

## FROM THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### LIFE

**362** The human person, created in the image of God, is a being at once corporeal and spiritual.

**365** The unity of soul and body is so profound that one has to consider the soul to be the “form” of the body: i.e., it is because of its spiritual soul that the body made of matter becomes a living, human body; spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single nature.

**366** The Church teaches that every spiritual soul is created immediately by God – it is not “produced” by the parents – and also that it is immortal: it does not perish when it separates from the body at death, and it will be reunited with the body at the final Resurrection.

### DEATH

**1005** To rise with Christ, we must die with Christ: we must “be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” In that “departure” which is death the soul is separated from the body. It will be reunited with the body on the day of resurrection of the dead.

**1013** Death is the end of man’s earthly pilgrimage, of the time of grace and mercy which God offers him so as to work out his earthly life in keeping with the divine plan, and to decide his ultimate destiny. When “the single course of our earthly life” is completed, we shall not return to other earthly lives: “It is appointed for men to die once.” There is no “reincarnation” after death.

### PARTICULAR JUDGMENT

**1021** Death puts an end to human life as the time open to either accepting or rejecting the divine grace manifested in Christ. The New Testament speaks of judgment primarily in its aspect of the final encounter with Christ in his second coming, but also affirms that each will be rewarded immediately after death in accordance with his works and faith. The parable of the poor man Lazarus and the words of Christ on the cross to the good thief, as well as other New Testament texts speak of a final destiny of the soul – a destiny which can be different for some and for others.

**1022** Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death, in a particular judgment that refers his life to Christ: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven – through a purification or immediately, or immediate and everlasting damnation.

### RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

**1038** The resurrection of all the dead, “of both the just and the unjust,” will precede the Last Judgment. This will be “the hour when all who are in the tombs will hear [the Son of man’s] voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.” Then Christ will come “in his glory, and all the angels with him. ... Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. ... And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

**1039** In the presence of Christ, who is Truth itself, the truth of each man’s relationship with God will be laid bare. The Last Judgment will reveal even to its furthest consequences the good each person has done or failed to do during his earthly life.

### LAST JUDGMENT

**1040** The Last Judgment will come when Christ returns in glory. Only the Father knows the day and the hour; only he determines the moment of its coming. Then through his Son Jesus Christ he will pronounce the final word on all history. We shall know the ultimate meaning of the whole work of creation and of the entire economy of salvation and understand the marvelous ways by which his Providence led everything towards its final end. The Last Judgment will reveal that God’s justice triumphs over all the injustices committed by his creatures and that God’s love is stronger than death.

**1041** The message of the Last Judgment calls men to conversion while God is still giving them “the acceptable time, ... the day of salvation.” It inspires a holy fear of God and commits them to the justice of the Kingdom of God. It proclaims the “blessed hope” of the Lord’s return, when he will come “to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at in all who have believed.”

