” The stories of the appearances of the Risen Jesus and His ascension describe a twofold dynamic:
 1. Community formation
 2. Sending on mission.
- II. What do the Scriptures tell us about the Resurrection?
 - A. The Gospels give us six resurrection narratives:
 1. Mark 16:1-8
 2. Matthew 28:1-20
 3. Luke 24:1-53
 4. John 20:1-29
 5. John 21:1-23
 6. Mark 16:9-20
 - B. Proclamation in Acts of the Apostles
 1. Acts 10: 34, 37-43
 2. Acts 5: 12-16
 3. Acts 5: 27-32, 40-41
 - C. St. Paul
 1. Colossians 3:1-4
 2. 1 Corinthians 15: 1-8
 3. 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

4. 1 Corinthians 15: 20-23
5. Romans 6: 3-9

D. Liturgical hymns

1. Philippians 2:6-11
2. Colossians 1:15-20

E. “On the third day ...”

1. Day of the Lord
2. “Eighth Day”

III. Teaching of the Church (The principal elements can be found in CCC, # 638-658)

- A. “The Resurrection of Jesus is the crowning truth of our faith in Christ, a faith believed and lived as the central truth by the first Christian community; handed on as fundamental by Tradition; established by the documents of the New Testament; and preached as an essential part of the Paschal mystery along with the cross.” (# 638)
- B. “The mystery of Christ’s resurrection is a real event, with manifestations that were historically verified, as the New Testament bears witness.” (# 639)
- C. “The first element we encounter in the framework of the Easter events is the empty tomb.”
- D. Other crucial elements: the appearance of the Risen Christ (#641) and the testimony of witnesses. (# 642 – 644)
- E. “Christ’s Resurrection was not a return to earthly life. . . . In his risen body he passes from the state of death to another life beyond time and space.” (# 645 – 646)
- F. “Although the Resurrection was an historical event that could be verified by the sign of the empty tomb and by the reality of the apostles’ encounters with the risen Christ, still it remains at the very heart of the mystery of faith as something that transcends and surpasses history.” (# 647)
- G. The Resurrection transcends and surpasses any event that has ever occurred in history. (# 656)

- IV. The Meaning of the Resurrection for us.
 - A. The Resurrection confirms the work and teaching of Christ (#651) and fulfills Old Testament prophecies. (#652)
 - B. The Resurrection confirms the truth of Christ's divinity and fulfills God's plan. (# 653)
 - C. Christ's Resurrection opens a way of new life (grace) for us. (# 654)
 - D. Christ's Resurrection is the principle and source of our own resurrection. (# 655)
 - E. We are brothers and sisters of Christ not by nature but by the gift of faith received through Baptism.

- V. The Ascension of Christ – “He ascended into heaven.”
 - A. Christ's ascension marks the entrance of his humanity into heavenly glory. (# 665)
 - B. During the “forty days” after the Resurrection, “his glory remains veiled under the appearance of ordinary humanity.” (# 659)
 - C. The last words of Jesus before he ascended into heaven remind us of Christ's abiding presence with his Church. “I am with you always.” (Matt. 28:20)
 - D. Paschal Mystery: “to be lifted up” (John) and “God raised up Jesus” (Paul).
 - 1. Liturgy: our connection to the paschal mystery.
 - 2. Liturgical time: (Christmas – Easter – Ordinary).

- VI. The Glorification of Christ – “He will come again to judge ...”
 - A. By professing that Jesus is now seated at “the right hand of the Father,” we understand the fullness of glory and honor that is proper to the Son of God. This signals the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom foretold by the prophets. He is our constant mediator, interceding for us and assuring the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon us. (#664)
 - B. Christ reigns over his Church. He is Lord. (# 680)

C. Christ will come to judge the living and the dead at the end of time. (# 674)

1. Christ's Second Coming – Parousia.
2. Judgment – triumph of God's plan.
3. Reward and punishment: heaven, hell, and purgatory.

VII. “His Kingdom will have no end.”

- A. Signs of the Kingdom: miracles and healing.
- B. Proclamation of the Kingdom: parables and preaching.
- C. The demands of the Kingdom: living as faithful disciples.