

THE CATHOLIC ESSENTIALS

Summer Sermon Series 2015

Week 1: The Essential Person: Jesus Christ

I. SACRED SCRIPTURE

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. ¹⁶ And from his fulness have we all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

John 1:14

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— ² the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— ³ that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:1-3

II. FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

AND so it is clear that through the mystery of the Word of God joined to man, the Word, which was sent to save men, can be termed Savior, and the Savior, who was born in the flesh, can through union with the Word be called the Son of God; and so through the indifferent use of either title, since God is joined to man, whatever is God and man, can be termed altogether God.

St. John Cassian, *De Incarnatione* 4.5

...what grace is more powerful than the only-begotten Son of God, equal to the Father and co-eternal, made man for them, and, without any sin of His own, either original or actual, crucified by men who were sinners? And although He rose again on the third day, never to die any more, He yet bore death for men and gave life to the dead, so that

redeemed by His blood, having received so great and such a pledge, they could say, "If God be for us, who is against us? He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not with Him also given to us all things?"

St. Augustine, *De Correptione et Gratia*, 11.30

III. CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

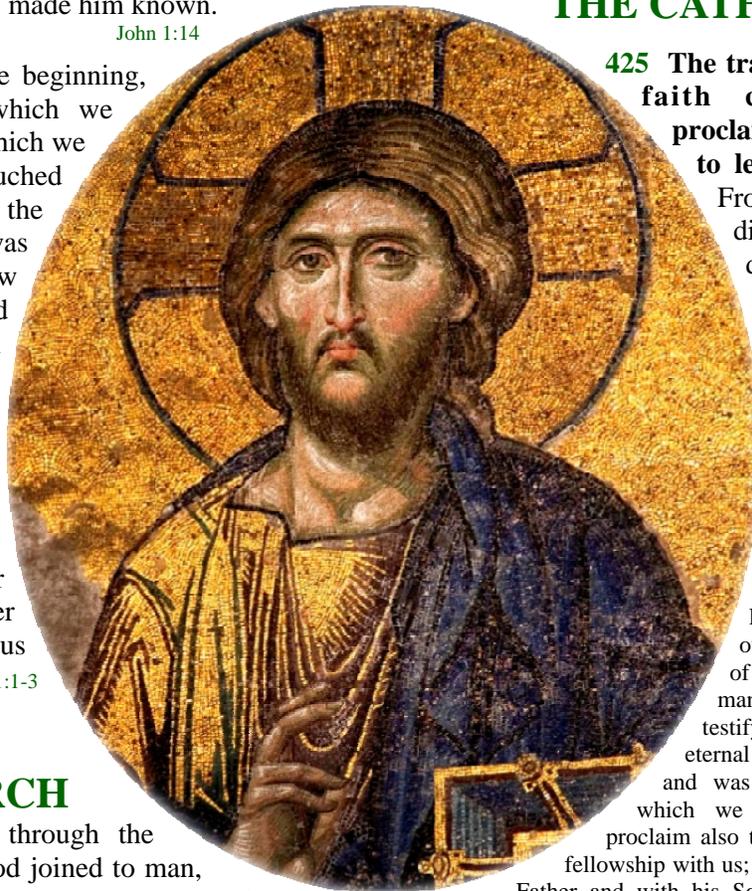
425 The transmission of the Christian faith consists primarily in proclaiming Jesus Christ in order to lead others to faith in him.

From the beginning, the first disciples burned with the desire to proclaim Christ: "We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." And they invite people of every era to enter into the joy of their communion with Christ:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing this that our joy may be complete. (1 John 1:1-4)

Catechism of the Catholic Church (2nd Ed.).

426 "At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father ... who suffered and died for us and who now, after rising, is living with us forever." To catechize is "to reveal in the Person of Christ the whole of God's eternal design reaching fulfillment in that Person. It is to seek to understand the meaning of Christ's actions and words and of the signs worked by him."¹⁴ Catechesis aims at putting "people ... in communion ... with Jesus Christ: only he can lead us to the love of the



Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church (2nd Ed.).*

1419 Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints. *Catechism of the Catholic Church (2nd Ed.).*

1533 Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are sacraments of Christian initiation. They ground the common vocation of all Christ’s disciples, a vocation to holiness and to the mission of evangelizing the world. They confer the graces needed for the life according to the Spirit during this life as pilgrims on the march towards the homeland. *Catechism of the Catholic Church (2nd Ed.).*

IV. PAPAL TEACHING

1. “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (1 Jn 4:16)....

We have come to believe in God’s love: in these words the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his life. **Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.** Saint John’s Gospel describes that event in these words: “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should ... have eternal life” (3:16). In acknowledging the centrality of love, Christian faith has retained the core of Israel’s faith, while

at the same time giving it new depth and breadth.

Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est

3. I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. **No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”.** The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms. Now is the time to say to Jesus: “Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming embrace”. How good it feels to come back to him whenever we are lost! Let me say this once more: God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy. Christ, who told us to forgive one another “seventy times seven” (Mt 18:22) has given us his example: he has forgiven us seventy times seven. Time and time again he bears us on his shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfailing love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew. Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire more than his life, which impels us onwards!

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium

