**Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Catechetical Institute**

**Module 1 Lesson 8 CCC 631-747**

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**His Ascent and the one He Sent:** Resurrection and Spirit

Saint Ignatius of Loyola – To Ascanio Colonna, Rome, April 25th 1543

* “There are very few people who realize what God could make of them if they abandoned themselves into his hands and let themselves be formed by his grace.”

**Exitus and Reditus**

Coming out of God and returning to Him

Saint Vincent de Paul – Conferences to the Priests of the Mission, Conference 207

* “If we are really called to carry the love of God far and wide, if we are to inflame the nations with this fire, if we have the vocation of setting the whole world on fire, if it is so, I say, if it is so my brothers, then how much must I myself burn with the divine fire?”

Our call to discipleship to Christ is much more than a call to be a holy people, dying to sin and living for God.

* We can fall into a plateau of discipleship, feeling comfortable comparing ourselves to our neighbor rather than comparing ourselves to Christ, and the glory that God is calling us to.

Pope Saint John Paul II – The Meaning of Vocation

* We are called to reveal and radiate the Father’s glory.

Augustine – On the Soul and Its Origin

* We are to allow our souls to be beautified, to grow in virtue, to be possessed by the Holy Spirit

**To the Father, Through the Son**

It is in the Paschal Mystery of dying and rising that Christ, our savior, lays out before us Jesus himself as the map of the journey back to the blessing of communion, of discipleship, of friendship with the Father.

He opened the doors for us and won for us our salvation. To save us body, mind, soul, and spirit.

* God the Father so loves the Son that he pours himself out completely. And the Son receives the Father’s love completely, then gives Himself fully to the Father. That exchange of love is called the Holy Spirit.
* The Holy Spirit is given to us as an invitation to live like Jesus and give ourselves fully to the Father.

**Descent and Ascent**

All of Salvation history is about us returning to the garden.

Jesus descends to earth to be born a man, dies, rises, and ascends into heaven

From Baptism to Transfiguration

Matt 3:17 🡪 Matt 17:5

“This is my Beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.”

Romans 6:11

* “You too must think of yourselves as [being] dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.”
* We cannot do it on our own.

We sin and turn to the sacrament of reconciliation. The sacraments are God’s chosen way to give us assured grace, to lift us up and give us a taste of heaven.

**The Beatitudes**

Matthew 5:7 and Luke 6:20-26

* Beatitudes are the promises of blessings given by Christ that describe the qualities of Christian perfection given to his disciples.
* The heart of Jesus’s teachings and fulfill the promises made to Abraham.
* Embody the charity of Christ’s passion—His descent—and the glory of His resurrection—His ascent.

Philippians 2:1-11

* “If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing. Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but [also] everyone for those of others. Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
* Jesus desires each and every one of us to descent and ascend as he did, so that we may give him glory as we are glorified.

John 15:7-9

* “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love.”

The beatitudes are Gods answer to man’s greatest question or search: happiness.

Peter Kreeft – Back to Virtue

* “Blessedness, beatitude, is what all of us are seeking, all the time, in everything we seek…Blessedness is always our end… Blessedness is the greatest good. Everyone seeks it, but not everyone finds it, because not everyone knows where it is.”
* Blessedness is a permanent state depended on God’s grace and our choice, while happiness is temporary and subjective.

Augustine – Commentaries on the Psalms, 31.5

* Love, but be careful what you love.

St. Therese of Lisieux – Her Last Conversations, 57

* Everything is grace; its all grace.

Augustine – City of God, X.1

* “We all want to live happily, in the whole human race there is not one who does not ascend to this proposition, even before it is fully articulated.”

Thomas Aquinas – Summa Theologiae, q. 82 aa. 1-4

* Everyone wants happiness, which is why some people peruse sin.
* They perceive the pleasure of sin as happiness and goodness.
* Some things are objectively wrong.

John 12

* Am I making a god of this world or am I using this world to glorify God?

Philippians 3:8-10

* Make room for God’s grace to live in the power of his resurrection.

Prudence guides our actions: a voice of invitation, truth and freedom

Romans 12:21-22

* We need to let life unfold as we take on the image and likeness of the transformation
* Hear His wisdom and His invitation to grow in maturity and His holiness.

**The Deepest Descent and Highest Ascent of Jesus**

* The passion, death, and resurrection are all one single act of redemption.
* The crucifixion was a great show of love for us: his wounds are his victory, but it is also shows of the horrors of our sin.
* His resurrection conquers death and makes possible our participation in eternal life.
* His ascension is an outward sign of the Father’s acceptance of His Son’s perfect sacrifice.

Teresa of Avila

“God is so madly in love with us that he follows us all the way to the gates of hell, if we choose to go there.”

The mass is a continual offering of the Son to the Father. The action is eternal. Our sacrifice is conjoined with Christ’s sacrifice.

CCC 634

Christ’s decent into hell brings the Gospel message to complete fulfillment.

* Not hell as in the realm of the damned, rather the abode of the dead (virtuous souls, who died prior to the Messiah, that Christ descended to retrieve).
* The last phase of the Messianic Mission

The Father’s deepest desire is to live in communion with us.

CCC 647

The resurrection is at the heart of the Mystery of Faith.

Luke 12:49

* God wants us alive, aflame, when spreading his message.
* Allow his grace to do his work in us 🡪 allow him to transform us

**The Ascension**

40 days of unveiled teaching by the risen and transformed Christ

* Christ is restoring and teaching, calling us into friendship with him, preparing to send the Holy Spirit

John 21:25

* “There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written.”
* The core of his teaching came after his resurrection.
* This teaching is the Tradition of the church.

God has a plan for each and every one of our lives.

Our true home is with the Father.

Through the ascension, Jesus takes man kind to the right hand of the Father, acts as a mediator between God and man, and assures Man the out pouring of the Holy Spirit.

CCC 661

Only Christ can open to us access to the Father’s house.

John 12:32

* “And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself.”

Ephesians 5

* Give yourself up to God and allow yourself to rise up—ascend—as a sacrifice—offering—to the Father.

We do ourselves a disservice by trying to hide, sometimes unintentionally, our “worst parts” from God. But the Father wants all of us.

**The Holy Spirit**

The third chapter of the creed

* The spirit dwells among us as a continuation of salvation history
* Three major themes of the Catechism
  1. Blessing of eternal life is the Father’s gift
  2. The plan of our salvation is patterned by the Son
  3. The plan of salvation is worked out over time by the Holy Spirit
* The coming of the spirit inaugurates the beginning of the Church.

St. Seraphim of Sarov – On Acquisition of the Holy Spirit

* “Acquire the Holy Spirit and thousands will be saved.”
* The Holy Spirit is the love exchange between the Father and the Son that we are drawn up into.
* The whole work of salvation is a Trinitarian work.
* Scriptural Symbols of the Spirit: Water, Anointing, Fire, Cloud and Rays of Light, The Seal, The Hand, The Finger, The Dove

St. Vincent DePaul – The Five Characteristic Virtues, Common Rules, 11, a. 14

* “If the love of God is a fire, than zeal is it’s flame.”

St. Augustine – In Epistulam Johannis ad Parthos Tractatus

* “For a just man to be made from the sinner, is greater than creating heaven and earth.

Thomas Aquinas – Summa Theologica, Prima Pars, q. 24, aa.2-3

* “The good of grace in one, than the good of nature in the whole universe.”

Galations 2:19-20

* “I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me.”

Let your everyday reflect the magnitude and the power of the greatest day of your life: your redemption.

C.S. Lewis – The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses

* “If we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by an offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

St. Therese of Liseux – Story of a Soul, 183-184

* “If only everyone weak and imperfect like me felt as I do, no one would despair of reaching the heights of love, for Jesus does not ask for glorious deeds. He only asks for self-surrender and for gratitude.”

Theodore Roosevelt – Citizenship In A Republic, Paris, France, 20 April 1910

* “It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

Revelation 3:16

* “So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.”
* He desires us to be on fire, for him, with love.

St. Katherine Drexel – St. Katherine Drexel Novena

* “I looked up in wonder at God's wonderful ways and thought how little we imagine what may be the result of listening and acting on a desire He puts into the heart. Nourish before Him great desires.”