

# THE IMPORTANCE AND NATURE OF THE RESURRECTION



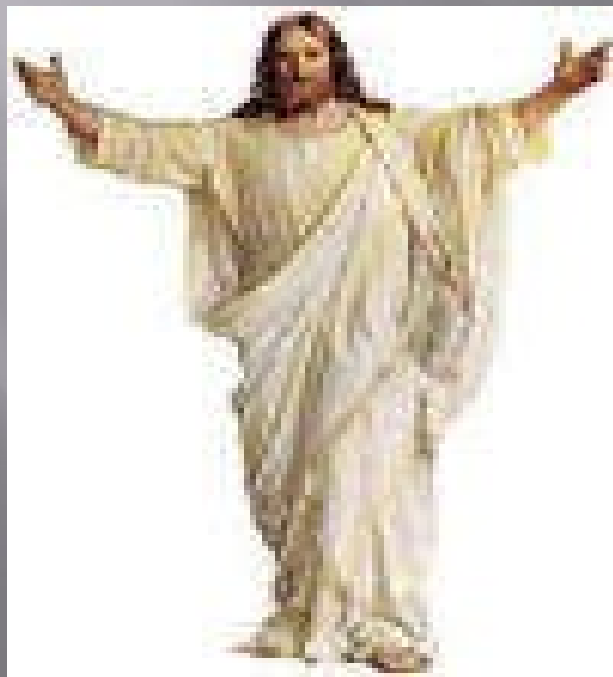
We can sketch  
the meaning and  
salvific  
importance of  
Christ's  
Resurrection in  
five points.

# First, his Resurrection confirmed everything Christ had done and taught.



- ▣ It fulfilled both Jesus' triple prediction of his Passion, Death, and Resurrection in the Synoptics (cf. Mk 8:31; 9:30; 10:32), and his triple prediction of being "lifted up" in John's Gospel (cf. Jn 3:14; 8:28; 12:32).
- ▣ Christ's exaltation vindicated all he claimed to be, as he himself asserted in his trial before the high priest (cf. Mk. 14:61 f).

Second, through his Resurrection, Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies promising a Savior for all the world. (cf. Ps 110; Dn 7:13)



- ▣ The history of God's Self-revelation, begun with Abraham and continuing through Moses, the Exodus, and the whole Old Testament, reached its climax in Christ's Resurrection, something unprecedented, totally new.

# Third, the Resurrection confirmed Jesus' divinity.



- ▣ St. Paul preached that Jesus was “designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead” (Rom 1:4; cf. Phil. 2:7-8).
- ▣ Upon seeing the Risen Jesus, Thomas cried out, “My Lord and my God!” (J n. 20:28)

Fourth, Christ's death freed us from sin, and his Resurrection brought us a share in the new life of adopted son/daughters of the Father in the Holy Spirit.



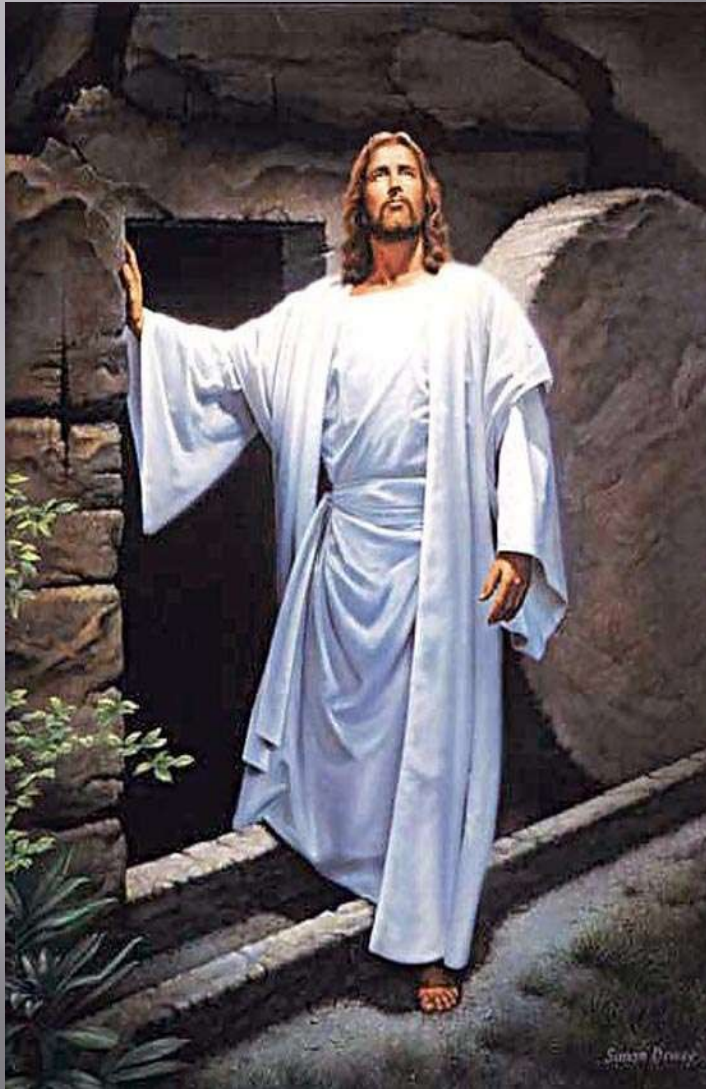
- ▣ “If then we have died with Christ [freed from sin], we believe that we shall also live with him” (Rom 6:8)

# Finally, the Risen Christ is the principle and source of our future resurrection



- ▣ This means Jesus rose not only to a “glorious” higher state of life himself, but also become the source of this new life for all.
- ▣ “He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself” (Phil 3:21).
- ▣ “In Christ all will come to life again” (1 Cor 15:22; cf CCC 651-655)

## B. Nature of the Resurrection



- ▣ The Resurrection was basically Jesus' passage from death to new, definitive glorified life. Thus it can be described from three points of view:



1. as passage: an event in human history;
2. as the glorified life of the Risen Christ; and
3. as effected by the Blessed Trinity.

# First, as an event, Christ's Resurrection is both historical and trans-historical.

- ▣ It is historical in terms of the testimony of witnesses to the Risen Christ, the empty tomb, etc. But it surpasses and transcends history in that no one claimed to see the event, no one described how it took place, no one can explain what “risen, glorified existence” is essentially. Therefore, the passage to such a new state of life is necessarily a reality discerned through the eyes of Faith, not by the senses (cf. CCC 639, 647)

# Second, the glorified state of the Risen Christ is both like and unlike the historical, earthly Jesus

- ▣ He has personal continuity with his prior earthly bodily existence.
- ▣ The Risen Christ re-established direct relations with his disciples, even with the marks of his Passion.
- ▣ For it was the Crucified one whom “God freed from death’s bitter pangs and raised up again” (Acts 2:24)

- ▣ Yet, the Risen Christ also showed a clear discontinuity with his earthly state.
- ▣ In his risen state he transcends the bodily limits of time and space, and inaugurates the new and final creation, the final destiny of all.
- ▣ The Risen Christ is the “first fruits of those who have fallen asleep... in Christ all will come to life again” (1 Cor 15:20, 22, cf. CCC 645).

- ▣ Therefore, Christ's Resurrection did not mean a return to earthly life.
- ▣ The Risen Christ is not like Lazarus, the son of the widow of Naim or the daughter of Jairus (cf. Jn 11:43f; Lk 7:15; Mk 5:41f).
- ▣ They were revived from death to resume their earthly existence, only to die again (cf. Jn 11:43-44; CCC 646). Christ arose to an entirely new "glorified" existence.
- ▣ We recognize this in the fact that "Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him" (Rom 6:9)
- ▣ Thus we pray: "Christ is the victim who dies no more; the Lamb, once slain, who lives forever" (Easter Pref. III).

Third, As effected by the Trinity, the Resurrection represents the definitive intervention of the Triune God into creation and our human history.

- ▣ As in all out-going divine acts, the Resurrection is effected by all three divine Persons working together, but each according to the distinctiveness proper to each (cf. CCC 648-50).

- ▣ Thus, like the source of Jesus' divine sonship and mission is the Father, so too the divine power raising Jesus from the dead has its source in the Father (cf. Acts 2:24).
- ▣ Also, like Jesus' very conception in the Virgin Mary, the divine power re-vivifying and glorifying the dead Jesus, body and soul, is the Holy Spirit.
- ▣ And as sharing equally together with Father and Spirit the one divine power, the Eternal Son works his own humanity's resurrection as Jesus promised. "I have the power to lay down my life, and to take it up again" (Jn 10:18)

▣ **The challenge today is not in accepting Christ's Resurrection, but in living out the Gospel of the Risen Christ.**

**Christ's Resurrection is not only the proof of the Gospel message. It IS the central Gospel message itself.**



# Christ's Ascension



# Christ's Ascension



- ▣ It means that the Risen Christ ascended to heaven to take his place at the right hand of the Father.
- ▣ The Ascension is a salvific event for us since Christ's return to the Father was necessary for **sending the Spirit among us**, and for Christ's continued mediating on our behalf as well as for grounding our hope in our own future resurrection.



▣ He Ascended into Heaven, and is Seated at the Right Hand of the Father

## He Ascended into Heaven

Jesus ascended into heaven 40 days after His resurrection. As the Gospel says: Jesus took His disciples out as far as Bethany...Lk.24:50-51



▣ Before ascending into heaven, Jesus gave the apostles their mission.

▣ He said to them: *Go, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...* (Mt.28:19-20).



- ▣ To sit at the right hand of the Father means to have the power to carry out all His commands.
- ▣ Jesus Christ received from the Father all power and authority in heaven and on earth. (Mt.28:18)

▣ Jesus from heaven helps men and women to be saved and to enter in the eternal life.

▣ As St. Paul said: Jesus Christ...at the right hand He stands and pleads for us (Rom.8:34).

# Christ's Ascension



- ▣ The raising of Christ did not stop with his Resurrection from the dead.
- ▣ An integral part of Christ's Paschal Mystery is his Ascension.
- ▣ The Risen Jesus told Mary told Mary Magdalene: I am ascending to my Father, to my God and to your God." ( Jn. 20:17 )
- ▣ John's gospel neatly unifies all dimensions of Christ's Paschal Mystery ( Crucifixion , Resurrection and Ascension by Jesus assertion of being "lifted up."



- ▣ The primary meaning of being raised or “lifted up” is Christ’s exaltation, sovereign authority and power over creation and all history.
  - ▣ But the Ascension is also a saving event for us.
  - ▣ Christ’s Ascension, then, brings out a number of basic truths of our Christian Faith.
- First, the Ascension marks Jesus’ exaltation into the heavenly realm of his Father.**





- ▣ Second, it does not separate Christ from us because as he promised, from heaven he draws everyone to himself.
- ▣ Third, since “ he lives forever to make intercession,” Christ continues to exercise his priesthood since he entered “ heaven itself, that he might now appear before God on our behalf.
- ▣ Finally, the ascended Christ as Head of the Church gives us, members of his body, the hope of one day entering into glory with him.

# CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN

- ▣ We are aware of the living presence of the Risen Christ among us in the Holy Spirit sent among us.
- ▣ But we also know from the Creed that he “will come again to judge then living and the dead” (cf. CCC

- ▣ In the first Eucharistic acclamation we proclaim: “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!”
- ▣ “Parousia,” meaning “coming” or “presence” is the traditional term for Christ’s Second Coming as divine Judge (cf. Mt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor 15:23; etc.)
- ▣ “The Son of Man will come with his Father’s glory accompanied by his angels. When he does, he will repay each man according to his conduct” (Mt 16:27-28).

- ▣ Given such qualities of biblical apocalyptic literature, it is more important to us, Filipino Catholics, to focus on the basic truths of the Parousia.
- ▣ *The First* is that the Risen Christ as the Son of Man will “come to judge the living and the dead” (2 Tim 4:1).
- ▣ “The Lord himself will come down from heaven at the word of command, at the sound of archangel’s voice and God’s trumpet; and those who have died in Christ will rise first” (1 Thes 4:16).

- ▣ *Second*, Christ's Second Coming will be unmistakable since it will be accompanied by unprecedented signs in the heavens and on the earth.
- ▣ “ As the light from the East flashes to the West, so will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Mt 24:27)

- ▣ **Third** regarding when the Parousia will take place, the Gospel is very clear. “As for the exact day or hour, no one knows it, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but the Father only” (Mt 24:36)
- ▣ Therefore, *Fourth*, because it will come unexpectedly, “like a thief in the night”
- ▣ (1 Thes 5:2), we must “be constantly on the watch! Stay awake! You do not know when the appointed time will come” (Mk 13:33).

- ▣ *Lastly*, because Christ is already in his glory, and has sent his Spirit among us, the “time” of salvation has already come.
- ▣ Now is the time when our salvation is being worked out in our daily acts with our neighbors.
- ▣ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory,” he will judge our acts according to one norm: “As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me” (Mt 25:31, 40)