



Paragraph 3. JESUS CHRIST WAS BURIED

624 "By the grace of God" Jesus tasted death "for every one".⁴⁵⁹ In his plan of salvation, God ordained that his Son should not only "die for our sins"⁴⁶⁰ 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. the state of the dead Christ is the mystery of the tomb and the descent into hell. It is the mystery of Holy Saturday, when Christ, lying in the tomb,⁴⁶¹ reveals God's great sabbath rest⁴⁶² after the fulfilment⁴⁶³ of man's salvation, which brings peace to the whole universe.⁴⁶⁴

Christ in the tomb in his body

625 Christ's stay in the tomb constitutes the real link between his passible state before Easter and his glorious and risen state today. the same person of the "Living One" can say, "I died, and behold I am alive for evermore":⁴⁶⁵

God [the Son] did not impede death from separating his soul from his body according to the necessary order of nature, but has reunited them to one another in the Resurrection, so that he himself might be, in his person, the meeting point for death and life, by arresting in himself the decomposition of nature produced by death and so becoming the source of reunion for the separated parts.⁴⁶⁶

626 Since the "Author of life" who was killed⁴⁶⁷ is the same "living one [who has] risen",⁴⁶⁸ The divine person of the Son of God necessarily continued to possess his human soul and body, separated from each other by death:

By the fact that at Chnst's death his soul was separated from his flesh, his one person is not itself divided into two persons; for the human body and soul of Christ have existed in the same way from the beginning of his earthly existence, in the divine person of the Word; and in death, although separated from each other, both remained with one and the same person of the Word.⁴⁶⁹

"You will not let your Holy One see corruption"

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."⁴⁷⁰ Both of these statements can be said of Christ: "He was cut off out of the land of the living",⁴⁷¹ and "My flesh will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor let your Holy One see corruption."⁴⁷² Jesus' Resurrection "on the third day" was the proof of this, for bodily decay was held to begin on the fourth day after death.⁴⁷³

"Buried with Christ. . ."

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."⁴⁷⁴

IN BRIEF

⁶²⁹ To the benefit of every man, Jesus Christ tasted death (cf ⇒ Heb 2:9). It is truly the Son of God made man who died and was buried.

⁶³⁰ During Christ's period in the tomb, his divine person continued to assume both his soul and his body, although they were separated from each other by death. For this reason the dead Christ's body "saw no corruption" (⇒ Acts 13:37).

Biblical Quote

⁴⁵⁹ ⇒ Heb 2:9.

⁴⁶⁰ ⇒ I Cor 15:3.

⁴⁶¹ Cf. ⇒ Jn 19:42.

⁴⁶² Cf. ⇒ Heb 4:7-9.

⁴⁶³ Cf. ⇒ Jn 19:30.

⁴⁶⁴ Cf ⇒ Col 1: 18-20.

⁴⁶⁵ ⇒ Rev 1:18.

⁴⁶⁶ St. Gregory of Nyssa, Orat. catech. 16: PG 45, 52D.

⁴⁶⁷ ⇒ Acts 3:15.

⁴⁶⁸ ⇒ Lk 24:5-6.

469 St. John Damascene, De fide orth. 3, 27: PG 94, 1097.

470 St. Thomas Aquinas, STh III, 51, 3.

471 ⇒ Is 53:8.

472 ⇒ Acts 2:26-27; cf. ⇒ Ps 16:9-10.

473 Cf. ⇒ I Cor 15:4; ⇒ Lk 24:46; ⇒ Mt 12:40; ⇒ Jon 2:1; ⇒ Hos 6:2; cf. ⇒ Jn 11:39.

474 ⇒ Rom 6:4; cf. ⇒ Col 2:12; ⇒ Eph 5:26.