

the last day the word that I have spoken will serve as judge" (jn 12:47-48). The Judgment of God is this: "The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil" (Jn 3:19). This judgment has already begun and is now; and the standard for judgment is faith in Christ: "Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God" (Jn 3:18). Judgment depends upon faith and works of love: "As you did to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it ... [or] did not do it to me" (Mt 25:40-45, RSV-CE).

- 249 The Judgment of God began with the Incarnation of Christ (see Jn 1:9-13) and shall be fulfilled at his glorious second coming (see Mt 25:31). However, "about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mt 24:36). This Judgment will be fearful to all evildoers (see Mt 7:23); but for the righteous, it shall be a blessing (see Mt 25:34).
- 250 If a person has fallen asleep in God, having repented of all sins, but has not yet achieved spiritual maturity—the fullness of life in Christ—then that person enters the kingdom of God "as through fire" (1 Cor 3:15). After death, such a person is still in need of spiritual healing and cleansing of all stain, in order to dwell "in a place of light ... where there is no pain, sorrow, or mourning."²⁰⁴ In the Church, this healing condition of the dead is referred to as "purgatory."²⁰⁵

Every fair and God-beloved soul, once it has been set free from the bonds of the body, departs hence, and immediately enjoys a sense and perception of the blessings which await it, inasmuch as that which darkened it has been purged away, or laid aside—I know not how else to term it. It then feels a wondrous pleasure and exultation, and goes rejoicing to meet its Lord.²⁰⁶

For this reason, the Church prays for the departed:

Let us then give them aid and perform commemorations for them. For if the children of Job were purged by the sacrifice of their father, why do you doubt that when we too offer for the departed, some consolation arises to them? Since God is wont to grant the petitions of those who ask for others.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ *Trebnyk*, Rite of Burial for a Layperson, Prayer of the ekteny for the deceased.

²⁰⁵ COUNCIL OF FLORENCE, *Bull Laetentur caeli* [Let the Heavens Rejoice] (July 6, 1439); See also, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1030.

²⁰⁶ GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, *Oration 7*, 21: PG 35, 781.

²⁰⁷ JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies on 1 Corinthians*, 41, 8: PG 61, 361.

251 Being unrepentant until death results in the tragic reality of hell. fire of hell signifies an unrepentant person's inability to accept G love. "the Word of God is light, which illumines the minds of the faithful at the same time, it is also the fire of judgment, which consumes those, who ... abide in the night-darkness of this life."²⁰⁸ Hell is not much the punishment of God as it is the condition voluntarily chosen by the person. It is in this state,

the soul shall be found to be outside the order, and connection, and harmony in which it was created by God ... Not harmonizing with itself in the purposefulness of its rational movements, it will experience the chastisement and torture that arises from warring with itself, and feel punished by its own disordered condition ²⁰⁹

e. God -All in All

252 In his glorious second coming, Christ will transfigure the whole world, which will become free of all corruption and all things that pass, "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is" (1 Jn 3:2). The transfigured world will serve and assist humankind in glorifying God. Holy Scripture refers to this transfigured world as "the heavenly Jerusalem, "where "there will be no more night. [T]hey need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever" (Rev 22:5).

253 In renewed creation, the human race will behold the face of the Lord "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Cor 13:12). For humankind to be in a glorified state is to participate in the life of the Most Holy Trinity, together with the most holy Mother of God, the angels, and all the saints. Tradition calls this state heaven.

[Heaven] is the land of the living, in which there is no night, in which there is no sleep (the image of death); in which there is no eating, no drinking (the supports of our weakness); in which there is no disease, no pains, no remedies, no courts of justice, no businesses, no crafts, no money (the beginning of evil, the excuse for wars, the root of hatred); but a land of the living, who have not died through sin, but live the true life in Christ Jesus.²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ MAXIMUS THE Confessor, *Questions to Thalassium*, 39, 3: PG 90, 392.

²⁰⁹ ORIGEN, *On the Principles*, II, 10, 5: PG 11, 257.

²¹⁰ BASIL THE GREAT, *Homily on Psalm 114*: PG 29, 493.