

Mysterium

Session 2 - Thursday, 16 June 2016

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BEHOLD THE PIERCED ONE!

1. To him who loves us and has *freed us* from our sins *by his blood* and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and *every eye will see him, every one who pierced him*; and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. (Revelation 1:5-7).
 - 1.1. “Then he shall *kill the goat of the sin offering* which is for the people, and bring its blood within the veil...sprinkling it upon the place of atonement and before the place of atonement; thus he shall make atonement...because of their transgressions, *all their sins* (Leviticus 16:15-16a).
 - 1.2. But when they came to Jesus...one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water...and again another scripture says, “They shall look on him whom they have pierced” (John 19:33-37).
 - And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of compassion and supplication, so that, *when they look on him whom they have pierced*, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a *first-born*...On that day there shall be a *fountain opened* for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem *to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness* (Zechariah 12:10, 13:1).

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2. After this I looked, and lo, in heaven an open door! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “*Come up hither*, and I will show you what must take place after this.” At once I was in the Spirit, and lo, *a throne* stood in heaven, with *one seated on the throne*. And he who sat there appeared like jasper and carnelian, and round the throne was a rainbow that looked like an emerald. Round the throne were *twenty-four thrones*, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four *presbyters*, clad in *white garments*, with *golden crowns* upon their heads. From the throne issue flashes of lightning, and voices and peals of thunder, and before the throne burn seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God; and *before the throne* there is as it were *a sea of glass, like crystal*. (Revelation 4:1-6)

FOR PRAYER

THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD

3. Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord...

For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire, and *darkness, and gloom*, and *a tempest*, and *the sound of a trumpet*, and a voice whose words made the hearers entreat that no further messages be spoken to them...But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly

Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the *mediator of a new covenant*, and to the sprinkled *blood* that speaks *more graciously than the blood of Abel*. (Hebrews 12:12-13, 18-19, 22-23)

- 3.1. On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings, and a *thick cloud* upon the mountain, and a *very loud trumpet blast*, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God; and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. And *Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire*; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and *the whole mountain quaked greatly*. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. *And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.* (Exodus 19:16-20)

THE THRONE & ALTAR OF GOD

4. Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the *elders of Israel went up*, and they saw the God of Israel; and there was *under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness*. And...*they beheld God, and ate and drank.* (Exodus 24:9-11)
5. *I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne*, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. (Isaiah 6:1)
- 5.1. And above the firmament over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, *in appearance like sapphire*; (Ezekiel 1:26a).
- 5.2. Then flew one of the seraphim to me, having in his hand a *burning coal* which he had taken with tongs from the altar. (Isaiah 6:6).
6. When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was *silence in heaven for about half an hour*...And another angel came and stood at the altar *with a golden censer*; and he was given *much incense* to mingle with *the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne*; and *the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God*. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, voices, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. (Revelation 8:1-5)
- 6.1. [T]he four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints; (Revelation 5:8)
7. When he opened the fifth seal, I saw *under the altar* the souls of *those who had been slain for the word of God* and for the witness they had borne; (Revelation 6:9).

FOR PRAYER

PRESBYTERS, PRIESTS OF THE NEW COVENANT

8. In 1 Chronicles 24:1-31, there are 24 priestly divisions.
9. [O]n the gates [of the New Jerusalem] the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed...And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (cf. Revelation 21:12-

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- 9.1. [For the *Day of Atonement*, Aaron the priest] shall put on the holy *linen* coat, and shall have the *linen* breeches on his body, be girded with the *linen* sash, and wear the *linen* turban; *these are the holy garments*. (Exodus 16:4)
- 9.2. And you shall take the garments, and put on Aaron...the turban on his head, and put *the holy crown* upon the turban. (cf. Exodus 25:5-6).
10. Then I looked, and lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand *who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads*. And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpers playing on their harps, and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. *No one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth*. It is these *who have not defiled themselves with women*, for they are chaste; it is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes; these have been *redeemed from mankind as first fruits* for God and the Lamb, and *in their mouth no lie was found*, for they are spotless. (Revelation 14:1-5)
- 10.1. “And you shall make a plate of pure gold, and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, ‘Holy to the LORD [YHWH]’...It shall be *upon Aaron's forehead*...it shall always be upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD. (cf. Exodus 28:36-38)
- 10.2. “Behold, *I have taken the Levites* from among the people of Israel *instead of every first-born* that opens the womb among the people of Israel. *The Levites shall be mine*, (Numbers 3:12-13)
- Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. (Isaiah 43:1b)
- 10.3. *True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.* (Malachi 2:6-7)

FOR PRAYER

UP THE MOUNTAIN

11. “Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced. *Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven.*” (Ps. 85: 10-11)
12. It is in the Liturgy that the Church, enlivened by the breath of the Spirit, lives her mission as “*sacrament - a sign and instrument*, that is, of *communion with God* and of unity among all men”, and finds the most exalted expression of her mystical reality...The mystery brought about in the Liturgy is truly great. *It opens a glimpse of Heaven on earth, and the perennial hymn of praise rises from the community of believers in unison with the hymn of heavenly Jerusalem: “Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth...” (Spiritus et Sposa, 16)*

THE CHURCH MILITANT, THE CHURCH SUFFERING, THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

13. Liturgy is an “action” of the whole Christ (*Christus totus*). Those who even now celebrate it *without signs* are already in the heavenly liturgy, where celebration is *wholly communion and feast*... It is in this eternal liturgy that the Spirit and the Church enable us to participate whenever we celebrate the mystery of salvation in the sacraments. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1136, 1139)

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14. For by reason of the fact that those in heaven are more closely united with Christ, they establish the whole Church more firmly in holiness, [and] lend nobility to the worship which the Church offers to God here on earth...For after they have been received into their heavenly home and are present to the Lord, through Him and with Him and in Him *they do not cease to intercede with the Father for us...* (*Lumen Gentium*, 49)
15. Source & Summit
 15.1. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: Liturgy
 15.2. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: Eucharist
16. The Eucharist perpetuates the sacrifice of Christ, offered once and for all for us and for our salvation, making present the victory and triumph of Christ's death and resurrection. It is strength for those who journey in hope through this life and who desire to dwell with God in the life to come...through these many images, the Church helps us to see the Eucharist as union with Christ from whom she came, through whom she lives, and towards whom she directs her life. (*Norms for the Distribution & Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America*, 4)
17. Signs of the human world. In human life, signs and symbols occupy an important place. As a being at once **body and spirit**, man expresses and perceives spiritual realities through physical signs and symbols. As a **social** being, man needs signs and symbols to communicate with others, through language, gestures, and actions. *The same holds true for his relationship with God.* (CCC 1146)
18. Throughout history the martyrs continue Christ's self-oblation; they are like *the Church's living altar*, made not of stones but of men, who have become members of the Body of Christ and thus express a new kind of cultus (*worship*): **sacrifice is humanity becoming love with Christ.** (Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, pg 76)

FOR PRAYER

PRIESTHOOD

19. Pastors have the indispensable task of educating in prayer and more especially of *promoting liturgical life*, entailing a duty of discernment and guidance. This should not be seen as an uncompromising attitude that is incompatible with the need of Christian souls to abandon themselves to the action of God's Spirit who intercedes in us and "for us with sighs too deep for words" (Rom 8: 26). *Rather, the guidance of Pastors constitutes a principle of "guarantee", inherent in God's plan for his Church that is governed by the assistance of the Holy Spirit.* (*Spiritus et Sponsa*, 15)