**Jesus Christ is Lord**

*Catechism to Meditate on During Lent*

*The following are excerpts of the Catechism of the Catholic Church intended as “Blurbs” for the Bulletin or other means of Communication for the weeks of Lent.*

**Ash Wednesday**

Sin and God’s Mercy

*Sin is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods. It wounds the nature of man and injures human solidarity. It has been defined as "an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law." (CCC 1849)*

*“God created us without us: but he did not will to save us without us." To receive his mercy, we must admit our faults. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (CCC 1847)*

**First Sunday of Lent**

Christ Conquers Sin

*By the radiance of this grace all dimensions of man's life were confirmed. As long as he remained in the divine intimacy, man would not have to suffer or die. The inner harmony of the human person, the harmony between man and woman, and finally the harmony between the first couple and all creation, comprised the state called "original justice".*

*The "mastery" over the world that God offered man from the beginning was realized above all within man himself: mastery of self. the first man was unimpaired and ordered in his whole being because he was free from the triple concupiscence that subjugates him to the pleasures of the senses, covetousness for earthly goods, and self-assertion, contrary to the dictates of reason. (CCC 376, 377)*

*As St. Paul affirms, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." But to do its work grace must uncover sin so as to convert our hearts and bestow on us "righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Like a physician who probes the wound before treating it, God, by his Word and by his Spirit, casts a living light on sin:*

*Conversion requires convincing of sin; it includes the interior judgment of conscience, and this, being a proof of the action of the Spirit of truth in man's inmost being, becomes at the same time the start of a new grant of grace and love: "Receive the Holy Spirit." Thus in this "convincing concerning sin" we discover a double gift: the gift of the truth of conscience and the gift of the certainty of redemption. the Spirit of truth is the Consoler. (CCC 1848)*

**Second Sunday of Lent**

Jesus the Son of God

*“and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." The lifting up of Jesus on the cross signifies and announces his lifting up by his Ascension into heaven, and indeed begins it. Jesus Christ, the one priest of the new and eternal Covenant, "entered, not into a sanctuary made by human hands. . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf." There Christ permanently exercises his priesthood, for he "always lives to make intercession" for "those who draw near to God through him".As "high priest of the good things to come" he is the centre and the principal actor of the liturgy that honours the Father in heaven.*

*Henceforth Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father: "By 'the Father's right hand' we understand the glory and honour of divinity, where he who exists as Son of God before all ages, indeed as God, of one being with the Father, is seated bodily after he became incarnate and his flesh was glorified."*

*Being seated at the Father's right hand signifies the inauguration of the Messiah's kingdom, the fulfilment of the prophet Daniel's vision concerning the Son of man: "To him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed." After this event the apostles became witnesses of the "kingdom [that] will have no end". (CCC 662 - 664)*

**Third Sunday of Lent**

Jesus the Desire of Souls (Conversion)

*In his Passover Christ opened to all men the fountain of Baptism. He had already spoken of his Passion, which he was about to suffer in Jerusalem, as a "Baptism" with which he had to be baptized. The blood and water that flowed from the pierced side of the crucified Jesus are types of Baptism and the Eucharist, the sacraments of new life. From then on, it is possible "to be born of water and the Spirit" in order to enter the Kingdom of God.*

*See where you are baptized, see where Baptism comes from, if not from the cross of Christ, from his death. There is the whole mystery: he died for you. In him you are redeemed, in him you are saved.*

*Baptism in the Church*

*From the very day of Pentecost the Church has celebrated and administered holy Baptism. Indeed St. Peter declares to the crowd astounded by his preaching: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." The apostles and their collaborators offer Baptism to anyone who believed in Jesus: Jews, the God-fearing, pagans. Always, Baptism is seen as connected with faith: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household," St. Paul declared to his jailer in Philippi. and the narrative continues, the jailer "was baptized at once, with all his family."*

*According to the Apostle Paul, the believer enters through Baptism into communion with Christ's death, is buried with him, and rises with him:*

*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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.*

*The baptized have "put on Christ." Through the Holy Spirit, Baptism is a bath that purifies, justifies, and sanctifies.*

*Hence Baptism is a bath of water in which the "imperishable seed" of the Word of God produces its life-giving effect. St. Augustine says of Baptism: "The word is brought to the material element, and it becomes a sacrament." (CCC 1225-1228)*

**Fourth Sunday of Lent – Laetare Sunday**

Jesus the Healing Light of our Souls (Enlightenment)

*"This bath is called enlightenment, because those who receive this [catechetical] instruction are enlightened in their understanding
. . . ."**[8](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P3H.HTM%22%20%5Cl%20%22%241HF) Having received in Baptism the Word, "the true light that enlightens every man," the person baptized has been "enlightened," he becomes a "son of light," indeed, he becomes "light" himself:**[9](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P3H.HTM%22%20%5Cl%20%22%241HG)*

*Baptism is God's most beautiful and magnificent gift....We call it gift, grace, anointing, enlightenment, garment of immortality, bath of rebirth, seal, and most precious gift. It is called gift because it is conferred on those who bring nothing of their own; grace since it is given even to the guilty; Baptism because sin is buried in the water; anointing for it is priestly and royal as are those who are anointed; enlightenment because it radiates light; clothing since it veils our shame; bath because it washes; and seal as it is our guard and the sign of God's Lordship. (CCC 1216)*

*By Baptism all sins are forgiven, original sin and all personal sins, as well as all punishment for sin. In those who have been reborn nothing remains that would impede their entry into the Kingdom of God, neither Adam's sin, nor personal sin, nor the consequences of sin, the gravest of which is separation from God. (CCC 1263)*

*The Most Holy Trinity gives the baptized sanctifying grace, the grace of justification:
- enabling them to believe in God, to hope in him, and to love him through the theological virtues;
- giving them the power to live and act under the prompting of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Holy Spirit;
- allowing them to grow in goodness through the moral virtues.
Thus the whole organism of the Christian's supernatural life has its roots in Baptism. (CCC 1266)*

**Fifth Sunday of Lent**

Jesus, Life over Death

*Belief in the resurrection of the dead has been an essential element of the Christian faith from its beginnings. "The confidence of Christians is the resurrection of the dead; believing this we live."
How can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.... But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. (CCC 991)*

*United with Christ by Baptism, believers already truly participate in the heavenly life of the risen Christ, but this life remains "hidden with Christ in God." The Father has already "raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Nourished with his body in the Eucharist, we already belong to the Body of Christ. When we rise on the last day we "also will appear with him in glory."*

*In expectation of that day, the believer's body and soul already participate in the dignity of belonging to Christ. This dignity entails the demand that he should treat with respect his own body, but also the body of every other person, especially the suffering:*

*The body [is meant] for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. and God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? .... You are not your own; .... So glorify God in your body. (CCC 1003-1004)*

**Palm Sunday**

The Passion of Christ and the Effect of Our Sins

*The Scriptures had foretold this divine plan of salvation through the putting to death of "the righteous one, my Servant" as a mystery of universal redemption, that is, as the ransom that would free men from the slavery of sin. Citing a confession of faith that he himself had "received", St. Paul professes that "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures." In particular Jesus' redemptive death fulfils Isaiah's prophecy of the suffering Servant. Indeed Jesus himself explained the meaning of his life and death in the light of God's suffering Servant. After his Resurrection he gave this interpretation of the Scriptures to the disciples at Emmaus, and then to the apostles.*

*"For our sake God made him to be sin"*

*Consequently, St. Peter can formulate the apostolic faith in the divine plan of salvation in this way: "You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers... with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake." Man's sins, following on original sin, are punishable by death. By sending his own Son in the form of a slave, in the form of a fallen humanity, on account of sin, God "made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (CCC 601-602)*