



JESUS CHRIST
***“God loved the world so much
he sent his only Son”***
Texts from the
Catechism of the Catholic Church

THE GOOD NEWS - GOD HAS SENT HIS SON

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God

"But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." (Gal 4:4-5) This is "the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God": God has visited his people. (Mk 1:1) He has fulfilled the promise he made to Abraham and his descendants. He acted far beyond all expectation - he has sent his own "beloved Son." (Mk 1:11) (422)

Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son of God made man

We believe and confess that Jesus of Nazareth, born a Jew of a daughter of Israel at Bethlehem at the time of King Herod the Great and the emperor Caesar Augustus, a carpenter by trade, who died crucified in Jerusalem under the procurator Pontius Pilate during the reign of the emperor Tiberius, is the eternal Son of God made man. He "came from God," "descended from heaven," and "came in the flesh." (Jn 13:3; Jn 3:13; 6:33; I Jn 4:2) For "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... And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace." (Jn 1:14, 16) (423)

Moved by the grace of the Holy Spirit and drawn by the Father, we believe in Jesus and confess: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Mt 16:16) On the rock of this faith confessed by St. Peter, Christ built his Church. (424)

To preach... “the unsearchable riches of Christ”(Eph 3:8)

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." (Acts 4:20) 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.” (I Jn 1:1-4) (425)

At the heart of catechesis: Christ

"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.'" (Pope John Paul II) To catechise is "to reveal in the Person of Christ the whole of God's eternal design reaching fulfilment in that Person. It is to seek to understand the meaning of Christ's actions and words and of the signs worked by him." 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." (Pope John Paul II) (426)

Everything is taught in reference to Christ

In catechesis "Christ, the Incarnate Word and Son of God, ... is taught - everything else is taught with reference to him - and it is Christ alone who teaches - anyone else teaches to the extent that he is Christ's spokesman, enabling Christ to teach with his lips... Every catechist should be able to apply to himself the mysterious words of Jesus: 'My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.' (Jn 7:16)" (Pope John Paul II) (427)

Whoever is called "to teach Christ" must first seek "the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus"; he must suffer "the loss of all things..." in order to "gain Christ and be found in him," and "to know him and the power of his

resurrection, and [to] share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible [he] may attain the resurrection from the dead." (Phil 3:8-11) (428)

From this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to "evangelise," and to lead others to the "yes" of faith in Jesus Christ. But at the same time the need to know this faith better makes itself felt. (429)

WHY DID THE WORD BECOME FLESH?

A plan from the beginning of creation

Creation is the foundation of "all God's saving plans," the "beginning of the history of salvation" that culminates in Christ. Conversely, the mystery of Christ casts conclusive light on the mystery of creation and reveals the end for which "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth": *from the beginning, God envisaged the glory of the new creation in Christ.* (Gen 1:1) (280)

To save us by reconciling us to God

The Word became flesh for us *in order to save us by reconciling us with God*, who "loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins": "the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world," and "he was revealed to take away sins" (I Jn 4:10; 4:14; 3:5):

"Sick, our nature demanded to be healed; fallen, to be raised up; dead, to rise again. We had lost the possession of the good; it was necessary for it to be given back to us. Closed in the darkness, it was necessary to bring us the light; captives, we awaited a Saviour; prisoners, help; slaves, a liberator. Are these things minor or insignificant? Did they not move God to descend to human nature and visit it, since humanity was in so miserable and unhappy a state?" (St Gregory of Nyssa) (457)

That we might know God's love

The Word became flesh *so that thus we might know God's love*: "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him." (I Jn 4:9) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (Jn 3:16) (458)

To be our model of holiness

The Word became flesh *to be our model of holiness*: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me." (Mt 11:29) "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me." (Jn 14:6) On the mountain of the Transfiguration, the Father commands: "Listen to him!" (Mk 9:7) Jesus is the model for the Beatitudes and the norm of the new law: "Love one another as I have loved you." (Jn 15:12) This love implies an effective offering of oneself, after his example. (459)

To make us 'partakers of the divine nature'

The Word became flesh *to make us "partakers of the divine nature"*: "For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God." (St Irenaeus) "For the Son of God became man so that we might become God." (St Athanasius) "The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods." (St Thomas Aquinas) (460)

IN BRIEF

- **In the creation of the world and of man, God gave the first and universal witness to his almighty love and his wisdom, the first proclamation of the "plan of his loving goodness," which finds its goal in the new creation in Christ. (315)**
- **Jesus Christ is true God and true man, in the unity of his divine person; for this reason he is the one and only mediator between God and men. (480)**