

Gospel according to John

John 1

(Jn 1, 1-9) In the beginning was the Word

[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] He was in the beginning with God. [3] All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be [4] through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; [5] the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. [6] A man named John was sent from God. [7] He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. [8] He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. [9] The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

(CCC 291) "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" (Jn 1:1-3). 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" (Cf. Nicene Creed: DS 150; Hymn "*Veni, Creator Spiritus*"; Byzantine Troparion of Pentecost vespers, "*O heavenly King, Consoler*"). (CCC 240) Jesus revealed that God is Father in an unheard-of sense: he is Father not only in being Creator; he is eternally Father by his relationship to his only Son who, reciprocally, is Son only in relation to his Father: "No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" (Mt 11-27). (CCC 241) For this reason the apostles confess Jesus to be the Word: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"; as "the image of the invisible God"; as the "radiance of the glory of God and the very stamp of his nature" (Jn 1:1; Col 1:15; Heb 1:3). (CCC 717) "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (Jn 1:6). John was "filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb" (Lk 1:15, 41) by Christ himself, whom the Virgin Mary had just conceived by the Holy Spirit. Mary's visitation to Elizabeth thus became a visit from God to his people (Cf. Lk 1:68). (CCC 718) John is "Elijah [who] must come" (Mt 17:10-13; cf. Lk 1:78). The fire of the Spirit dwells in him and makes him the forerunner of the coming Lord. In John, the precursor, the Holy Spirit completes the work of "[making] ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Lk 1:17).

(Jn 1, 10-14) And the Word became flesh

[10] He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. [11] He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. [12] But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, [13] ho

were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. [14] And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

(CCC 530) The *flight into Egypt* and the massacre of the innocents (Cf. Mt 2:13-18) make manifest the opposition of darkness to the light: "He came to his own home, and his own people received him not" (Jn 1:11). Christ's whole life was lived under the sign of persecution. His own share it with him (Cf. Jn 15:20). Jesus' departure from Egypt recalls the exodus and presents him as the definitive liberator of God's people (Cf. Mt 2:15; Hos 11:1). (CCC 214) God, "He who is", revealed himself to Israel as the one "abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex 34:6). These two terms express summarily the riches of the divine name. In all his works God displays, not only his kindness, goodness, grace and steadfast love, but also his trustworthiness, constancy, faithfulness and truth. "I give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness" (Ps 138:2; cf. Ps 85:11). He is the Truth, for "God is light and in him there is no darkness"; "God is love", as the apostle John teaches (1 Jn 1:5; 4:8). (CCC 36) "Our holy mother, the Church, holds and teaches that God, the first principle and last end of all things, can be known with certainty from the created world by the natural light of human reason" (Vatican Council I, *Dei Filius* 2: DS 3004 cf. 3026; Vatican Council II, *Dei Verbum* 6). Without this capacity, man would not be able to welcome God's revelation. Man has this capacity because he is created "in the image of God" (Cf. Gen 1:27). (CCC 2466) In Jesus Christ, the whole of God's truth has been made manifest. "Full of grace and truth," he came as the "light of the world," he *is the Truth* (Jn 1:14; 8:12; cf. 14:6). "Whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness" (Jn 12:46). The disciple of Jesus continues in his word so as to know "the truth [that] will make you free" and that sanctifies (Jn 8:32; cf. 17:17). To follow Jesus is to live in "the Spirit of truth," whom the Father sends in his name and who leads "into all the truth" (Jn 16:13). To his disciples Jesus teaches the unconditional love of truth: "Let what you say be simply 'Yes or No.'" (Mt 5:37). (CCC 742) "Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal 4:6).

(Jn 1, 15-28) Make straight the way of the Lord

[15] John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'" [16] From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, [17] because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. [18] No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him. [19] And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites (to him) to ask him, "Who are you?" [20] he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Messiah." [21] So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." [22] So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" [23] He said: "I am 'the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as Isaiah the prophet said." [24] Some

Pharisees were also sent. [25] They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?" [26] John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, [27] the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." [28] This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

(CCC 504) Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary's womb because he is the New Adam, who inaugurates the new creation: "The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven" (1 Cor 15:45, 47). From his conception, Christ's humanity is filled with the Holy Spirit, for God "gives him the Spirit without measure" (Jn 3:34). From "his fullness" as the head of redeemed humanity "we have all received, grace upon grace" (Jn 1:16; cf. Col 1:18). (CCC 719) John the Baptist is "more than a prophet" (Lk 7:26). In him, the Holy Spirit concludes his speaking through the prophets. John completes the cycle of prophets begun by Elijah (Cf. Mt 11:13-14). He proclaims the imminence of the consolation of Israel; he is the "voice" of the Consoler who is coming (Jn 1:23; cf. Isa 40:1-3). As the Spirit of truth will also do, John "came to bear witness to the light" (Jn 1:7; cf. Jn 15:26; 5:35). In John's sight, the Spirit thus brings to completion the careful search of the prophets and fulfills the longing of the angels (Cf. 1 Pet 1:10-12). "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.... Behold, the Lamb of God" (Jn 1:33-36). (CCC 720) Finally, with John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit begins the restoration to man of "the divine likeness," prefiguring what he would achieve with and in Christ. John's baptism was for repentance; baptism in water and the Spirit will be a new birth (Cf. Jn 3:5).

(Jn 1, 29-31) Behold, the Lamb of God

[29] The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. [30] He is the one of whom I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' [31] I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel."

(CCC 523) *St. John the Baptist* is the Lord's immediate precursor or forerunner, sent to prepare his way (cf. Acts 13:24; Mt 3:3). "Prophet of the Most High", John surpasses all the prophets, of whom he is the last (Lk 1:76; cf. 7:26; Mt 11:13). He inaugurates the Gospel, already from his mother's womb welcomes the coming of Christ, and rejoices in being "the friend of the bridegroom", whom he points out as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29; cf. Acts 1:22; Lk 1:41; 16:16; Jn 3:29). Going before Jesus "in the spirit and power of Elijah", John bears witness to Christ in his preaching, by his Baptism of conversion, and through his martyrdom (Lk 1:17; cf. Mk 6:17-29). (CCC 536) The baptism of Jesus is on his part the acceptance and inauguration of his mission as God's suffering Servant. He allows himself to be numbered among sinners; he is already "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29; cf. Isa 53:12). Already he is anticipating the "baptism" of his bloody death (Cf. Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50). Already he is coming to "fulfil all righteousness", that is, he is submitting himself entirely to his

Father's will: out of love he consents to this baptism of death for the remission of our sins (Mt 3:15; cf. 26:39). The Father's voice responds to the Son's acceptance, proclaiming his entire delight in his Son (Cf. Lk 3:22; Isa 42:1). The Spirit whom Jesus possessed in fullness from his conception comes to "rest on him" (Jn 1:32-33; cf. Isa 11:2). Jesus will be the source of the Spirit for all mankind. At his baptism "the heavens were opened" (Mt 3:16) - the heavens that Adam's sin had closed - and the waters were sanctified by the descent of Jesus and the Spirit, a prelude to the new creation. (CCC 608) After agreeing to baptize him along with the sinners, John the Baptist looked at Jesus and pointed him out as the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29; cf. Lk 3:21; Mt 3:14-15; Jn 1:36). By doing so, he reveals that Jesus is at the same time the suffering Servant who silently allows himself to be led to the slaughter and who bears the sin of the multitudes, and also the Paschal Lamb, the symbol of Israel's redemption at the first Passover (Isa 53:7, 12; cf. Jer 11:19; Ex 12:3-14; Jn 19:36; 1 Cor 5:7). Christ's whole life expresses his mission: "to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45). (CCC 1286) In the Old Testament the prophets announced that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the hoped-for Messiah for his saving mission (Cf. Isa 11:2; 61:1; Lk 4:16-22). The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism by John was the sign that this was he who was to come, the Messiah, the Son of God (Cf. Mt 3:13-17; Jn 1:33-34). He was conceived of the Holy Spirit; his whole life and his whole mission are carried out in total communion with the Holy Spirit whom the Father gives him "without measure" (Jn 3:34).

(Jn 1, 32) I saw the Spirit remain upon him

[32] John testified further, saying, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him.

(CCC 743) From the beginning to the end of time, whenever God sends his Son, he always sends his Spirit: their mission is conjoined and inseparable. (CCC 245) The apostolic faith concerning the Spirit was confessed by the second ecumenical council at Constantinople (381): "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father" (Nicene Creed; cf. DS 150). By this confession, the Church recognizes the Father as "the source and origin of the whole divinity" (Council of Toledo VI (638): DS 490). But the eternal origin of the Spirit is not unconnected with the Son's origin: "The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is God, one and equal with the Father and the Son, of the same substance and also of the same nature. . . Yet he is not called the Spirit of the Father alone, . . . but the Spirit of both the Father and the Son" (Council of Toledo XI (675): DS 527). The Creed of the Church from the Council of Constantinople confesses: "With the Father and the Son, he is worshipped and glorified" (Nicene Creed; cf. DS 150). (CCC 246) The Latin tradition of the Creed confesses that the Spirit "proceeds from the Father *and the Son (filioque)*". The Council of Florence in 1438 explains: "The Holy Spirit is eternally from Father and Son; He has his nature and subsistence at once (*simul*) from the Father and the Son. He proceeds eternally from both as from one principle and through one spiration... And, since the Father has through generation given to the only-begotten Son everything that belongs to the Father, except being Father, the Son has also eternally from the Father, from whom he is

eternally born, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son" (Council of Florence (1439): DS 1300-1301).

(Jn 1, 33-34) He will baptize with the holy Spirit

[33] I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.' [34] Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

(CCC 745) The Son of God was consecrated as Christ (Messiah) by the anointing of the Holy Spirit at his Incarnation (cf. Ps 2:6-7). (CCC 248) At the outset the Eastern tradition expresses the Father's character as first origin of the Spirit. By confessing the Spirit as he "who proceeds from the Father", it affirms that he *comes from the Father through the Son* (Jn 15:26; cf. AG 2). The Western tradition expresses first the consubstantial communion between Father and Son, by saying that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (*filioque*). It says this, "legitimately and with good reason" (Council of Florence (1439): DS 1302), for the eternal order of the divine persons in their consubstantial communion implies that the Father, as "the principle without principle" (Council of Florence (1442): DS 1331), is the first origin of the Spirit, but also that as Father of the only Son, he is, with the Son, the single principle from which the Holy Spirit proceeds (Cf. Council of Lyons II (1274): DS 850). This legitimate complementarity, provided it does not become rigid, does not affect the identity of faith in the reality of the same mystery confessed. (CCC 247) The affirmation of the *filioque* does not appear in the Creed confessed in 381 at Constantinople. But Pope St. Leo I, following an ancient Latin and Alexandrian tradition, had already confessed it dogmatically in 447 (Cf. Leo I, *Quam laudabiliter* (447): DS 284), even before Rome, in 451 at the Council of Chalcedon, came to recognize and receive the Symbol of 381. The use of this formula in the Creed was gradually admitted into the Latin liturgy (between the eighth and eleventh centuries). The introduction of the *filioque* into the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed by the Latin liturgy constitutes moreover, even today, a point of disagreement with the Orthodox Churches.

(Jn 1, 35-42) Come, and you will see

[35] The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, [36] and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." [37] The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. [38] Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" [39] He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day. It was about four in the afternoon. [40] Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus. [41] He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed). [42] Then he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Kephas" (which is translated Peter).

(CCC 880) When Christ instituted the Twelve, "he constituted [them] in the form of a college or permanent assembly, at the head of which he placed Peter, chosen from among them" (LG 19; cf. Lk 6:13; Jn 21:15-17). Just as "by the Lord's institution, St. Peter and the rest of the apostles constitute a single apostolic college, so in like fashion the Roman Pontiff, Peter's successor, and the bishops, the successors of the apostles, are related with and united to one another" (LG 22; cf. CIC, can. 330). (CCC 881) The Lord made Simon alone, whom he named Peter, the "rock" of his Church. He gave him the keys of his Church and instituted him shepherd of the whole flock (Cf. Mt 16:18-19; Jn 21:15-17). "The office of binding and loosing which was given to Peter was also assigned to the college of apostles united to its head" (LG 22 § 2). This pastoral office of Peter and the other apostles belongs to the Church's very foundation and is continued by the bishops under the primacy of the Pope. (CCC 894) "The bishops, as vicars and legates of Christ, govern the particular Churches assigned to them by their counsels, exhortations, and example, but over and above that also by the authority and sacred power" which indeed they ought to exercise so as to edify, in the spirit of service which is that of their Master (LG 27; cf. Lk 22:26-27). (CCC 895) "The power which they exercise personally in the name of Christ, is proper, ordinary, and immediate, although its exercise is ultimately controlled by the supreme authority of the Church" (LG 27). But the bishops should not be thought of as vicars of the Pope. His ordinary and immediate authority over the whole Church does not annul, but on the contrary confirms and defends that of the bishops. Their authority must be exercised in communion with the whole Church under the guidance of the Pope.

(Jn 1, 43-51) You will see greater things than this

[43] The next day he decided to go to Galilee, and he found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow me." [44] Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter. [45] Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth." [46] But Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." [47] Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Here is a true Israelite. There is no duplicity in him." [48] Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree." [49] Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." [50] Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this." [51] And he said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

(CCC 275) With Job, the just man, we confess: "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted". (CCC 426) "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" (CT 5). To catechize 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" (CT 5). 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" (CT 5). (Job 42:2). (CCC 488) "God sent forth his Son", but to prepare a body for him (Gal 4:4; Heb 10:5), he wanted the free co-operation of a creature. For this, from all eternity God chose for the mother of his Son a daughter of Israel, a young Jewish woman of Nazareth in Galilee, "a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" (Lk 1:26-27): The Father of mercies willed that the Incarnation should be preceded by assent on the part of the predestined mother, so that just as a woman had a share in the coming of death, so also should a woman contribute to the coming of life (LG 56; cf. LG 61). (CCC 333) From the Incarnation to the Ascension, the life of the Word incarnate is surrounded by the adoration and service of angels. When God "brings the firstborn into the world, he says: 'Let all God's angels worship him'" (Heb 1:6). Their song of praise at the birth of Christ has not ceased resounding in the Church's praise: "Glory to God in the highest!" (Lk 2:14). They protect Jesus in his infancy, serve him in the desert, strengthen him in his agony in the garden, when he could have been saved by them from the hands of his enemies as Israel had been (Cf. Mt 1:20; 2:13,19; 4:11; 26:53; Mk 1:13; Lk 22:43; 2 Macc 10:29-30; 11:8). Again, it is the angels who "evangelize" by proclaiming the Good News of Christ's Incarnation and Resurrection (Cf. Lk 2:8-14; Mk 16:5-7). They will be present at Christ's return, which they will announce, to serve at his judgement. (Cf. Acts 1:10-11; Mt 13:41; 24:31; Lk 12:8-9).

John 2

(Jn 2, 1-4) They have no wine

[1] On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. [2] Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. [3] When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." [4] (And) Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come."

(CCC 487) What the Catholic faith believes about Mary is based on what it believes about Christ, and what it teaches about Mary illumines in turn its faith in Christ. (CCC 1335) The miracles of the multiplication of the loaves, when the Lord says the blessing, breaks and distributes the loaves through his disciples to feed the multitude, prefigure the superabundance of this unique bread of his Eucharist (Cf. Mt 14:13-21; 15:32-39). The sign of water turned into wine at Cana already announces the Hour of Jesus' glorification. It makes manifest the fulfillment of the wedding feast in the Father's kingdom, where the faithful will drink the new wine that has become the Blood of Christ (Cf. Jn 2:11; Mk 14:25). (CCC 1613) On the threshold of his public life Jesus performs his first sign - at his mother's request - during a wedding feast (Cf. Jn 2:1-11). The Church attaches great importance to Jesus' presence at the wedding at Cana. She sees in it the confirmation of the goodness of marriage and the proclamation that thenceforth marriage will be an efficacious sign of Christ's presence. (CCC 495) Called in the Gospels "the mother of Jesus", Mary is acclaimed by Elizabeth, at the prompting of the Spirit and even

before the birth of her son, as "the mother of my Lord"(Lk 1:43; Jn 2:1; 19:25; cf. Mt 13:55; *et al.*). In fact, the One whom she conceived as man by the Holy Spirit, who truly became her Son according to the flesh, was none other than the Father's eternal Son, the second person of the Holy Trinity. Hence the Church confesses that Mary is truly "Mother of God" (*Theotokos*) (Council of Ephesus (431): DS 251).

(Jn 2, 5-12) Do whatever he tells you

[5] His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." [6] Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. [7] Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. [8] Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it. [9] And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom [10] and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now." [11] Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him. [12] After this, he and his mother, (his) brothers, and his disciples went down to Capernaum and stayed there only a few days.

(CCC 2618) The Gospel reveals to us how Mary prays and intercedes in faith. At Cana (Cf. Jn 2:1-12). The mother of Jesus asks her son for the needs of a wedding feast; this is the sign of another feast - that of the wedding of the Lamb where he gives his body and blood at the request of the Church, his Bride. It is at the hour of the New Covenant, at the foot of the cross (Cf. Jn 19:25-27), that Mary is heard as the Woman, the new Eve, the true "Mother of all the living." (CCC 974) The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body. (CCC 966) "Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death" (LG 59; cf. Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus* (1950): DS 3903; cf. Rev 19:16). The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son's Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians: In giving birth you kept your virginity; in your Dormition you did not leave the world, O Mother of God, but were joined to the source of Life. You conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death (Byzantine Liturgy, *Troparion*, Feast of the Dormition, August 15th).

(Jn 2, 13-22) Zeal for your house will consume me

[13] Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. [14] He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money-changers seated there. [15] He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the money-changers and overturned their

tables, [16] and to those who sold doves he said, "Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace." [17] His disciples recalled the words of scripture, "Zeal for your house will consume me." [18] At this the Jews answered and said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" [19] Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." [20] The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?" [21] But he was speaking about the temple of his body. [22] Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.

(CCC 583) Like the prophets before him Jesus expressed the deepest respect for the Temple in Jerusalem. It was in the Temple that Joseph and Mary presented him forty days after his birth (Lk 2:22-39). At the age of twelve he decided to remain in the Temple to remind his parents that he must be about his Father's business (Cf. Lk 2 46-49). He went there each year during his hidden life at least for Passover (Cf. Lk 2 41). His public ministry itself was patterned by his pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the great Jewish feasts (Cf. Jn 2:13-14; 5:1, 14; 7:1, 10, 14; 8:2; 10:22-23). (CCC 584) Jesus went up to the Temple as the privileged place of encounter with God. For him, the Temple was the dwelling of his Father, a house of prayer, and he was angered that its outer court had become a place of commerce (Cf. Mt 21:13). He drove merchants out of it because of jealous love for his Father: "You shall not make my Father's house a house of trade. His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me'" (Jn 2:16-17; cf. Ps 69:10). After his Resurrection his apostles retained their reverence for the Temple (Cf. Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:20, 21; etc). (CCC 586) Far from having been hostile to the Temple, where he gave the essential part of his teaching, Jesus was willing to pay the Temple-tax, associating with him Peter, whom he had just made the foundation of his future Church (Cf. Mt 8:4; 16:18; 17:24-27; Lk 17:14; Jn 4:22; 18:20). He even identified himself with the Temple by presenting himself as God's definitive dwelling-place among men (Cf. Jn 2:21; Mt 12:6). Therefore his being put to bodily death (Cf. Jn 2:18-22) presaged the destruction of the Temple, which would manifest the dawning of a new age in the history of salvation: "The hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father" (Jn 4:21; cf. 4:23-24; Mt 27:5; Heb 9:11; Rev 21:22).

(Jn 2, 23-25) Many began to believe in his name

[23] While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, many began to believe in his name when they saw the signs he was doing. [24] But Jesus would not trust himself to them because he knew them all, [25] and did not need anyone to testify about human nature. He himself understood it well.

(CCC 472) This human soul that the Son of God assumed is endowed with a true human knowledge. As such, this knowledge could not in itself be unlimited: it was exercised in the historical conditions of his existence in space and time. This is why the Son of God could, when he became man, "increase in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man" (Lk 2:52), and would even have to inquire for himself about what one in the human condition can learn only from experience (Cf. Mk 6 38; 8:27; Jn 11:34; etc.). This corresponded to the reality of his voluntary

emptying of himself, taking "the form of a slave" (Phil 2:7). (CCC 473) But at the same time, this truly human knowledge of God's Son expressed the divine life of his person (Cf. St. Gregory the Great, "*Sicut aqua*" *ad Eulogium*, *Epist. Lib. 10*, 39: PL 77, 1097 A ff.; DS 475). "The human nature of God's Son, *not by itself but by its union with the Word*, knew and showed forth in itself everything that pertains to God" (St. Maximus the Confessor, *Qu. et dub.* 66 PG 90, 840A). Such is first of all the case with the intimate and immediate knowledge that the Son of God made man has of his Father (Cf. Mk 14:36; Mt 11:27; Jn 1:18; 8:55; etc.). The Son in his human knowledge also showed the divine penetration he had into the secret thoughts of human hearts (Cf. Mk 2:8; Jn 2 25; 6:61; etc.). (CCC 474) By its union to the divine wisdom in the person of the Word incarnate, Christ enjoyed in his human knowledge the fullness of understanding of the eternal plans he had come to reveal (Cf. Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; 14:18-20, 26-30). What he admitted to not knowing in this area, he elsewhere declared himself not sent to reveal (Cf. Mk 13:32, Acts 1:7). (CCC 236) The Fathers of the Church distinguish between theology (*theologia*) and economy (*oikonomia*). "Theology" refers to the mystery of God's inmost life within the Blessed Trinity and "economy" to all the works by which God reveals himself and communicates his life. Through the *oikonomia* the *theologia* is revealed to us; but conversely, the *theologia* illuminates the whole *oikonomia*. God's works reveal who he is in himself; the mystery of his inmost being enlightens our understanding of all his works. So it is, analogously, among human persons. A person discloses himself in his actions, and the better we know a person, the better we understand his actions.

John 3

(Jn 3, 1-6) Be born of water and Spirit

[1] Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. [2] He came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you are doing unless God is with him." [3] Jesus answered and said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." [4] Nicodemus said to him, "How can a person once grown old be born again? Surely he cannot reenter his mother's womb and be born again, can he?" [5] Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. [6] What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit.

(CCC 728) Jesus does not reveal the Holy Spirit fully, until he himself has been glorified through his Death and Resurrection. Nevertheless, little by little he alludes to him even in his teaching of the multitudes, as when he reveals that his own flesh will be food for the life of the world (Cf. Jn 6:27, 51, 62-63). He also alludes to the Spirit in speaking to Nicodemus (Cf. Jn 3:5-8), to the Samaritan woman (Cf. Jn 4:10, 14, 23-24), and to those who take part in the feast of Tabernacles (Cf. Jn 7:37-39). To his disciples he speaks openly of the Spirit in connection with prayer (Cf. Lk 11:13) and with the witness they will have to bear (Cf. Mt 10:19-20). (CCC 1238) The *baptismal water* is consecrated by a prayer of epiclesis (either at this moment or

at the Easter Vigil). The Church asks God that through his Son the power of the Holy Spirit may be sent upon the water, so that those who will be baptized in it may be "born of water and the Spirit" (Jn 3:5). (CCC 1215) This sacrament is also called "the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit," for it signifies and actually brings about the birth of water and the Spirit without which no one "can enter the kingdom of God" (Titus 3:5; Jn 3:5). (CCC 1316) Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

(Jn 3, 7-13) You must be born from above

[7] Do not be amazed that I told you, 'You must be born from above.'
[8] The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." [9] Nicodemus answered and said to him, "How can this happen?" [10] Jesus answered and said to him, "You are the teacher of Israel and you do not understand this? [11] Amen, amen, I say to you, we speak of what we know and we testify to what we have seen, but you people do not accept our testimony. [12] If I tell you about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? [13] No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man.

(CCC 782) The People of God is marked by characteristics that clearly distinguish it from all other religious, ethnic, political, or cultural groups found in history: - It is the *People of God*: God is not the property of any one people. But he acquired a people for himself from those who previously were not a people: "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Pet 2:9). - One becomes a *member* of this people not by a physical birth, but by being "born anew," a birth "of water and the Spirit" (Jn 3:3-5), that is, by faith in Christ, and Baptism. - This People has for its Head Jesus the Christ (the anointed, the Messiah). Because the same anointing, the Holy Spirit, flows from the head into the body, this is "the messianic people." - "The *status* of this people is that of the dignity and freedom of the sons of God, in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells as in a temple." - "Its *law* is the new commandment to love as Christ loved us" (Cf. Jn 13:34). This is the "new" law of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:2; Gal 5:25). - Its *mission* is to be salt of the earth and light of the world (Cf. Mt 5:13-16). This people is "a most sure seed of unity, hope, and salvation for the whole human race." -Its *destiny*, finally, "is the Kingdom of God which has been begun by God himself on earth and which must be further extended until it has been brought to perfection by him at the end of time" (LG 9 § 2). (CCC 976) The Apostle's Creed associates faith in the forgiveness of sins not only with faith in the Holy Spirit, but also with faith in the Church and in the communion of saints. It was when he gave the Holy Spirit to his apostles that the risen Christ conferred on them his own divine power to forgive sins: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (Jn 20:22-23).

(Jn 3, 14-18) Who believes in him may have eternal life

[14] And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, [15] so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." [16] For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. [17] For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. [18] Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

(CCC 219) God's love for Israel is compared to a father's love for his son. His love for his people is stronger than a mother's for her children. God loves his people more than a bridegroom his beloved; his love will be victorious over even the worst infidelities and will extend to his most precious gift: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son" (Jn 3:16; cf. Hos 11:1; Isa 49:14-15; 62:4-5; Ezek 16; Hos 11). (CCC 444) The Gospels report that at two solemn moments, the Baptism and the Transfiguration of Christ, the voice of the Father designates Jesus his "beloved Son" (Cf. Mt 3:17; cf. 17:5). Jesus calls himself the "only Son of God", and by this title affirms his eternal pre-existence (Jn 3:16; cf. 10:36). He asks for faith in "the name of the only Son of God" (Jn 3:18). In the centurion's exclamation before the crucified Christ, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mk 15:39), that Christian confession is already heard. Only in the Paschal mystery can the believer give the title "Son of God" its full meaning. (CCC 454) The title "Son of God" signifies the unique and eternal relationship of Jesus Christ to God his Father: he is the only Son of the Father (cf. Jn 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18); he is God himself (cf. Jn 1:1). To be a Christian, one must believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (cf. Acts 8:37; 1 Jn 2:23). (CCC 458) 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" (1 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).

(Jn 3, 19-21) Whoever lives the truth comes to the light

[19] And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. [20] For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. [21] But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

(CCC 748) "Christ is the light of humanity; and it is, accordingly, the heartfelt desire of this sacred Council, being gathered together in the Holy Spirit, that, by proclaiming his Gospel to every creature, it may bring to all men that light of Christ which shines out visibly from the Church" (LG 1; cf. Mk 16:15). These words open the Second Vatican Council's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*. By choosing this starting point, the Council demonstrates that the article of faith about the Church depends entirely on the articles concerning Christ Jesus. The Church has no other

light than Christ's; according to a favorite image of the Church Fathers, the Church is like the moon, all its light reflected from the sun. (CCC 257) "O blessed light, O Trinity and first Unity!" (*LH*, Hymn for Evening Prayer). 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 1:4-5, 9; Rom 8:15, 29). This plan is a "grace [which] was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began", stemming immediately from Trinitarian love (2 Tim 1:9-10). 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 (Cf. AG 2-9). (CCC 214 God, "He who is", revealed himself to Israel as the one "abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex 34:6). These two terms express summarily the riches of the divine name. In all his works God displays, not only his kindness, goodness, grace and steadfast love, but also his trustworthiness, constancy, faithfulness and truth. "I give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness" (Ps 138:2; cf. Ps 85:11). He is the Truth, for "God is light and in him there is no darkness"; "God is love", as the apostle John teaches (1 Jn 1:5; 4:8). (CCC 298) Since God could create everything out of nothing, he can also, through the Holy Spirit, give spiritual life to sinners by creating a pure heart in them (Cf. Ps 51:12), and bodily life to the dead through the Resurrection. God "gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (Rom 4:17). And since God was able to make light shine in darkness by his Word, he can also give the light of faith to those who do not yet know him (Cf. Gen 1:3; 2 Cor 4:6). (CCC 49) Without the Creator, the creature vanishes (GS 36). This is the reason why believers know that the love of Christ urges them to bring the light of the living God to those who do not know him or who reject him.

(Jn 3, 22-30) He must increase; I must decrease

[22] After this, Jesus and his disciples went into the region of Judea, where he spent some time with them baptizing. [23] John was also baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was an abundance of water there, and people came to be baptized, [24] for John had not yet been imprisoned. [25] Now a dispute arose between the disciples of John and a Jew about ceremonial washings. [26] So they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing and everyone is coming to him." [27] John answered and said, "No one can receive anything except what has been given him from heaven. [28] You yourselves can testify that I said (that) I am not the Messiah, but that I was sent before him. [29] The one who has the bride is the bridegroom; the best man, who stands and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made complete. [30] He must increase; I must decrease."

(CCC 524) When the Church celebrates *the liturgy of Advent* each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for

his second coming (Cf. Rev 22:17). By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (Jn 3:30). (CCC 796) The unity of Christ and the Church, head and members of one Body, also implies the distinction of the two within a personal relationship. This aspect is often expressed by the image of bridegroom and bride. The theme of Christ as Bridegroom of the Church was prepared for by the prophets and announced by John the Baptist (Jn 3:29). The Lord referred to himself as the "bridegroom" (Mk 2:19). The Apostle speaks of the whole Church and of each of the faithful, members of his Body, as a bride "betrothed" to Christ the Lord so as to become but one spirit with him (Cf. Mt 22:1-14; 25:1-13; 1 Cor 6:15-17; 2 Cor 11:2). The Church is the spotless bride of the spotless Lamb (Cf. Rev 22:17; Eph 1:4; 5:27). "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her" (Eph 5:25-26). He has joined her with himself in an everlasting covenant and never stops caring for her as for his own body (Cf. Eph 5:29): This is the whole Christ, head and body, one formed from many... whether the head or members speak, it is Christ who speaks. He speaks in his role as the head (*ex persona capitis*) and in his role as body (*ex persona corporis*). What does this mean? "The two will become one flesh. This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the Church" (Eph 5:31-32). And the Lord himself says in the Gospel: "So they are no longer two, but one flesh" (Mt 19:6). They are, in fact, two different persons, yet they are one in the conjugal union,... *as head, he calls himself the bridegroom, as body, he calls himself "bride"* (St. Augustine, *En. in Ps. 74:4*: PL 36, 948-949).

(Jn 3, 31-36) The one who comes from heaven

[31] The one who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of earthly things. But the one who comes from heaven (is above all). [32] He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. [33] Whoever does accept his testimony certifies that God is trustworthy. [34] For the one whom God sent speaks the words of God. He does not ration his gift of the Spirit. [35] The Father loves the Son and has given everything over to him. [36] Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains upon him.

(CCC 504) Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary's womb because he is the New Adam, who inaugurates the new creation: "The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven" (1 Cor 15:45, 47). From his conception, Christ's humanity is filled with the Holy Spirit, for God "gives him the Spirit without measure" (Jn 3:34). From "his fullness" as the head of redeemed humanity "we have all received, grace upon grace" (Jn 1:16; cf. Col 1:18). (CCC 1286) In the Old Testament the prophets announced that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the hoped-for Messiah for his saving mission (Cf. Isa 11:2; 61:1; Lk 4:16-22). The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism by John was the sign that this was he who was to come, the Messiah, the Son of God (Cf. Mt 3:13-17; Jn 1:33-34). He was conceived of the Holy Spirit; his whole life and his whole mission are carried out in total communion with the Holy Spirit whom the Father gives him "without measure" (Jn 3:34). (CCC 2104) "All men are bound to seek the truth,

especially in what concerns God and his Church, and to embrace it and hold on to it as they come to know it" (DH 1 § 2). This duty derives from "the very dignity of the human person" (DH 2 § 1). It does not contradict a "sincere respect" for different religions which frequently "reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men" (NA 2 § 2), nor the requirement of charity, which urges Christians "to treat with love, prudence and patience those who are in error or ignorance with regard to the faith" (DH 14 § 4).

John 4

(Jn 4, 1-6) Jesus sat down at the Jacob's well

[1] Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John [2] (although Jesus himself was not baptizing, just his disciples), [3] he left Judea and returned to Galilee. [4] He had to pass through Samaria. [5] So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. [6] Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

(CCC 694) *Water*. The symbolism of water signifies the Holy Spirit's action in Baptism, since after the invocation of the Holy Spirit it becomes the efficacious sacramental sign of new birth: just as the gestation of our first birth took place in water, so the water of Baptism truly signifies that our birth into the divine life is given to us in the Holy Spirit. As "by one Spirit we were all baptized," so we are also "made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:13). Thus the Spirit is also personally the living water welling up from Christ crucified (Jn 19:34; 1 Jn 5:8) as its source and welling up in us to eternal life (Cf. Jn 4:10-14; 7:38; Ex 17:1-6; Isa 55:1; Zech 14:8; 1 Cor 10:4; Rev 21:6; 22:17). (CCC 2557) "I want to see God" expresses the true desire of man. Thirst for God is quenched by the water of eternal life (cf. Jn 4:14). (CCC 1317) Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian's soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once in one's life. (CCC 1318) In the East this sacrament is administered immediately after Baptism and is followed by participation in the Eucharist; this tradition highlights the unity of the three sacraments of Christian initiation. In the Latin Church this sacrament is administered when the age of reason has been reached, and its celebration is ordinarily reserved to the bishop, thus signifying that this sacrament strengthens the ecclesial bond.

(Jn 4, 7-10) If you knew the gift of God

[7] A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." [8] His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. [9] The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.) [10] Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

(CCC 2560) "If you knew the gift of God!" (Jn 4:10). The wonder of prayer is revealed beside the well where we come seeking water: there, Christ comes to

meet every human being. It is he who first seeks us and asks us for a drink. Jesus thirsts; his asking arises from the depths of God's desire for us. Whether we realize it or not, prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours. God thirsts that we may thirst for him (Cf. St. Augustine *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus* 64, 4: PL 40, 56). (CCC 2561) "You would have asked him, and he would have given you living water" (Jn 4:10). Paradoxically our prayer of petition is a response to the plea of the living God: "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water!" (Jer 2:13). Prayer is the response of faith to the free promise of salvation and also a response of love to the thirst of the only Son of God (Cf. Jn 7:37-39; 19:28; Isa 12:3; 51:1; Zech 12:10; 13:1). (CCC 1320) The essential rite of Confirmation is anointing the forehead of the baptized with sacred chrism (in the East other sense-organs as well), together with the laying on of the minister's hand and the words: "*Accipe signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti*" (Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.) in the Roman Rite, or *Signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti* [the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit] in the Byzantine rite. (CCC 1319) A candidate for Confirmation who has attained the age of reason must profess the faith, be in the state of grace, have the intention of receiving the sacrament, and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial community and in temporal affairs. (CCC 1321) When Confirmation is celebrated separately from Baptism, its connection with Baptism is expressed, among other ways, by the renewal of baptismal promises. The celebration of Confirmation during the Eucharist helps underline the unity of the sacraments of Christian initiation.

(Jn 4, 11-15) Sir, give me this water

[11] (The woman) said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? [12] Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?" [13] Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; [14] but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." [15] The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

(CCC 1218) Since the beginning of the world, water, so humble and wonderful a creature, has been the source of life and fruitfulness. Sacred Scripture sees it as "overshadowed" by the Spirit of God (Cf. Gen 1:2): At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness (*Roman Missal*, Easter Vigil 42: Blessing of Water). (CCC 354) Respect for laws inscribed in creation and the relations which derive from the nature of things is a principle of wisdom and a foundation for morality. (CCC 1210) Christ instituted the sacraments of the new law. There are seven: Baptism, Confirmation (or Chrismation), the Eucharist, Penance, the Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. The seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life: (Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III, 65, 1): they give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Christian's life of faith. There is thus a certain resemblance between the stages of natural life and the stages of the spiritual life.

(CCC 1277) Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In accordance with the Lord's will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church herself, which we enter by Baptism.

(Jn 4, 16-23) The Father seeks true worshipers in Spirit

[16] Jesus said to her, "Go call your husband and come back." [17] The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband." Jesus answered her, "You are right in saying, 'I do not have a husband.'" [18] For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true." [19] The woman said to him, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. [20] Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem." [21] Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. [22] You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. [23] But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him.

(CCC 728) Jesus does not reveal the Holy Spirit fully, until he himself has been glorified through his Death and Resurrection. Nevertheless, little by little he alludes to him even in his teaching of the multitudes, as when he reveals that his own flesh will be food for the life of the world (Cf. Jn 6:27, 51, 62-63). He also alludes to the Spirit in speaking to Nicodemus (Cf. Jn 3:5-8), to the Samaritan woman (Cf. Jn 4:10, 14, 23-24), and to those who take part in the feast of Tabernacles (Cf. Jn 7:37-39). To his disciples he speaks openly of the Spirit in connection with prayer (Cf. Lk 11:13) and with the witness they will have to bear (Cf. Mt 10:19-20).

(Jn 4, 24-26) We must worship God in Spirit and truth

[24] God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth." [25] The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Anointed; when he comes, he will tell us everything." [26] Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking with you."

(CCC 1179) The worship "in Spirit and in truth" (Jn 4:24) of the New Covenant is not tied exclusively to any one place. The whole earth is sacred and entrusted to the children of men. What matters above all is that, when the faithful assemble in the same place, they are the "living stones," gathered to be "built into a spiritual house" (1 Pet 2:4-5). For the Body of the risen Christ is the spiritual temple from which the source of living water springs forth: incorporated into Christ by the Holy Spirit, "we are the temple of the living God" (2 Cor 6:16). (CCC 439) Many Jews and even certain Gentiles who shared their hope recognized in Jesus the fundamental attributes of the messianic "Son of David", promised by God to Israel (Cf. Mt 2:2; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30; 21:9.15). Jesus accepted his rightful title of Messiah, though with some reserve because it was understood by some of his contemporaries in too human a sense, as essentially political (Cf. Jn 4:25-26; 6:15; 11:27; Mt 22:41-46; Lk 24:21).

(Jn 4, 27-34) My food is to do the will of the Father

[27] At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but still no one said, "What are you looking for?" or "Why are you talking with her?" [28] The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, [29] "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Messiah?" [30] They went out of the town and came to him. [31] Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat." [32] But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." [33] So the disciples said to one another, "Could someone have brought him something to eat?" [34] Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work."

(CCC 606) The Son of God, who came down "from heaven, not to do (his) own will, but the will of him who sent (him)" (Jn 6:38), said on coming into the world, "Lo, I have come to do your will, O God." "And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:5-10). From the first moment of his Incarnation the Son embraces the Father's plan of divine salvation in his redemptive mission: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work" (Jn 4:34). The sacrifice of Jesus "for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn 2:2) expresses his loving communion with the Father. "The Father loves me, because I lay down my life", said the Lord, "[for] I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father" (Jn 10:17; 14:31). (CCC 2824) In Christ, and through his human will, the will of the Father has been perfectly fulfilled once for all. Jesus said on entering into this world: "Lo, I have come to do your will, O God" (Heb 10:7; Ps 40:7). Only Jesus can say: "I always do what is pleasing to him" (Jn 8:29). In the prayer of his agony, he consents totally to this will: "not my will, but yours be done" (Lk 22:42; cf. Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38). For this reason Jesus "gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal 1:4). "And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:10).

(Jn 4, 35-36) Look up and see the fields ripe

[35] Do you not say, 'In four months the harvest will be here'? I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest. [36] The reaper is already receiving his payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together.

(CCC 54) "God, who creates and conserves all things by his Word, provides men with constant evidence of himself in created realities. And furthermore, wishing to open up the way to heavenly salvation, he manifested himself to our first parents from the very beginning" (DV 3; cf. Jn 1:3; Rom 1:19-20). He invited them to intimate communion with himself and clothed them with resplendent grace and justice. (CCC 90) The mutual connections between dogmas, and their coherence, can be found in the whole of the Revelation of the mystery of Christ (Cf. Vatican Council I: DS 3016: *nexus mysteriorum*; LG 25). "In Catholic doctrine there exists an order or hierarchy of truths, since they vary in their relation to the foundation of the Christian faith" (UR 11). (CCC 826) Charity is the soul of the holiness to which

all are called: it "governs, shapes, and perfects all the means of sanctification" (LG 42). If the Church was a body composed of different members, it couldn't lack the noblest of all; *it must have a Heart, and a Heart **burning with love***. And I realized that *this love alone* was the true motive force which enabled the other members of the Church to act; if it ceased to function, the Apostles would forget to preach the gospel, the Martyrs would refuse to shed their blood: *love, in fact, is the vocation which includes all others; it's a universe of its own, comprising all time and space - it's eternal!* (St. Therese of Lisieux, *Autobiography of a Saint*, tr. Ronald Knox (London: Harvill, 1958) 235).

(Jn 4, 37-38) You reap the fruits of other's work

[37] For here the saying is verified that 'One sows and another reaps.'
[38] I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work, and you are sharing the fruits of their work."

(CCC 89) There is an organic connection between our spiritual life and the dogmas. Dogmas are lights along the path of faith; they illuminate it and make it secure. Conversely, if our life is upright, our intellect and heart will be open to welcome the light shed by the dogmas of faith (Cf. Jn 8:31-32). (CCC 88) The Church's Magisterium exercises the authority it holds from Christ to the fullest extent when it defines dogmas, that is, when it defines dogmas, that is, it proposes in a form obliging the Christian people to an irrevocable adherence of faith, truth contained in divine Revelation or also when it proposes, in a definitive way, truths having a necessary connection with these. (CCC 2611 The prayer of faith consists not only in saying "Lord, Lord," but in disposing the heart to do the will of the Father (Cf. Mt 7:21). Jesus calls his disciples to bring into their prayer this concern for cooperating with the divine plan (Cf. Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2; Jn 4:34).

(Jn 4, 39-42) He is truly the savior of the world

[39] Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me everything I have done." [40] When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. [41] Many more began to believe in him because of his word, [42] and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."

(CCC 457) 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, *Orat. catech* 15: PG 45, 48B).

(Jn 4, 43-54) Your son will live

[43] After the two days, he left there for Galilee. [44] For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his native place. [45] When he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all he had done in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves had gone to the feast. [46] Then he returned to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. Now there was a royal official whose son was ill in Capernaum. [47] When he heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was near death. [48] Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." [49] The royal official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." [50] Jesus said to him, "You may go; your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him and left. [51] While he was on his way back, his slaves met him and told him that his boy would live. [52] He asked them when he began to recover. They told him, "The fever left him yesterday, about one in the afternoon." [53] The father realized that just at that time Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live," and he and his whole household came to believe. [54] (Now) this was the second sign Jesus did when he came to Galilee from Judea.

(CCC 26) We begin our profession of faith by saying: "I believe" or "We believe". Before expounding the Church's faith, as confessed in the Creed, celebrated in the liturgy and lived in observance of God's commandments and in prayer, we must first ask what "to believe" means. Faith is man's response to God, who reveals himself and gives himself to man, at the same time bringing man a superabundant light as he searches for the ultimate meaning of his life. Thus we shall consider first that, then the divine Revelation by which God comes to meet man, and finally the response of faith. (CCC 143) *By faith*, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God (Cf. DV 5). With his whole being man gives his assent to God the revealer. Sacred Scripture calls this human response to God, the author of revelation, "the obedience of faith" (Cf. Rom 1:5; 16:26). (CCC 144) To obey (from the Latin *ob-audire*, to "hear or listen to") in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself. Abraham is the model of such obedience offered us by Sacred Scripture. The Virgin Mary is its most perfect embodiment.

John 5

(Jn 5, 1-12) Rise, take up your mat, and walk

[1] After this, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. [2] Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep (Gate) a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes. [3] In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled. [4]. [5] One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. [6] When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be well?" [7] The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there

before me." [8] Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk." [9] Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked. Now that day was a sabbath. [10] So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." [11] He answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" [12] They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Take it up and walk'?"

(CCC 594) Jesus performed acts, such as pardoning sins, that manifested him to be the Saviour God himself (cf. Jn 5:16-18). Certain Jews, who did not recognize God made man (cf. Jn 1:14), saw in him only a man who made himself God (Jn 10:33), and judged him as a blasphemer. (CCC 589) Jesus gave scandal above all when he identified his merciful conduct toward sinners with God's own attitude toward them (Cf. Mt 9:13; Hos 6:6). He went so far as to hint that by sharing the table of sinners he was admitting them to the messianic banquet (Cf. Lk 15:1-2, 22-32). But it was most especially by forgiving sins that Jesus placed the religious authorities of Israel on the horns of a dilemma. Were they not entitled to demand in consternation, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mk 2:7). By forgiving sins Jesus either is blaspheming as a man who made himself God's equal, or is speaking the truth and his person really does make present and reveal God's name (Cf. Jn 5:18; 10:33; 17:6, 26).

(Jn 5, 13-14) Look, you are well; do not sin any more

[13] The man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away, since there was a crowd there. [14] After this Jesus found him in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you."

(CCC 978) "When we made our first profession of faith while receiving the holy Baptism that cleansed us, the forgiveness we received then was so full and complete that there remained in us absolutely nothing left to efface, neither original sin nor offenses committed by our own will, nor was there left any penalty to suffer in order to expiate them.... Yet the grace of Baptism delivers no one from all the weakness of nature. On the contrary, we must still combat the movements of concupiscence that never cease leading us into evil" (*Roman Catechism* I, 11,3). (CCC 979) In this battle against our inclination towards evil, who could be brave and watchful enough to escape every wound of sin? "If the Church has the power to forgive sins, then Baptism cannot be her only means of using the keys of the Kingdom of heaven received from Jesus Christ. The Church must be able to forgive all penitents their offenses, even if they should sin until the last moment of their lives" (*Roman Catechism* I, 11,4). (CCC 980) It is through the sacrament of Penance that the baptized can be reconciled with God and with the Church: Penance has rightly been called by the holy Fathers "a laborious kind of baptism." This sacrament of Penance is necessary for salvation for those who have fallen after Baptism, just as Baptism is necessary for salvation for those who have not yet been reborn (Council of Trent (1551): DS 1672; cf. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio* 39, 17: PG 36, 356).

(Jn 5, 15-18) My Father is at work until now, so am I

[15] The man went and told the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well. [16] Therefore, the Jews began to persecute Jesus because

he did this on a sabbath. [17] But Jesus answered them, "My Father is at work until now, so I am at work." [18] For this reason the Jews tried all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but he also called God his own father, making himself equal to God.

(CCC 574) From the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, certain Pharisees and partisans of Herod together with priests and scribes agreed together to destroy him (Cf. Mk 3:6; 14:1). Because of certain of his acts - expelling demons, forgiving sins, healing on the sabbath day, his novel interpretation of the precepts of the Law regarding purity, and his familiarity with tax collectors and public sinners (Cf. Mt 12:24; Mk 2:7, 14-17; 3:1-6; 7:14-23) - some ill-intentioned persons suspected Jesus of demonic possession (Cf. Mk 3:22; Jn 8:48; 10:20). He is accused of blasphemy and false prophecy, religious crimes which the Law punished with death by stoning (Cf. Mk 2:7; Jn 5:18; 7:12; 7:52; 8:59; 10:31, 33). (CCC 575) Many of Jesus' deeds and words constituted a "sign of contradiction" (Lk 2:34), but more so for the religious authorities in Jerusalem, whom the Gospel according to John often calls simply "the Jews" (Cf. Jn 1:19; 2:18; 5:10; 7:13; 9:22; 18:12; 19:38; 20:19), than for the ordinary People of God (Jn 7:48-49). To be sure, Christ's relations with the Pharisees were not exclusively polemical. Some Pharisees warn him of the danger he was courting (Cf. Lk 13:31); Jesus praises some of them, like the scribe of *Mark* 12:34, and dines several times at their homes (Cf. Lk 7:36; 14:1). Jesus endorses some of the teachings imparted by this religious elite of God's people: the resurrection of the dead (Cf. Mt 22:23-34; Lk 20:39), certain forms of piety (almsgiving, fasting and prayer) (Cf. Mt 6:18), the custom of addressing God as Father, and the centrality of the commandment to love God and neighbour (Cf. Mk 12:28-34).

(Jn 5, 19-21) The Son gives life to whomever he wishes

[19] Jesus answered and said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, a son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees his father doing; for what he does, his son will do also. [20] For the Father loves his Son and shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these, so that you may be amazed. [21] For just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, so also does the Son give life to whomever he wishes.

(CCC 1063) In the book of the prophet Isaiah, we find the expression "God of truth" (literally "God of the Amen"), that is, the God who is faithful to his promises: "He who blesses himself in the land shall bless himself by the God of truth [amen]" (Isa 65:16). Our Lord often used the word "Amen," sometimes repeated (Cf. Mt 6:2, 5, 16; Jn 5:19), to emphasize the trustworthiness of his teaching, his authority founded on God's truth. (CCC 1061) The Creed, like the last book of the Bible (Cf. Rev 22:21), ends with the Hebrew word amen. This word frequently concludes prayers in the New Testament. The Church likewise ends her prayers with "Amen." (CCC 1345) As early as the second century we have the witness of St. Justin Martyr for the basic lines of the order of the Eucharistic celebration. They have stayed the same until our own day for all the great liturgical families. St. Justin wrote to the pagan emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161) around the year 155,

explaining what Christians did: On the day we call the day of the sun, all who dwell in the city or country gather in the same place. The memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read, as much as time permits. When the reader has finished, he who presides over those gathered admonishes and challenges them to imitate these beautiful things. Then we all rise together and offer prayers* for ourselves. . . and for all others, wherever they may be, so that we may be found righteous by our life and actions, and faithful to the commandments, so as to obtain eternal salvation. When the prayers are concluded we exchange the kiss. Then someone brings bread and a cup of water and wine mixed together to him who presides over the brethren. He takes them and offers praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and for a considerable time he gives thanks (in Greek: *eucharistian*) that we have been judged worthy of these gifts. When he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all present give voice to an acclamation by saying: 'Amen.' When he who presides has given thanks and the people have responded, those whom we call deacons give to those present the "eucharisted" bread, wine and water and take them to those who are absent (St. Justin, *Apol.* 1, 65-67: PG 6, 428-429; the text before the asterisk (*) is from chap. 67).

(Jn 5, 22-24) The Father gave all judgment to his Son

[22] Nor does the Father judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to his Son, [23] so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. [24] Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life.

(CCC 679) Christ is Lord of eternal life. Full right to pass definitive judgement on the works and hearts of men belongs to him as redeemer of the world. He "acquired" this right by his cross. The Father has given "all judgement to the Son" (Jn 5:22; cf. 5:27; Mt 25:31; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Tim 4:1). Yet the Son did not come to judge, but to save and to give the life he has in himself (Cf. Jn 3:17; 5:26). By rejecting grace in this life, one already judges oneself, receives according to one's works, and can even condemn oneself for all eternity by rejecting the Spirit of love (Cf. Jn 3:18; 12:48; Mt 12:32; 1 Cor 3:12-15; Heb 6:4-6; 10:26-31).

(Jn 5, 25-27) Who hear the voice of the Son will live

[25] Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. [26] For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to his Son the possession of life in himself. [27] And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

(CCC 635) Christ went down into the depths of death so that "the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live" (Jn 5:25; cf. Mt 12:40; Rom 10:7; Eph 4:9). Jesus, "the Author of life", by dying destroyed "him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and [delivered] all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage" (Heb 2:14-15; cf. Acts 3:15). Henceforth the risen Christ holds "the keys of Death and Hades", so that "at the name of Jesus

every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Rev 1:18; Phil 2:10). Today a great silence reigns on earth, a great silence and a great stillness. A great silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. . . . He has gone to search for Adam, our first father, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow Adam in his bonds and Eve, captive with him - He who is both their God and the son of Eve. . . . "I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. . . . I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be a prisoner in hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead" (Ancient Homily for Holy Saturday: PG 43, 440A, 452C; *LH*, Holy Saturday, OR).

(Jn 5, 28-30) All who are in the tombs will come out

[28] Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice [29] and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation. [30] "I cannot do anything on my own; I judge as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me.

(CCC 1038) The resurrection of all the dead, "of both the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15), will precede the Last Judgment. This will be "the hour when all who are in the tombs will hear [the Son of man's] voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (Jn 5:28-29). Then Christ will come "in his glory, and all the angels with him.... Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left.... And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Mt 25:31, 32, 46).

(Jn 5, 31-35) Another testifies on my behalf

[31] "If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony cannot be verified. [32] But there is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that the testimony he gives on my behalf is true. [33] You sent emissaries to John, and he testified to the truth. [34] I do not accept testimony from a human being, but I say this so that you may be saved. [35] He was a burning and shining lamp, and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light.

(CCC 523) *St. John the Baptist* is the Lord's immediate precursor or forerunner, sent to prepare his way (cf. Acts 13:24; Mt 3:3). "Prophet of the Most High", John surpasses all the prophets, of whom he is the last (Lk 1:76; cf. 7:26; Mt 11:13). He inaugurates the Gospel, already from his mother's womb welcomes the coming of Christ, and rejoices in being "the friend of the bridegroom", whom he points out as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29; cf. Acts 1:22; Lk 1:41; 16:16; Jn 3:29). Going before Jesus "in the spirit and power of Elijah", John bears witness to Christ in his preaching, by his Baptism of conversion, and through his martyrdom (Lk 1:17; cf. Mk 6:17-29).

(Jn 5, 36-38) I have testimony greater than John's

[36] But I have testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father gave me to accomplish, these works that I perform testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. [37] Moreover, the Father who sent me has testified on my behalf. But you have never heard his voice nor seen his form, [38] and you do not have his word remaining in you, because you do not believe in the one whom he has sent.

(CCC 151) For a Christian, believing in God cannot be separated from believing in the One he sent, his "beloved Son", in whom the Father is "well pleased"; God tells us to listen to him (Mk 1:11; cf. 9:7). The Lord himself said to his disciples: "Believe in God, believe also in me" (Jn 14:1). We can believe in Jesus Christ because he is himself God, the Word made flesh: "No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known" (Jn 1:18). Because he "has seen the Father", Jesus Christ is the only one who knows him and can reveal him (Jn 6:46; cf. Mt 11:27). (CCC 548) The signs worked by Jesus attest that the Father has sent him. They invite belief in him (cf. Jn 5:36; 10:25, 38). To those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask (Cf. Mk 5:25-34; 10:52; etc.). So miracles strengthen faith in the One who does his Father's works; they bear witness that he is the Son of God (Cf. Jn 10:31-38). But his miracles can also be occasions for "offense" (Mt 11:6); they are not intended to satisfy people's curiosity or desire for magic. Despite his evident miracles some people reject Jesus; he is even accused of acting by the power of demons (Cf. Jn 11:47-48; Mk 3:22).

(Jn 5, 39) The scriptures testify on my behalf

[39] You search the scriptures, because you think you have eternal life through them; even they testify on my behalf.

(CCC 120) It was by the apostolic Tradition that the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the list of the sacred books (Cf. DV 8 § 3). This complete list is called the canon of Scripture. It includes 46 books for the Old Testament (45 if we count Jeremiah and Lamentations as one) and 27 for the New (Cf. DS 179; 1334-1336; 1501-1504) [...]. (CCC 121) The Old Testament is an indispensable part of Sacred Scripture. Its books are divinely inspired and retain a permanent value (Cf. DV 14), for the Old Covenant has never been revoked. (CCC 122) Indeed, "the economy of the Old Testament was deliberately SO oriented that it should prepare for and declare in prophecy the coming of Christ, redeemer of all men" (DV 15). "Even though they contain matters imperfect and provisional (DV 15), the books of the Old Testament bear witness to the whole divine pedagogy of God's saving love: these writings "are a storehouse of sublime teaching on God and of sound wisdom on human life, as well as a wonderful treasury of prayers; in them, too, the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way" (DV 15). (CCC 123) Christians venerate the Old Testament as true Word of God. The Church has always vigorously opposed the idea of rejecting the Old Testament under the pretext that the New has rendered it void (Marcionism). (CCC 115) According to an ancient tradition, one can distinguish between two *senses* of Scripture: the literal and the spiritual, the latter being subdivided into the allegorical, moral and anagogical senses. The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the

living reading of Scripture in the Church. (CCC 116) The *literal sense* is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation: "All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I, 1, 10, ad I).

(Jn 5, 40-47) You do not want to come to me to have life

[40] But you do not want to come to me to have life. [41] "I do not accept human praise; [42] moreover, I know that you do not have the love of God in you. [43] I came in the name of my Father, but you do not accept me; yet if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. [44] How can you believe, when you accept praise from one another and do not seek the praise that comes from the only God? [45] Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father: the one who will accuse you is Moses, in whom you have placed your hope. [46] For if you had believed Moses, you would have believed me, because he wrote about me. [47] But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

(CCC 702) From the beginning until "the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4), the joint mission of the Father's Word and Spirit remains *hidden*, but it is at work. God's Spirit prepares for the time of the Messiah. Neither is fully revealed but both are already promised, to be watched for and welcomed at their manifestation. So, for this reason, when the Church reads the Old Testament, she searches there for what the Spirit, "who has spoken through the prophets," wants to tell us about Christ (Cf. 2 Cor 3:14; Jn 5:39, 46). By "prophets" the faith of the Church here understands all whom the Holy Spirit inspired in living proclamation and in the composition of the sacred books, both of the Old and the New Testaments. Jewish tradition distinguishes first the Law (the five first books or Pentateuch), then the Prophets (our historical and prophetic books) and finally the Writings (especially the wisdom literature, in particular the Psalms) (Cf. Lk 24:44).

John 6

(Jn 6, 1-6) Jesus saw a large crowd coming to him

[1] After this, Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee (of Tiberias). [2] A large crowd followed him, because they saw the signs he was performing on the sick. [3] Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. [4] The Jewish feast of Passover was near. [5] When Jesus raised his eyes and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, he said to Philip, "Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?" [6] He said this to test him, because he himself knew what he was going to do.

(CCC 1164) From the time of the Mosaic law, the People of God have observed fixed feasts, beginning with Passover, to commemorate the astonishing actions of the Savior God, to give him thanks for them, to perpetuate their remembrance, and to teach new generations to conform their conduct to them. In the age of the Church, between the Passover of Christ already accomplished once for all, and its consummation in the kingdom of God, the liturgy celebrated on fixed days bears the imprint of the newness of the mystery of Christ. (CCC 1335) The miracles of the multiplication of the loaves, when the Lord says the blessing, breaks and

distributes the loaves through his disciples to feed the multitude, prefigure the superabundance of this unique bread of his Eucharist (Cf. Mt 14:13-21; 15:32-39). The sign of water turned into wine at Cana already announces the Hour of Jesus' glorification. It makes manifest the fulfillment of the wedding feast in the Father's kingdom, where the faithful will drink the new wine that has become the Blood of Christ (Cf. Jn 2:11; Mk 14:25). (CCC 549) By freeing some individuals from the earthly evils of hunger, injustice, illness and death (Cf. Jn 6:5-15; Lk 19:8; Mt 11:5), Jesus performed messianic signs. Nevertheless he did not come to abolish all evils here below (Cf. Lk 12:13-14; Jn 18:36), but to free men from the gravest slavery, sin, which thwarts them in their vocation as God's sons and causes all forms of human bondage (Cf. Jn 8:34-36).

(Jn 6, 7-10) Men reclined, about five thousand in number

[7] Philip answered him, "Two hundred days' wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little (bit)." [8] One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to him, [9] "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many?" [10] Jesus said, "Have the people recline." Now there was a great deal of grass in that place. So the men reclined, about five thousand in number.

(CCC 1350) The *presentation of the offerings* (the Offertory). Then, sometimes in procession, the bread and wine are brought to the altar; they will be offered by the priest in the name of Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice in which they will become his body and blood. It is the very action of Christ at the Last Supper - "taking the bread and a cup." "The Church alone offers this pure oblation to the Creator, when she offers what comes forth from his creation with thanksgiving" (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 18, 4: PG 7/1, 1027; cf. Mal 1:11). The presentation of the offerings at the altar takes up the gesture of Melchizedek and commits the Creator's gifts into the hands of Christ who, in his sacrifice, brings to perfection all human attempts to offer sacrifices. (CCC 1353) In the *epiclesis*, the Church asks the Father to send his Holy Spirit (or the power of his blessing, Cf. *Roman Missal*, EP I Roman Canon, 90) on the bread and wine, so that by his power they may become the body and blood of Jesus Christ and so that those who take part in the Eucharist may be one body and one spirit (some liturgical traditions put the *epiclesis* after the *anamnesis*). In the *institution narrative*, the power of the words and the action of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, make sacramentally present under the species of bread and wine Christ's body and blood, his sacrifice offered on the cross once for all. (CCC 1354) In the *anamnesis* that follows, the Church calls to mind the Passion, resurrection, and glorious return of Christ Jesus; she presents to the Father the offering of his Son which reconciles us with him. In the *intercessions*, the Church indicates that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the whole Church in heaven and on earth, the living and the dead, and in communion with the pastors of the Church, the Pope, the diocesan bishop, his presbyterium and his deacons, and all the bishops of the whole world together with their Churches.

(Jn 6, 11-13) Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks...

[11] Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to those who were reclining, and also as much of the fish as they wanted. [12] When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted." [13] So they collected them, and filled twelve wicker baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves that had been more than they could eat.

(CCC 1375) It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament. The Church Fathers strongly affirmed the faith of the Church in the efficacy of the Word of Christ and of the action of the Holy Spirit to bring about this conversion. Thus St. John Chrysostom declares: It is not man that causes the things offered to become the Body and Blood of Christ, but he who was crucified for us, Christ himself. The priest, in the role of Christ, pronounces these words, but their power and grace are God's. This is my body, he says. This word transforms the things offered (St. John Chrysostom, *prod. Jud.* 1:6: PG 49, 380). And St. Ambrose says about this conversion: Be convinced that this is not what nature has formed, but what the blessing has consecrated. The power of the blessing prevails over that of nature, because by the blessing nature itself is changed.... Could not Christ's word, which can make from nothing what did not exist, change existing things into what they were not before? It is no less a feat to give things their original nature than to change their nature (St. Ambrose, *De myst.* 9, 50; 52: PL 16, 405-407). (CCC 1376) The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: "Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation" (Council of Trent (1551): DS 1642; cf. Mt 26:26 ff.; Mk 14:22 ff.; Lk 22:19 ff.; 1 Cor 11:24 ff).

(Jn 6, 14) This is the Prophet, the one who is to come

[14] When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, "This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world."

(CCC 1151) *Signs taken up by Christ.* In his preaching the Lord Jesus often makes use of the signs of creation to make known the mysteries of the Kingdom of God (Cf. Lk 8:10). He performs healings and illustrates his preaching with physical signs or symbolic gestures (Cf. Jn 9:6; Mk 7:33 ff.; 8:22 ff). He gives new meaning to the deeds and signs of the Old Covenant, above all to the Exodus and the Passover (Cf. Lk 9:31; 22:7-20), for he himself is the meaning of all these signs. (CCC 1374) The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III, 73, 3c). In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, *the whole Christ is truly, really, and*

substantially contained" (Council of Trent (1551): DS 1651). "This presence is called 'real' - by which is not intended to exclude the other types of presence as if they could not be 'real' too, but because it is presence in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a *substantial* presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present" (Paul VI, MF 39). (CCC 1377) The Eucharistic presence of Christ begins at the moment of the consecration and endures as long as the Eucharistic species subsist. Christ is present whole and entire in each of the species and whole and entire in each of their parts, in such a way that the breaking of the bread does not divide Christ (Cf. Council of Trent: DS 1641). (CCC 1378) *Worship of the Eucharist*. In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. "The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession" (Paul VI, MF 56).

(Jn 6, 15) Jesus withdrew again to the mountain alone

[15] Since Jesus knew that they were going to come and carry him off to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain alone.

(CCC 439) Many Jews and even certain Gentiles who shared their hope recognized in Jesus the fundamental attributes of the messianic "Son of David", promised by God to Israel (Cf. Mt 2:2; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30; 21:9.15). Jesus accepted his rightful title of Messiah, though with some reserve because it was understood by some of his contemporaries in too human a sense, as essentially political (Cf. Jn 4:25-26; 6:15; 11:27; Mt 22:41-46; Lk 24:21). (CCC 1379) The tabernacle was first intended for the reservation of the Eucharist in a worthy place so that it could be brought to the sick and those absent, outside of Mass. As faith in the real presence of Christ in his Eucharist deepened, the Church became conscious of the meaning of silent adoration of the Lord present under the Eucharistic species. It is for this reason that the tabernacle should be located in an especially worthy place in the church and should be constructed in such a way that it emphasizes and manifests the truth of the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. (CCC 1381) "That in this sacrament are the true Body of Christ and his true Blood is something that 'cannot be apprehended by the senses,' says St. Thomas, 'but *only by faith*, which relies on divine authority.' For this reason, in a commentary on *Luke* 22:19 ('This is my body which is given for you. '), St. Cyril says: 'Do not doubt whether this is true, but rather receive the words of the Savior in faith, for since he is the truth, he cannot lie'" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III, 75, 1; cf. Paul VI, MF 18; St. Cyril of Alexandria, *In Luc.* 22, 19: PG 72, 912; cf. Paul VI, MF 18). Godhead here in hiding, whom I do adore Masked by these bare shadows, shape and nothing more, See, Lord, at thy service low lies here a heart Lost, all lost in wonder at the God thou art. Seeing, touching, tasting are in thee deceived; How says trusty hearing? that shall be believed; What God's Son has told me, take for truth I do; Truth himself speaks truly or there's nothing true (St. Thomas Aquinas (attr.), *Adoro te devote*; tr. Gerard Manley Hopkins).

(Jn 6, 16-21) They saw Jesus walking on the sea

[16] When it was evening, his disciples went down to the sea, [17] embarked in a boat, and went across the sea to Capernaum. It had already grown dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. [18] The sea was stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. [19] When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they began to be afraid. [20] But he said to them, "It is I. Do not be afraid." [21] They wanted to take him into the boat, but the boat immediately arrived at the shore to which they were heading.

(CCC 1147) God speaks to man through the visible creation. The material cosmos is so presented to man's intelligence that he can read there traces of its Creator (Cf. Wis 13:1; Rom 1:19 f; Acts 14:17). Light and darkness, wind and fire, water and earth, the tree and its fruit speak of God and symbolize both his greatness and his nearness. (CCC 1148) Inasmuch as they are creatures, these perceptible realities can become means of expressing the action of God who sanctifies men, and the action of men who offer worship to God. The same is true of signs and symbols taken from the social life of man: washing and anointing, breaking bread and sharing the cup can express the sanctifying presence of God and man's gratitude toward his Creator. (CCC 537) Through Baptism the Christian is sacramentally assimilated to Jesus, who in his own baptism anticipates his death and resurrection. The Christian must enter into this mystery of humble self-abasement and repentance, go down into the water with Jesus in order to rise with him, be reborn of water and the Spirit so as to become the Father's beloved son in the Son and "walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:4): Let us be buried with Christ by Baptism to rise with him; let us go down with him to be raised with him; and let us rise with him to be glorified with him (St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio* 40, 9: PG 36, 369). Everything that happened to Christ lets us know that, after the bath of water, the Holy Spirit swoops down upon us from high heaven and that, adopted by the Father's voice, we become sons of God (St. Hilary of Poitiers, *In Matth.* 2, 5: PL 9, 927).

(Jn 6, 22-26) You ate the loaves and were filled

[22] The next day, the crowd that remained across the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not gone along with his disciples in the boat, but only his disciples had left. [23] Other boats came from Tiberias near the place where they had eaten the bread when the Lord gave thanks. [24] When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into boats and came to Capernaum looking for Jesus. [25] And when they found him across the sea they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" [26] Jesus answered them and said, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled.

(CCC 1412) The essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper: "This is my body which will be given up for you.... This is the cup of my blood...." (CCC 1413) By the consecration the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body

and Blood of Christ is brought about. Under the consecrated species of bread and wine Christ himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner: his Body and his Blood, with his soul and his divinity (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1640; 1651). (CCC 1390) Since Christ is sacramentally present under each of the species, communion under the species of bread alone makes it possible to receive all the fruit of Eucharistic grace. For pastoral reasons this manner of receiving communion has been legitimately established as the most common form in the Latin rite. But "the sign of communion is more complete when given under both kinds, since in that form the sign of the Eucharistic meal appears more clearly" (GIRM 240). This is the usual form of receiving communion in the Eastern rites. (CCC 1398) *The Eucharist and the unity of Christians*. Before the greatness of this mystery St. Augustine exclaims, "*O sacrament of devotion! O sign of unity! O bond of charity!*" (St. Augustine, *In Jo. ev.* 26, 13: PL 35, 1613; cf. SC 47). The more painful the experience of the divisions in the Church which break the common participation in the table of the Lord, the more urgent are our prayers to the Lord that the time of complete unity among all who believe in him may return.

(Jn 6, 27) The food that endures for eternal life

[27] Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him the Father, God, has set his seal."

(CCC1419) Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints. (CCC 1416) Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. (CCC 1417) The Church warmly recommends that the faithful receive Holy Communion each time they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist; she obliges them to do so at least once a year. (CCC 1418) Because Christ himself is present in the sacrament of the altar, he is to be honored with the worship of adoration. "To visit the Blessed Sacrament is... a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord" (Paul VI, MF 66). (CCC 1414) As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God. (CCC 1415) Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance. (CCC 1396) *The unity of the Mystical Body: the Eucharist makes the Church*. Those who receive the Eucharist are united more closely to Christ. Through it Christ unites them to all the faithful in one body - the Church. Communion renews, strengthens, and deepens this incorporation into the Church, already achieved by Baptism. In Baptism we have been called to form but one body (Cf. 1 Cor 12:13). The Eucharist fulfills this call: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a

participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor 10:16-17): If you are the body and members of Christ, then it is your sacrament that is placed on the table of the Lord; it is your sacrament that you receive. To that which you are you respond "Amen" ("yes, it is true!") and by responding to it you assent to it. For you hear the words, "the Body of Christ" and respond "Amen." Be then a member of the Body of Christ that your *Amen* may be true (St. Augustine, *Sermo* 272: PL 38, 1247).

(Jn 6, 28-33) The bread of God gives life to the world

[28] So they said to him, "What can we do to accomplish the works of God?" [29] Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent." [30] So they said to him, "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? [31] Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" [32] So Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. [33] For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

(CCC 2835) This petition, with the responsibility it involves, also applies to another hunger from which men are perishing: "Man does not live by bread alone, but . . . by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Deut 8:3; Mt 4:4), that is, by the Word he speaks and the Spirit he breathes forth. Christians must make every effort "to proclaim the good news to the poor." There is a famine on earth, "not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD" (Am 8:11). For this reason the specifically Christian sense of this fourth petition concerns the Bread of Life: the Word of God accepted in faith, the Body of Christ received in the Eucharist (Cf. Jn 6:26-58). (CCC 698) *The seal* is a symbol close to that of anointing. "The Father has set his seal" on Christ and also seals us in him (Jn 6:27; cf. 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30). Because this seal indicates the indelible effect of the anointing with the Holy Spirit in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, the image of the seal (*sphragis*) has been used in some theological traditions to express the indelible "character" imprinted by these three unrepeatable sacraments. (CCC 1296) Christ himself declared that he was marked with his Father's seal (Cf. Jn 6:27). Christians are also marked with a seal: "It is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has commissioned us; he has put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee" (2 Cor 1:21-22; cf. Eph 1:13; 4, 30). This seal of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service for ever, as well as the promise of divine protection in the great eschatological trial (Cf. Rev 7:2-3; 9:4; Ezek 9:4-6). (CCC 728) Jesus does not reveal the Holy Spirit fully, until he himself has been glorified through his Death and Resurrection. Nevertheless, little by little he alludes to him even in his teaching of the multitudes, as when he reveals that his own flesh will be food for the life of the world (Cf. Jn 6:27, 51, 62-63). He also alludes to the Spirit in speaking to Nicodemus (Cf. Jn 3:5-8), to the Samaritan woman (Cf. Jn 4:10, 14, 23-24), and to those who take part in the feast of Tabernacles (Cf. Jn 7:37-39). To his disciples he speaks openly of the Spirit in connection with prayer (Cf. Lk 11:13) and with the witness they will have to bear (Cf. Mt 10:19-20).

(Jn 6, 34-40) Not lose anything of what he gave me

[34] So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." [35] Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst. [36] But I told you that although you have seen (me), you do not believe. [37] Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, [38] because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. [39] And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it (on) the last day. [40] For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him (on) the last day."

(CCC 1409) The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover, that is, of the work of salvation accomplished by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, a work made present by the liturgical action. (CCC 1399) The Eastern churches that are not in full communion with the Catholic Church celebrate the Eucharist with great love. "These Churches, although separated from us, yet possess true sacraments, above all - by apostolic succession - the priesthood and the Eucharist, whereby they are still joined to us in closest intimacy." A certain communion *in sacris*, and so in the Eucharist, "given suitable circumstances and the approval of Church authority, is not merely possible but is encouraged" (UR 15 § 2; cf. CIC, can. 844 § 3). (CCC 1400) Ecclesial communities derived from the Reformation and separated from the Catholic Church, "have not preserved the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Holy Orders" (UR 22 § 3). It is for this reason that Eucharistic intercommunion with these communities is not. However these ecclesial communities, "when they commemorate the Lord's death and resurrection in the Holy Supper . . . profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and await his coming in glory" (UR 22 § 3). (CCC 1401) When, in the Ordinary's judgment, a grave necessity arises, Catholic ministers may give the sacraments of Eucharist, Penance, and Anointing of the Sick to other Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church, who ask for them of their own will, provided they give evidence of holding the Catholic faith regarding these sacraments and possess the required dispositions (CIC, can. 844 § 4).

(Jn 6, 41-47) I have come down from heaven

[41] The Jews murmured about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven," [42] and they said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph? Do we not know his father and mother? Then how can he say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" [43] Jesus answered and said to them, "Stop murmuring among yourselves. [44] No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draw him, and I will raise him on the last day. [45] It is written in the prophets: 'They shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from him comes to me. [46] Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. [47] Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

(CCC 606) The Son of God, who came down "from heaven, not to do (his) own will, but the will of him who sent (him)" (Jn 6:38), said on coming into the world, "Lo, I have come to do your will, O God." "And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:5-10). From the first moment of his Incarnation the Son embraces the Father's plan of divine salvation in his redemptive mission: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work" (Jn 4:34). The sacrifice of Jesus "for the sins of the whole world"(1 Jn 2:2) expresses his loving communion with the Father. "The Father loves me, because I lay down my life", said the Lord, "[for] I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father" (Jn 10:17; 14:31). (CCC 2824) In Christ, and through his human will, the will of the Father has been perfectly fulfilled once for all. Jesus said on entering into this world: "Lo, I have come to do your will, O God" (Heb 10:7; Ps 40:7). Only Jesus can say: "I always do what is pleasing to him" (Jn 8:29). In the prayer of his agony, he consents totally to this will: "not my will, but yours be done" (Lk 22:42; cf. Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38). For this reason Jesus "gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal 1:4). "And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:10). (CCC 161) Believing in Jesus Christ and in the One who sent him for our salvation is necessary for obtaining that salvation (Cf. Mk 16:16; Jn 3:36; 6:40 *et al.*). "Since 'without faith it is impossible to please (God)' and to attain to the fellowship of his sons, therefore without faith no one has ever attained justification, nor will anyone obtain eternal life 'but he who endures to the end.'" [*Dei Filius* 3: DS 3012; cf. Mt 10:22; 24:13 and Heb11:6; Council of Trent DS 1532].

(Jn 6, 48-51) I am the bread of life

[48] I am the bread of life. [49] Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; [50] this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. [51] I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

(CCC 1334) In the Old Covenant bread and wine were offered in sacrifice among the first fruits of the earth as a sign of grateful acknowledgment to the Creator. But they also received a new significance in the context of the Exodus: the unleavened bread that Israel eats every year at Passover commemorates the haste of the departure that liberated them from Egypt; the remembrance of the manna in the desert will always recall to Israel that it lives by the bread of the Word of God (Cf. Deut 8:3); their daily bread is the fruit of the promised land, the pledge of God's faithfulness to his promises. The "cup of blessing" (1 Cor 10:16) at the end of the Jewish Passover meal adds to the festive joy of wine an eschatological dimension: the messianic expectation of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. When Jesus instituted the Eucharist, he gave a new and definitive meaning to the blessing of the bread and the cup. (CCC 1094) It is on this harmony of the two Testaments that the Paschal catechesis of the Lord is built (Cf. DV 14-16; Lk 24:13-49), and then, that of the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church. This catechesis unveils what lay hidden under the letter of the Old Testament: the mystery of Christ. It is called "typological" because it reveals the newness of Christ on the basis of the "figures" (types) which

announce him in the deeds, words, and symbols of the first covenant. By this re-reading in the Spirit of Truth, starting from Christ, the figures are unveiled (Cf. 2 Cor 3:14-16). Thus the flood and Noah's ark prefigured salvation by Baptism (Cf. 1 Pet 3:21), as did the cloud and the crossing of the Red Sea. Water from the rock was the figure of the spiritual gifts of Christ, and manna in the desert prefigured the Eucharist, "the true bread from heaven" (Jn 6:32; cf. 1 Cor 10:1-6).

(Jn 6, 52-54) Whoever eats my flesh has eternal life

[52] The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us (his) flesh to eat?" [53] Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. [54] Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day.

(CCC 1338) The three synoptic Gospels and St. Paul have handed on to us the account of the institution of the Eucharist; St. John, for his part, reports the words of Jesus in the synagogue of Capernaum that prepare for the institution of the Eucharist: Christ calls himself the bread of life, come down from heaven (Cf. Jn 6). (CCC 1406) Jesus said: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; . . . he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and . . . Abides in me, and I in him" Jn 6:51, 54, 56). (CCC 1407) The Eucharist is the heart and the summit of the Church's life, for in it Christ associates his Church and all her members with his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all on the cross to his Father; by this sacrifice he pours out the graces of salvation on his Body which is the Church.

(Jn 6, 55-57) My flesh is true food, my blood is true drink

[55] For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. [56] Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. [57] Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me.

(CCC 2837) "*Daily*" (*epiousios*) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Taken in a temporal sense, this word is a pedagogical repetition of "this day" (Cf. Ex 16:19-21), to confirm us in trust "without reservation." Taken in the qualitative sense, it signifies what is necessary for life, and more broadly every good thing sufficient for subsistence (Cf. 1 Tim 6:8). Taken literally (*epi-ousios*: "super-essential"), it refers directly to the Bread of Life, the Body of Christ, the "medicine of immortality," without which we have no life within us (St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Eph.* 20, 2 PG 5, 661; Jn 6:53-56). Finally in this connection, its heavenly meaning is evident: "this day" is the Day of the Lord, the day of the feast of the kingdom, anticipated in the Eucharist that is already the foretaste of the kingdom to come. For this reason it is fitting for the Eucharistic liturgy to be celebrated each day. The Eucharist is our daily bread. The power belonging to this divine food makes it a bond of union. Its effect is then understood as unity, so that, gathered into his Body and made members of him, we may become what we receive.... This also is our daily bread: the readings you hear each day in church and the hymns you hear and sing. All these are necessities for our pilgrimage (St. Augustine, *Sermo* 57, 7: PL 38, 389). The Father in heaven urges us, as children of heaven, to ask for the bread of heaven.

[Christ] himself is the bread who, sown in the Virgin, raised up in the flesh, kneaded in the Passion, baked in the oven of the tomb, reserved in churches, brought to altars, furnishes the faithful each day with food from heaven (St. Peter Chrysologus, *Sermo* 67 PL 52, 392; Cf. Jn 6:51). (CCC 1462) Forgiveness of sins brings reconciliation with God, but also with the Church. Since ancient times the bishop, visible head of a particular Church, has thus rightfully been considered to be the one who principally has the power and ministry of reconciliation: he is the moderator of the penitential discipline (Cf. LG 26 § 3). Priests, his collaborators, exercise it to the extent that they have received the commission either from their bishop (or religious superior) or the Pope, according to the law of the Church (Cf. CIC cann. 844; 967-969; 972; CCEO, can. 722 §§ 3-4).

(Jn 6, 58-59) Whoever eats this bread will live forever

[58] This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever."
[59] These things he said while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

(CCC 1457) According to the Church's command, "after having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year" (Cf. CIC, Can. 989; Council of Trent (1551): DS 1683; DS 1708). Anyone who is aware of having committed a mortal sin must not receive Holy Communion, even if he experiences deep contrition, without having first received sacramental absolution, unless he has a grave reason for receiving Communion and there is no possibility of going to confession (Cf. Council of Trent (1551): DS 1647; 1661; CIC, can. 916; CCEO, can. 711). Children must go to the sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion for the first time (Cf. CIC, can. 914). (CCC 1458) Without being strictly necessary, confession of everyday faults (venial sins) is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church (Cf. Council of Trent: DS 1680; CIC, can. 988 § 2). Indeed the regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit. By receiving more frequently through this sacrament the gift of the Father's mercy, we are spurred to be merciful as he is merciful (Cf. Lk 6:36): Whoever confesses his sins . . . is already working with God. God indicts your sins; if you also indict them, you are joined with God. Man and sinner are, so to speak, two realities: when you hear "man" - this is what God has made; when you hear "sinner" - this is what man himself has made. Destroy what you have made, so that God may save what he has made.... When you begin to abhor what you have made, it is then that your good works are beginning, since you are accusing yourself of your evil works. The beginning of good works is the confession of evil works. You do the truth and come to the light (St. Augustine, *In Jo. Ev.* 12, 13; PL 35, 1491). (CCC 1456) Confession to a priest is an essential part of the sacrament of Penance: "All mortal sins of which penitents after a diligent self-examination are conscious must be recounted by them in confession, even if they are most secret and have been committed against the last two precepts of the Decalogue; for these sins sometimes wound the soul more grievously and are more dangerous than those which are committed openly" (Council of Trent (1551): DS 1680 (ND 1626); cf. Ex 20:17; Mt 5:28). When Christ's faithful strive to confess all the sins that they can remember, they undoubtedly place all of them before the divine mercy

for pardon. But those who fail to do so and knowingly withhold some, place nothing before the divine goodness for remission through the mediation of the priest, "for if the sick person is too ashamed to show his wound to the doctor, the medicine cannot heal what it does not know" (Council of Trent (1551): DS 1680 (ND 1626); cf. St. Jerome, *In Eccl.* 10, 11: PL 23:1096).

(Jn 6, 60-63) The words I have spoken are spirit and life

[60] Then many of his disciples who were listening said, "This saying is hard; who can accept it?" [61] Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this, he said to them, "Does this shock you? [62] What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? [63] It is the spirit that gives life, while the flesh is of no avail. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

(CCC 1336) The first announcement of the Eucharist divided the disciples, just as the announcement of the Passion scandalized them: "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" (Jn 6:60). The Eucharist and the Cross are stumbling blocks. It is the same mystery and it never ceases to be an occasion of division. "Will you also go away?" (Jn 6:67): The Lord's question echoes through the ages, as a loving invitation to discover that only he has "the words of eternal life" (Jn 6:68) and that to receive in faith the gift of his Eucharist is to receive the Lord himself. (CCC 729) Only when the hour has arrived for his glorification does Jesus *promise* the coming of the Holy Spirit, since his Death and Resurrection will fulfill the promise made to the fathers (Cf. Jn 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15; 17:26). The Spirit of truth, the other Paraclete, will be given by the Father in answer to Jesus' prayer; he will be sent by the Father in Jesus' name; and Jesus will send him from the Father's side, since he comes from the Father. The Holy Spirit will come and we shall know him; he will be with us for ever; he will remain with us. The Spirit will teach us everything, remind us of all that Christ said to us and bear witness to him. The Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth and will glorify Christ. He will prove the world wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgment. (CCC 2766) But Jesus does not give us a formula to repeat mechanically (Cf. Mt 6:7; 1 Kings 18:26-29). As in every vocal prayer, it is through the Word of God that the Holy Spirit teaches the children of God to pray to their Father. Jesus not only gives us the words of our filial prayer; at the same time he gives us the Spirit by whom these words become in us "spirit and life" (Jn 6:63). Even more, the proof and possibility of our filial prayer is that the Father "sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal 4:6). Since our prayer sets forth our desires before God, it is again the Father, "he who searches the hearts of men," who "knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom 8:27). The prayer to Our Father is inserted into the mysterious mission of the Son and of the Spirit.

(Jn 6, 64-66) Some of you who do not believe

[64] But there are some of you who do not believe." Jesus knew from the beginning the ones who would not believe and the one who would betray him. [65] And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by my Father." [66] As a result of this, many

(of) his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him.

(CCC 472) This human soul that the Son of God assumed is endowed with a true human knowledge. As such, this knowledge could not in itself be unlimited: it was exercised in the historical conditions of his existence in space and time. This is why the Son of God could, when he became man, "increase in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man" (Lk 2:52), and would even have to inquire for himself about what one in the human condition can learn only from experience (Cf. Mk 6 38; 8:27; Jn 11:34; etc.). This corresponded to the reality of his voluntary emptying of himself, taking "the form of a slave" (Phil 2:7). (CCC 473) But at the same time, this truly human knowledge of God's Son expressed the divine life of his person (Cf. St. Gregory the Great, *"Sicut aqua" ad Eulogium, Epist. Lib. 10, 39: PL 77, 1097A ff.; DS 475*). "The human nature of God's Son, *not by itself but by its union with the Word*, knew and showed forth in itself everything that pertains to God" (St. Maximus the Confessor, *Qu. Et dub. 66: PG 90, 840A*). Such is first of all the case with the intimate and immediate knowledge that the Son of God made man has of his Father (Cf. Mk 14:36; Mt 11:27; Jn 1:18; 8:55; etc.). The Son in his human knowledge also showed the divine penetration he had into the secret thoughts of human hearts (Cf. Mk 2:8; Jn 2 25; 6:61; etc.). (CCC 474) By its union to the divine wisdom in the person of the Word incarnate, Christ enjoyed in his human knowledge the fullness of understanding of the eternal plans he had come to reveal (Cf. Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; 14:18-20, 26-30). What he admitted to not knowing in this area, he elsewhere declared himself not sent to reveal (Cf. Mk 13:32, Acts 1:7).

(Jn 6, 67-71) Master, you have the words of eternal life.

[67] Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?" [68] Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. [69] We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God." [70] Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you twelve? Yet is not one of you a devil?" [71] He was referring to Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot; it was he who would betray him, one of the Twelve.

(CCC 440) Jesus accepted Peter's profession of faith, which acknowledged him to be the Messiah, by announcing the imminent Passion of the Son of Man (Cf. Mt 16:16-23). He unveiled the authentic content of his messianic kingship both in the transcendent identity of the Son of Man "who came down from heaven", and in his redemptive mission as the suffering Servant: "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Jn 3:13; Mt 20:28; cf. Jn 6:62; Dan 7:13; Isa 53:10-12). Hence the true meaning of his kingship is revealed only when he is raised high on the cross (Cf. Jn 19:19-22; Lk 23:39-43). Only after his Resurrection will Peter be able to proclaim Jesus' messianic kingship to the People of God: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36). (CCC 438) Jesus' messianic consecration reveals his divine mission, "for the name 'Christ' implies 'he who anointed', 'he who was anointed' and 'the very anointing with which he was anointed'. The one who anointed is the Father, the one who was anointed is

the Son, and he was anointed with the Spirit who is the anointing" (St. Irenaeus, *adv. haeres.* 3, 18, 3: PG 7/1, 934). His eternal messianic consecration was revealed during the time of his earthly life at the moment of his baptism by John, when "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power," "that he might be revealed to Israel" (Acts 10:38; Jn 1:31) as its Messiah. His works and words will manifest him as "the Holy One of God" (Mk 1:24; Jn 6:69; Acts 3:14).

John 7

(Jn 7, 1-5) His brothers did not believe in him

[1] After this, Jesus moved about within Galilee; but he did not wish to travel in Judea, because the Jews were trying to kill him. [2] But the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was near. [3] So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. [4] No one works in secret if he wants to be known publicly. If you do these things, manifest yourself to the world." [5] For his brothers did not believe in him.

(CCC 2250) "The well-being of the individual person and of both human and Christian society is closely bound up with the healthy state of conjugal and family life" (GS 47 § 1). (CCC 2553) Envy is sadness at the sight of another's goods and the immoderate desire to have them for oneself. It is a capital sin. (CCC 2539) Envy is a capital sin. It refers to the sadness at the sight of another's goods and the immoderate desire to acquire them for oneself, even unjustly. When it wishes grave harm to a neighbor it is a mortal sin: St. Augustine saw envy as "*the diabolical sin*" (Cf. St. Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus* 4, 8 PL 40, 315-316). "From envy are born hatred, detraction, calumny, joy caused by the misfortune of a neighbor, and displeasure caused by his prosperity" (St. Gregory the *Great Moralia in Job* 31, 45: PL 76, 621). (CCC 2554) The baptized person combats envy through good-will, humility, and abandonment to the providence of God. (CCC 2540) Envy represents a form of sadness and therefore a refusal of charity; the baptized person should struggle against it by exercising good will. Envy often comes from pride; the baptized person should train himself to live in humility: Would you like to see God glorified by you? Then rejoice in your brother's progress and you will immediately give glory to God. Because his servant could conquer envy by rejoicing in the merits of others, God will be praised (St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Rom.* 71, 5: PG 60, 448).

(Jn 7, 6-10) My time has not yet been fulfilled

[6] So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but the time is always right for you. [7] The world cannot hate you, but it hates me, because I testify to it that its works are evil. [8] You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, because my time has not yet been fulfilled." [9] After he had said this, he stayed on in Galilee. [10] But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, he himself also went up, not openly but (as it were) in secret.

(CCC 479) At the time appointed by God, the only Son of the Father, the eternal Word, that is, the Word and substantial Image of the Father, became incarnate; without losing his divine nature he has assumed human nature. (CCC 559)

How will Jerusalem welcome her Messiah? Although Jesus had always refused popular attempts to make him king, he chooses the time and prepares the details for his messianic entry into the city of "his father David" (Lk 1:32; cf. Mt 21:1-11; Jn 6:15). Acclaimed as son of David, as the one who brings salvation (*Hosanna* means "Save!" or "Give salvation!"), the "King of glory" enters his City "riding on an ass" (Ps 24:7-10; Zech 9:9). Jesus conquers the Daughter of Zion, a figure of his Church, neither by ruse nor by violence, but by the humility that bears witness to the truth (Cf. Jn 18:37). And so the subjects of his kingdom on that day are children and God's poor, who acclaim him as had the angels when they announced him to the shepherds (Cf. Mt 21:15-16; cf. Ps 8:3; Lk 19:38; 2:14). Their acclamation, "Blessed be he who comes in the name of the Lord" (Cf. Ps 118:26), is taken up by the Church in the "Sanctus" of the Eucharistic liturgy that introduces the memorial of the Lord's Passover. (CCC 600) To God, all moments of time are present in their immediacy. When therefore he establishes his eternal plan of "predestination", he includes in it each person's free response to his grace: "In this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place" (Acts 4:27-28; cf. Ps 2:1-2). For the sake of accomplishing his plan of salvation, God permitted the acts that flowed from their blindness (Cf. Mt 26:54; Jn 18:36; 19:11; Acts 3:17-18). (CCC 672) Before his Ascension Christ affirmed that the hour had not yet come for the glorious establishment of the messianic kingdom awaited by Israel (Cf. Acts 1:6-7) which, according to the prophets, was to bring all men the definitive order of justice, love and peace (Cf. Isa 11:1-9). According to the Lord, the present time is the time of the Spirit and of witness, but also a time still marked by "distress" and the trial of evil which does not spare the Church (Cf. Acts 1:8; 1 Cor 7:26; Eph 5:16; 1 Pt 4:17) and ushers in the struggles of the last days. It is a time of waiting and watching (Cf. Mt 25:1, 13; Mk 13:33-37; 1 Jn 2:18; 4:3; 1 Tim 4:1).

(Jn 7, 11-14) Jesus began to teach in the temple area

[11] The Jews were looking for him at the feast and saying, "Where is he?" [12] And there was considerable murmuring about him in the crowds. Some said, "He is a good man," (while) others said, "No; on the contrary, he misleads the crowd." [13] Still, no one spoke openly about him because they were afraid of the Jews. [14] When the feast was already half over, Jesus went up into the temple area and began to teach.

(CCC 578) Jesus, Israel's Messiah and therefore the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, was to fulfil the Law by keeping it in its all embracing detail - according to his own words, down to "the least of these commandments" (Mt 5:19). He is in fact the only one who could keep it perfectly (Cf. Jn 8:46). On their own admission the Jews were never able to observe the Law in its entirety without violating the least of its precepts (Cf. Jn 7:19; Acts 13:38-41; 15:10). This is why every year on the Day of Atonement the children of Israel ask God's forgiveness for their transgressions of the Law. The Law indeed makes up one inseparable whole, and St. James recalls, "Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it". (Jas 2:10; cf. Gal 3:10; 5:3).

(Jn 7, 15-17) My teaching is from God

[15] The Jews were amazed and said, "How does he know scripture without having studied?" [16] Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not my own but is from the one who sent me. [17] Whoever chooses to do his will shall know whether my teaching is from God or whether I speak on my own.

(CCC 2060) The gift of the commandments and of the Law is part of the covenant God sealed with his own. In *Exodus*, the revelation of the "ten words" is granted between the proposal of the covenant (Cf. Ex 19) and its conclusion - after the people had committed themselves to "do" all that the Lord had said, and to "obey" it (Cf. Ex 24:7). The Decalogue is never handed on without first recalling the covenant ("The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.") (Deut 5:2). (CCC 2047) The moral life is a spiritual worship. Christian activity finds its nourishment in the liturgy and the celebration of the sacraments. (CCC 427) 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'" (CT 6; cf. Jn 7:16). (CCC 2033) The *Magisterium of the Pastors of the Church* in moral matters is ordinarily exercised in catechesis and preaching, with the help of the works of theologians and spiritual authors. Thus from generation to generation, under the aegis and vigilance of the pastors, the "deposit" of Christian moral teaching has been handed on, a deposit composed of a characteristic body of rules, commandments, and virtues proceeding from faith in Christ and animated by charity. Alongside the Creed and the Our Father, the basis for this catechesis has traditionally been the Decalogue which sets out the principles of moral life valid for all men. (CCC 2034) The Roman Pontiff and the bishops are "authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach the faith to the people entrusted to them, the faith to be believed and put into practice" (LG 25). The *ordinary* and universal *Magisterium* of the Pope and the bishops in communion with him teach the faithful the truth to believe, the charity to practice, the beatitude to hope for. (CCC 2035) The supreme degree of participation in the authority of Christ is ensured by the charism of *infallibility*. This infallibility extends as far as does the deposit of divine Revelation; it also extends to all those elements of doctrine, including morals, without which the saving truths of the faith cannot be preserved, explained, or observed (Cf. LG 25; CDF, declaration, *Mysterium Ecclesiae* 3).

(Jn 7, 18) I seek the glory of the one who sent me

[18] Whoever speaks on his own seeks his own glory, but whoever seeks the glory of the one who sent him is truthful, and there is no wrong in him.

(CCC 2059) The "ten words" are pronounced by God in the midst of a theophany ("The LORD spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire" Deut 5:4). They belong to God's revelation of himself and his glory. The gift of the Commandments is the gift of God himself and his holy will. In

making his will known, God reveals himself to his people. (CCC 2036) The authority of the Magisterium extends also to the specific precepts of the *natural law*, because their observance, demanded by the Creator, is necessary for salvation. In recalling the prescriptions of the natural law, the Magisterium of the Church exercises an essential part of its prophetic office of proclaiming to men what they truly are and reminding them of what they should be before God (Cf. DH 14). (CCC 2051) The infallibility of the Magisterium of the Pastors extends to all the elements of doctrine, including moral doctrine, without which the saving truths of the faith cannot be preserved, expounded, or observed. (CCC 2051) The infallibility of the Magisterium of the Pastors extends to all the elements of doctrine, including moral doctrine, without which the saving truths of the faith cannot be preserved, expounded, or observed. (CCC2050) The Roman Pontiff and the bishops, as authentic teachers, preach to the People of God the faith which is to be believed and applied in moral life. It is also incumbent on them to pronounce on moral questions that fall within the natural law and reason. (CCC 2048) The precepts of the Church concern the moral and Christian life united with the liturgy and nourished by it. (CCC 2049) The Magisterium of the Pastors of the Church in moral matters is ordinarily exercised in catechesis and preaching, on the basis of the Decalogue which states the principles of moral life valid for every man.

(Jn 7, 19) None of you keeps the law

[19] Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

(CCC 2058) The "ten words" sum up and proclaim God's law: "These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them upon two tables of stone, and gave them to me" (Deut 5:22). For this reason these two tables are called "the Testimony." In fact, they contain the terms of the covenant concluded between God and his people. These "tables of the Testimony" were to be deposited in "the ark" (Ex 25:16; 31:18; 32:15; 34:29; 40:1-2). (CCC 2063) The covenant and dialogue between God and man are also attested to by the fact that all the obligations are stated in the first person ("I am the Lord.") and addressed by God to another personal subject ("you"). In all God's commandments, the *singular* personal pronoun designates the recipient. God makes his will known to each person in particular, at the same time as he makes it known to the whole people: The Lord prescribed love towards God and taught justice towards neighbor, so that man would be neither unjust, nor unworthy of God. Thus, through the Decalogue, God prepared man to become his friend and to live in harmony with his neighbor.... The words of the Decalogue remain likewise for us Christians. Far from being abolished, they have received amplification and development from the fact of the coming of the Lord in the flesh (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.*, 4, 16, 3-4: PG 7/1, 1017-1018).

(Jn 7, 20-22) You circumcise a man on the sabbath

[20] The crowd answered, "You are possessed! Who is trying to kill you?" [21] Jesus answered and said to them, "I performed one work and all of you are amazed [22] because of it. Moses gave you circumcision - not that

it came from Moses but rather from the patriarchs - and you circumcise a man on the sabbath.

(CCC 2067) The Ten Commandments state what is required in the love of God and love of neighbor. The first three concern love of God, and the other seven love of neighbor. As charity comprises the two commandments to which the Lord related the whole Law and the prophets . . . so the Ten Commandments were themselves given on two tablets. Three were written on one tablet and seven on the other (St. Augustine, *Sermo* 33, 2, 2: PL 38, 208). (CCC 2064) In fidelity to Scripture and in conformity with the example of Jesus, the tradition of the Church has acknowledged the primordial importance and significance of the Decalogue. (CCC 2066) The division and numbering of the Commandments have varied in the course of history. The present catechism follows the division of the Commandments established by St. Augustine, which has become traditional in the Catholic Church. It is also that of the Lutheran confessions. The Greek Fathers worked out a slightly different division, which is found in the Orthodox Churches and Reformed communities.

(Jn 7, 23) I made a whole person well on a sabbath

[23] If a man can receive circumcision on a sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I made a whole person well on a sabbath?

(CCC 428) 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). (CCC 2173) The Gospel reports many incidents when Jesus was accused of violating the sabbath law. But Jesus never fails to respect the holiness of this day (Cf. Mk 1:21; Jn 9:16). He gives this law its authentic and authoritative interpretation: "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath" (Mk 2:27). With compassion, Christ declares the sabbath for doing good rather than harm, for saving life rather than killing (Cf. Mk 3:4). The sabbath is the day of the Lord of mercies and a day to honor God (Cf. Mt 12:5; Jn 7:23). "The Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath" (Mk 2:28). (CCC 1779) It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience. This requirement of *interiority* is all the more necessary as life often distracts us from any reflection, self-examination or introspection: Return to your conscience, question it.... Turn inward, brethren, and in everything you do, see God as your witness (St. Augustine, *In ep Jo.* 8, 9: PL 35, 2041).

(Jn 7, 24) Stop judging by appearances, but judge justly

[24] Stop judging by appearances, but judge justly."

(CCC 1780) The dignity of the human person implies and requires *uprightness of moral conscience*. Conscience includes the perception of the principles of morality (synderesis); their application in the given circumstances by practical discernment of reasons and goods; and finally judgment about concrete acts yet to be performed or already performed. The truth about the moral good, stated in the law of reason, is

recognized practically and concretely by the *prudent judgment* of conscience. We call that man prudent who chooses in conformity with this judgment. (CCC 1781) Conscience enables one to assume *responsibility* for the acts performed. If man commits evil, the just judgment of conscience can remain within him as the witness to the universal truth of the good, at the same time as the evil of his particular choice. The verdict of the judgment of conscience remains a pledge of hope and mercy. In attesting to the fault committed, it calls to mind the forgiveness that must be asked, the good that must still be practiced, and the virtue that must be constantly cultivated with the grace of God: We shall . . . reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything (1 Jn 3:19-20). (CCC 1782) Man has the right to act in conscience and in freedom so as personally to make moral decisions. "He must not be forced to act contrary to his conscience. Nor must he be prevented from acting according to his conscience, especially in religious matters" (DH 3 § 2).

(Jn 7, 25-30) I did not come on my own

[25] So some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, "Is he not the one they are trying to kill? [26] And look, he is speaking openly and they say nothing to him. Could the authorities have realized that he is the Messiah? [27] But we know where he is from. When the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from." [28] So Jesus cried out in the temple area as he was teaching and said, "You know me and also know where I am from. Yet I did not come on my own, but the one who sent me, whom you do not know, is true. [29] I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me." [30] So they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand upon him, because his hour had not yet come.

(CCC 34) The world, and man, attest that they contain within themselves neither their first principle nor their final end, but rather that they participate in Being itself, which alone is without origin or end. Thus, in different ways, man can come to know that there exists a reality which is the first cause and final end of all things, a reality "that everyone calls God" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I, 2, 3). (CCC 213) The revelation of the ineffable name "I Am who Am" contains then the truth that God alone IS. The Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, and following it the Church's Tradition, understood the divine name in this sense: God is the fullness of Being and of every perfection, without origin and without end. All creatures receive all that they are and have from him; but he alone *is* his very being, and he is of himself everything that he is. (CCC 216) God's truth is his wisdom, which commands the whole created order and governs the world (Cf. Wis 13:1-9). God, who alone made heaven and earth, can alone impart true knowledge of every created thing in relation to himself (Cf. Ps 115:15; Wis 7:17-21). (CCC 221) But St. John goes even further when he affirms that "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8, 16): God's very being is love. By sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret (Cf. 1 Cor 2:7-16; Eph 3:9-12): God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange.

(Jn 7, 31-34) Will the Messiah perform more signs?

[31] But many of the crowd began to believe in him, and said, "When the Messiah comes, will he perform more signs than this man has done?" [32] The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring about him to this effect, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent guards to arrest him. [33] So Jesus said, "I will be with you only a little while longer, and then I will go to the one who sent me. [34] You will look for me but not find (me), and where I am you cannot come."

(CCC 117) The *spiritual sense*. Thanks to the unity of God's plan, not only the text of Scripture but also the realities and events about which it speaks can be signs. 1. The *allegorical sense*. We can acquire a more profound understanding of events by recognizing their significance in Christ; thus the crossing of the Red Sea is a sign or type of Christ's victory and also of Christian Baptism (Cf. 1 Cor 10:2). 2. The *moral sense*. The events reported in Scripture ought to lead us to act justly. As St. Paul says, they were written "for our instruction" (1 Cor 10:11; cf. Heb 3-4:11). 3. The *anagogical sense* (Greek: *anagoge*, "leading"). We can view realities and events in terms of their eternal significance, leading us toward our true homeland: thus the Church on earth is a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem (Cf. Rev 21:1-22:5). (CCC 156) What moves us to believe is not the fact that revealed truths appear as true and intelligible in the light of our natural reason: we believe "because of the authority of God himself who reveals them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived" (*Dei Filius* 3: DS 3008). So "that the submission of our faith might nevertheless be in accordance with reason, God willed that external proofs of his Revelation should be joined to the internal helps of the Holy Spirit" (*Dei Filius* 3: DS 3009). Thus the miracles of Christ and the saints, prophecies, the Church's growth and holiness, and her fruitfulness and stability "are the most certain signs of divine Revelation, adapted to the intelligence of all"; they are "motives of credibility" (*motiva credibilitatis*), which show that the assent of faith is "by no means a blind impulse of the mind" (*Dei Filius* 3: DS 3008-3010; cf. Mk 16 20; Heb 2:4).

(Jn 7, 35-36) What is the meaning of his saying?

[35] So the Jews said to one another, "Where is he going that we will not find him? Surely he is not going to the dispersion among the Greeks to teach the Greeks, is he? [36] What is the meaning of his saying, 'You will look for me and not find (me), and where I am you cannot come'?"

(CCC 208) Faced with God's fascinating and mysterious presence, man discovers his own insignificance. Before the burning bush, Moses takes off his sandals and veils his face in the presence of God's holiness (Cf. Ex 3:5-6). Before the glory of the thrice-holy God, Isaiah cries out: "Woe is me! I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa 6:5). Before the divine signs wrought by Jesus, Peter exclaims: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Lk 5:8). But because God is holy, he can forgive the man who realizes that he is a sinner before him: "I will not execute my fierce anger... for I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst" (Hos 11:9). The apostle John says likewise: "We shall... reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he

knows everything" (1 Jn 3:19-20). (CCC 426) "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" (CT 5). To catechize 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" (CT 5). 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" (CT 5).

(Jn 7, 37-38) Who thirsts come to me and drink

[37] On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood up and exclaimed, "Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink. [38] Whoever believes in me, as scripture says: 'Rivers of living water will flow from within him.'"

(CCC 950) *Communion of the sacraments*. "The fruit of all the sacraments belongs to all the faithful. All the sacraments are sacred links uniting the faithful with one another and binding them to Jesus Christ, and above all Baptism, the gate by which we enter into the Church. The communion of saints must be understood as the communion of the sacraments.... The name 'communion' can be applied to all of them, for they unite us to God.... But this name is better suited to the Eucharist than to any other, because it is primarily the Eucharist that brings this communion about" (*Roman Catechism* 1, 10, 24).

(Jn 7, 39-42) He said this in reference to the Spirit

[39] He said this in reference to the Spirit that those who came to believe in him were to receive. There was, of course, no Spirit yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified. [40] Some in the crowd who heard these words said, "This is truly the Prophet." [41] Others said, "This is the Messiah." But others said, "The Messiah will not come from Galilee, will he? [42] Does not scripture say that the Messiah will be of David's family and come from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?"

(CCC 694) *Water*. The symbolism of water signifies the Holy Spirit's action in Baptism, since after the invocation of the Holy Spirit it becomes the efficacious sacramental sign of new birth: just as the gestation of our first birth took place in water, so the water of Baptism truly signifies that our birth into the divine life is given to us in the Holy Spirit. As "by one Spirit we were all baptized," so we are also "made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:13). Thus the Spirit is also personally the living water welling up from Christ crucified (Jn 19:34; 1 Jn 5:8) as its source and welling up in us to eternal life (Cf. Jn 4:10-14; 7:38; Ex 17:1-6; Isa 55:1; Zech 14:8; 1 Cor 10:4; Rev 21:6; 22:17). (CCC 1287) This fullness of the Spirit was not to remain uniquely the Messiah's, but was to be communicated to *the whole messianic people* (Cf. Ezek 36:25-27; Joel 3:1-2). On several occasions Christ promised this outpouring of the Spirit (Cf. Lk 12:12; Jn 3:5-8; 7:37-39; 16:7-15; Acts 1:8), a promise which he fulfilled first on Easter Sunday and then more strikingly at Pentecost (Cf. Jn 20:22; Acts 2:1-14). Filled with the Holy Spirit the apostles began to proclaim "the mighty works of God," and Peter declared this outpouring of the

Spirit to be the sign of the messianic age (Acts 2:11; Cf. 2:17-18). Those who believed in the apostolic preaching and were baptized received the gift of the Holy Spirit in their turn (Cf. Acts 2:38). (CCC 1999) The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. It is the *sanctifying* or *deifying grace* received in Baptism. It is in us the source of the work of sanctification (Cf. Jn 4:14; 7:38-39): Therefore if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself (2 Cor 5:17-18).

(Jn 7, 43-53) Never has anyone spoken like this one

[43] So a division occurred in the crowd because of him. [44] Some of them even wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. [45] So the guards went to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not bring him?" [46] The guards answered, "Never before has anyone spoken like this one." [47] So the Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived? [48] Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? [49] But this crowd, which does not know the law, is accursed." [50] Nicodemus, one of their members who had come to him earlier, said to them, [51] "Does our law condemn a person before it first hears him and finds out what he is doing?" [52] They answered and said to him, "You are not from Galilee also, are you? Look and see that no prophet arises from Galilee." [53] Then each went to his own house,

(CCC 574) From the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, certain Pharisees and partisans of Herod together with priests and scribes agreed together to destroy him (Cf. Mk 3:6; 14:1). Because of certain of his acts - expelling demons, forgiving sins, healing on the sabbath day, his novel interpretation of the precepts of the Law regarding purity, and his familiarity with tax collectors and public sinners (Cf. Mt 12:24; Mk 2:7, 14-17; 3:1-6; 7:14-23) - some ill-intentioned persons suspected Jesus of demonic possession (Cf. Mk 3:22; Jn 8:48; 10:20). He is accused of blasphemy and false prophecy, religious crimes which the Law punished with death by stoning (Cf. Mk 2:7; Jn 5:18; 7:12; 7:52; 8:59; 10:31, 33). (CCC 575) Many of Jesus' deeds and words constituted a "sign of contradiction" (Lk 2:34), but more so for the religious authorities in Jerusalem, whom the Gospel according to John often calls simply "the Jews" (Cf. Jn 1:19; 2:18; 5:10; 7:13; 9:22; 18:12; 19:38; 20:19), than for the ordinary People of God (Jn 7:48-49). To be sure, Christ's relations with the Pharisees were not exclusively polemical. Some Pharisees warn him of the danger he was courting (Cf. Lk 13:31); Jesus praises some of them, like the scribe of *Mark* 12:34, and dines several times at their homes (Cf. Lk 7:36; 14:1). Jesus endorses some of the teachings imparted by this religious elite of God's people: the resurrection of the dead (Cf. Mt 22:23-34; Lk 20:39), certain forms of piety (almsgiving, fasting and prayer) (Cf. Mt 6:18), the custom of addressing God as Father, and the centrality of the commandment to love God and neighbour (Cf. Mk 12:28-34). (CCC 588) Jesus scandalized the Pharisees by eating with tax collectors and sinners as familiarly as with themselves (Cf. Lk 5:30; 7:36; 11:37; 14:1). Against those among them "who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others", Jesus affirmed: "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners

to repentance" (Lk 18:9; 5:32; cf. Jn 7:49; 9:34). He went further by proclaiming before the Pharisees that, since sin is universal, those who pretend not to need salvation are blind to themselves (Cf. Jn 8:33-36; 9:40-41). (CCC 595) Among the religious authorities of Jerusalem, not only were the Pharisee Nicodemus and the prominent Joseph of Arimathea both secret disciples of Jesus, but there was also long-standing dissension about him, so much so that St. John says of these authorities on the very eve of Christ's Passion, "many... believed in him", though very imperfectly (Jn 12:42; cf. 7:50; 9:16-17; 10:19-21; 19:38-39). This is not surprising, if one recalls that on the day after Pentecost "a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith" and "some believers... belonged to the party of the Pharisees", to the point that St. James could tell St. Paul, "How many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed; and they are all zealous for the Law" (Acts 6:7; 15:5; 21:20).