



JESUS CHRIST

Lord of the Cosmos, Lord of History

Texts from the Catechism of the Catholic Church

“GOD’S PLAN OF LOVING GOODNESS FORMED FROM ALL ETERNITY IN CHRIST”

God created man to share his own blessed life - to accomplish this God sent his Son

God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws near to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength. He calls together all men, scattered and divided by sin, into the unity of his family, the Church.

To accomplish this, when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son as Redeemer and Saviour. In his Son and through him, he invites men to become, in the Holy Spirit, his adopted children and thus heirs of his blessed life. (1)

A plan formed from all eternity in Christ

Through an utterly free decision, God has revealed himself to man. This he does by revealing the mystery, his plan of loving goodness, formed from all eternity in Christ, for the benefit of all men. God has fully revealed this plan by sending us his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. (50)

God’s will was that men should have access to the Father through Christ and become sharers in the divine nature

It pleased God, in his goodness and wisdom, to reveal himself and to make known the mystery of his will. His will was that men should have access to the Father through Christ, the Word made flesh, in the Holy Spirit, and thus become sharers in the divine nature. (51)

God’s plan conceived before the foundation of the world in his beloved Son

God is eternal blessedness, undying life, unfading light. God is love: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God freely wills to communicate the glory of his blessed life. Such is the “*plan of his loving kindness*”, conceived by the Father before the foundation of the world, in his beloved Son: “He destined us in love to be his sons” and “to be conformed to the image of his Son”, through “the spirit of sonship”. (Eph 1) (257)

This Trinitarian and wisely ordered plan unfolds in the work of creation, the whole history of salvation, and the missions of the Son and the Spirit

This plan is a “grace [which] was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began”, (2 Tim 1:9-10) stemming immediately from Trinitarian love. It unfolds in the work of creation, the whole history of salvation after the fall, and the missions of the Son and the Spirit, which are continued in the mission of the Church. (257)

The Church confesses the mystery of the Holy Trinity and of the plan of God’s ‘good pleasure’ for all creation: The Father accomplishes the “mystery of his will” (Eph 1:9) by giving his beloved Son and his Holy Spirit for the salvation of the world and for the glory of his name. Such is the mystery of Christ, revealed and fulfilled in history according to the wisely ordered plan that St Paul will call “the plan of the mystery” (Eph 3:9) and the patristic tradition will call “the economy of the Word incarnate” or the “economy of salvation”. (1066)

“THE FIRST CREATION FINDS ITS MEANING AND SUMMIT IN THE NEW CREATION IN CHRIST”

Creation is the foundation of all God’s saving plans

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.* (280)

In the beginning was the Word - God created everything by the eternal Word

“*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*”: three things are affirmed in these first words of Scripture: the eternal God gave a beginning to all that exists outside of himself; he alone is Creator (the verb ‘create’ - Hebrew *bara* - always has God for its subject). The totality of what exists (expressed by the formula “the heavens and the earth”) depends on the One who gives it being. (290)

“In the beginning was the Word...and the Word was God...all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.” (John 1:1) *The New Testament reveals that God created everything by the eternal Word, his beloved Son.* In him “all things were created, in heaven and on earth...all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” (Col 1:16-17) The Church’s faith likewise confesses the creative action of the Holy Spirit, the “giver of life”, “the Creator Spirit” (*Veni, Creator Spiritus*), the “source of every good”. (291)

God creates us ‘to be his sons through Jesus Christ’

The glory of God consists in the realisation of the manifestation and communication of his goodness, for which the world was created. God made us “to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, *to the praise of his glorious grace*”, (Eph 1: 5) for the “glory of God is man fully alive; moreover man’s life is the vision of God: if God’s revelation through creation has already obtained life for all beings that dwell on earth, how much more will the Word’s manifestation of the Father obtain life for those who see God.” (St Irenaeus) The ultimate purpose of creation is that God who is the Creator of all things may at last become “all in all”, thus simultaneously assuring his own glory and our beatitude. (294)

The first creation finds its meaning and summit in the new creation in Christ

The *eighth day*. But for us a new day has dawned: the day of Christ’s Resurrection. The seventh day completes the first creation. The eighth day begins the new creation. Thus, the work of creation culminates in the greater work of redemption. *The first creation finds its meaning and its summit in the new creation in Christ*, the splendour of which surpasses that of the first creation. (349)

Christ is the key, the centre and the purpose of the whole of man’s history

From the beginning of Christian history, the assertion of Christ’s lordship over the world and over history has implicitly recognised that man should not submit his personal freedom in an absolute manner to any earthly power, but only to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Caesar is not ‘the Lord’. *“The Church believes that the key, the centre and the purpose of the whole of man’s history is to be found in its Lord and Master.”* (Vatican II, GS 10) (450)

Christ is the Lord of the cosmos and of history

“Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.” (Rom 14:9) Christ’s Ascension into heaven signifies his participation in his humanity, in God’s power and authority. Jesus Christ is Lord: he possesses all power in heaven and on earth. He is “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion,” for the Father has “put all things under his feet.” (Eph 1:20-22) *Christ is the Lord of the cosmos and of history. In him human history and indeed all creation are ‘set forth’ and transcendentally fulfilled.* (668)

“EVERYTHING IS RECAPITULATED IN CHRIST - THINGS IN HEAVEN AND THINGS ON EARTH (Eph 1:10)”

The mystery of recapitulation - all things come to a head in Christ

Christ’s whole life is a mystery of *recapitulation*. All Jesus did, said and suffered had for its aim restoring fallen man to his original vocation:

“When Christ became incarnate and was made man, he recapitulated in himself the long history of mankind and procured for us a ‘short cut’ to salvation, so that what we had lost in Adam, that is, being in the image and likeness of God, we might recover in Christ Jesus. For this reason Christ experienced all the stages of life, thereby giving communion with God to all men”. (St Irenaeus) (518)

At the end of time, the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness. After the universal judgement, the righteous will reign for ever with Christ, glorified in body and soul. the universe itself will be renewed....It will be the definitive realisation of God’s plan to bring under a single head “all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth.”...Everything is recapitulated in Christ. (Eph 1:10) (1042, 1043, 2748)

IN BRIEF

- **God has revealed himself fully by sending his own Son, in whom he has established his covenant for ever. The Son is the Father’s definitive Word; so there will be no further Revelation after him. (73)**
- **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)**
- **God created the universe and keeps it in existence by his Word, the Son “upholding the universe by his power” (Heb 1:3), and by his Creator Spirit, the giver of life. (320)**

