

Letter to Romans

Romans 1

(Rm 1,1-4) Paul, called to be an apostle

[1] Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God, [2] which he promised previously through his prophets in the holy scriptures, [3] the gospel about his Son, descended from David according to the flesh, [4] but established as Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness through resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

(CCC 876) Intrinsically linked to the sacramental nature of ecclesial ministry is *its character as service*. Entirely dependent on Christ who gives mission and authority, ministers are truly "slaves of Christ" (Cf. Rom 1:1) in the image of him who freely took "the form of a slave" for us (Phil 2:7). Because the word and grace of which they are ministers are not their own, but are given to them by Christ for the sake of others, they must freely become the slaves of all (Cf. 1 Cor 9:19). (CCC 437) To the shepherds, the angel announced the birth of Jesus as the Messiah promised to Israel: "To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Lk 2:11). From the beginning he was "the one whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world", conceived as "holy" in Mary's virginal womb (Jn 10:36; cf. Lk 1:35). God called Joseph to "take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit," so that Jesus, "who is called Christ," should be born of Joseph's spouse into the messianic lineage of David (Mt 1:20; cf. 1:16; Rom 1:1; 2 Tim 2:8; Rev 22:16). (CCC 445) After his Resurrection, Jesus' divine sonship becomes manifest in the power of his glorified humanity. He was "designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his Resurrection from the dead"(Rom 1:3; cf. Acts 13:33). The apostles can confess: "We have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14).

(Rm 1, 5-7) To bring about the obedience of faith

[5] Through him we have received the grace of apostleship, to bring about the obedience of faith, for the sake of his name, among all the Gentiles, [6] among whom are you also, who are called to belong to Jesus Christ; [7] to all the beloved of God in Rome, called to be holy. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(CCC 648) Christ's Resurrection is an object of faith in that it is a transcendent intervention of God himself in creation and history. In it the three divine persons act together as one, and manifest their own proper characteristics. The Father's power "raised up" Christ his Son and by doing so perfectly introduced his Son's humanity, including his body, into the Trinity. Jesus is conclusively revealed as "Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his Resurrection from the dead" (Rom 1 3-4; cf. Acts 2:24). St. Paul insists on the manifestation of God's power (Cf. Rom 6:4; 2 Cor 13:4; Phil 3:10; Eph 1:19-22; Heb 7:16). through the working of the Spirit who gave life to Jesus' dead humanity and called it to the glorious state of Lordship. (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 2087) Our moral life has its source in faith in God who reveals his love to us. St. Paul speaks of the "obedience of faith" (Rom 1:5; 16:26) as our first obligation. He shows that "ignorance of God" is the principle and explanation of all moral deviations (cf. Rom 1:18-32). Our duty toward God is to believe in him and to bear witness to him.

(Rm 1, 8-15) I am eager to preach the gospel

[8] First, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is heralded throughout the world. [9] God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in proclaiming the gospel of his Son, that I remember you constantly, [10] always asking in my prayers that somehow by God's will I may at last find my way clear to come to you. [11] For I long to see you, that I may share with you some spiritual gift so that you may be strengthened, [12] that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by one another's faith, yours and mine. [13] I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I often planned to come to you, though I was prevented until now, that I might harvest some fruit among you, too, as among the rest of the Gentiles. [14] To Greeks and non-Greeks alike, to the wise and the ignorant, I am under obligation; [15] that is why I am eager to preach the gospel also to you in Rome.

(CCC 863) The whole Church is apostolic, in that she remains, through the successors of St. Peter and the other apostles, in communion of faith and life with her origin: and in that she is "sent out" into the whole world. All members of the Church share in this mission, though in various ways. "The Christian vocation is, of its nature, a vocation to the apostolate as well." Indeed, we call an apostolate "every activity of the Mystical Body" that aims "to spread the Kingdom of Christ over all the earth" (AA 2). (CCC 864) "Christ, sent by the Father, is the source of the Church's whole apostolate"; thus the fruitfulness of apostolate for ordained ministers as well as for lay people clearly depends on their vital union with Christ (AA 4; cf. Jn 15:5). In keeping with their vocations, the demands of the times and the various gifts of the Holy Spirit, the apostolate assumes the most varied forms. But charity, drawn from the Eucharist above all, is always "as it were, the soul of the whole apostolate" (AA 3). (CCC 868) The Church is catholic: she proclaims the fullness of the faith. She bears in herself and administers the totality of the means of salvation. She is sent out to all peoples. She speaks to all men. She encompasses all times. She is "missionary of her very nature" (AG 2).

(Rm 1, 16-17) I am not ashamed of the gospel

[16] For I am not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: for Jew first, and then Greek. [17] For in it is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous by faith will live."

(CCC 1814) Faith is the theological virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that he has said and revealed to us, and that Holy Church proposes for our belief, because he is truth itself. By faith "man freely commits his entire self to God" (DV 5). For this reason the believer seeks to know and do God's will. "The righteous shall live by faith." Living faith "work[s] through charity" (Rom 1:17;

Gal 5:6). (CCC 1815) The gift of faith remains in one who has not sinned against it (Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1545). But "faith apart from works is dead" (Jas 2:26): when it is deprived of hope and love, faith does not fully unite the believer to Christ and does not make him a living member of his Body. (CCC 1816) The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: "All however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks" (LG 42; cf. DH 14). Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation: "So every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 10:32-33).

(Rm 1, 18-19) God made it evident to them

[18] The wrath of God is indeed being revealed from heaven against every impiety and wickedness of those who suppress the truth by their wickedness. [19] For what can be known about God is evident to them, because God made it evident to them.

(CCC 315) In the creation of the world and of man, God gave the first and universal witness to his almighty love and his wisdom, the first proclamation of the "plan of his loving goodness", which finds its goal in the new creation in Christ. (CCC 283) The question about the origins of the world and of man has been the object of many scientific studies which have splendidly enriched our knowledge of the age and dimensions of the cosmos, the development of life-forms and the appearance of man. These discoveries invite us to even greater admiration for the greatness of the Creator, prompting us to give him thanks for all his works and for the understanding and wisdom he gives to scholars and researchers. With Solomon they can say: "It is he who gave me unerring knowledge of what exists, to know the structure of the world and the activity of the elements... for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me" (Wis 7: 17-22). (CCC 284) The great interest accorded to these studies is strongly stimulated by a question of another order, which goes beyond the proper domain of the natural sciences. It is not only a question of knowing when and how the universe arose physically, or when man appeared, but rather of discovering the meaning of such an origin: is the universe governed by chance, blind fate, anonymous necessity, or by a transcendent, intelligent and good Being called "God"? and if the world does come from God's wisdom and goodness, why is there evil? Where does it come from? Who is responsible for it? Is there any liberation from it?

(Rm 1, 20) Ever since the creation of the world

[20] Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what he has made. As a result, they have no excuse;

(CCC 285) Since the beginning the Christian faith has been challenged by responses to the question of origins that differ from its own. Ancient religions and cultures produced many myths concerning origins. Some philosophers have said that everything is God, that the world is God, or that the development of the world is the development of God (Pantheism). Others have said that the world is a necessary emanation arising from God and returning to him. Still others have affirmed the existence of two eternal principles, Good and Evil, Light and

Darkness, locked, in permanent conflict (Dualism, Manichaeism). According to some of these conceptions, the world (at least the physical world) is evil, the product of a fall, and is thus to be rejected or left behind (Gnosticism). Some admit that the world was made by God, but as by a watch-maker who, once he has made a watch, abandons it to itself (Deism). Finally, others reject any transcendent origin for the world, but see it as merely the interplay of matter that has always existed (Materialism). All these attempts bear witness to the permanence and universality of the question of origins. This inquiry is distinctively human. (CCC 317) God alone created the universe, freely, directly and without any help. (CCC 318) No creature has the infinite power necessary to "create" in the proper sense of the word, that is, to produce and give being to that which had in no way possessed it (to call into existence "out of nothing") (cf. DS 3624). (CCC 319) God created the world to show forth and communicate his glory. That his creatures should share in his truth, goodness and beauty - this is the glory for which God created them.

(Rm 1, 21a) They did not accord him glory

[21a] for although they knew God they did not accord him glory as God or give him thanks.

(CCC 2123) "Many... of our contemporaries either do not at all perceive, or explicitly reject, this intimate and vital bond of man to God. Atheism must therefore be regarded as one of the most serious problems of our time" (GS 19 § 1). (CCC 2124) The name "atheism" covers many very different phenomena. One common form is the practical materialism which restricts its needs and aspirations to space and time. Atheistic humanism falsely considers man to be "an end to himself, and the sole maker, with supreme control, of his own history" (GS 20 § 1). Another form of contemporary atheism looks for the liberation of man through economic and social liberation. "It holds that religion, of its very nature, thwarts such emancipation by raising man's hopes in a future life, thus both deceiving him and discouraging him from working for a better form of life on earth" (GS 20 § 2). (CCC 2125) Since it rejects or denies the existence of God, atheism is a sin against the virtue of religion (Cf. Rom 1:18). The imputability of this offense can be significantly diminished in virtue of the intentions and the circumstances. "Believers can have more than a little to do with the rise of atheism. To the extent that they are careless about their instruction in the faith, or present its teaching falsely, or even fail in their religious, moral, or social life, they must be said to conceal rather than to reveal the true nature of God and of religion" (GS 19 § 3).

(Rm 1, 21b) They became vain in their reasoning

[21b] Instead, they became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless minds were darkened.

(CCC 2126) *Atheism* is often based on a false conception of human autonomy, exaggerated to the point of refusing any dependence on God (Cf. GS 20 § 1). Yet, "to acknowledge God is in no way to oppose the dignity of man, since such dignity is grounded and brought to perfection in God...." (GS 21 § 3) "For the Church knows full well that her message is in harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart" (GS 21 § 7). (CCC 2127) *Agnosticism* assumes a number of forms. In certain cases the agnostic refrains from denying God; instead he postulates the existence of a transcendent being which is incapable of revealing itself, and about which nothing can be said. In other cases, the agnostic

makes no judgment about God's existence, declaring it impossible to prove, or even to affirm or deny. (CCC 2128) *Agnosticism* can sometimes include a certain search for God, but it can equally express indifferentism, a flight from the ultimate question of existence, and a sluggish moral conscience. Agnosticism is all too often equivalent to practical atheism.

(Rm 1, 22) They became fools

[22] While claiming to be wise, they became fools

(CCC 159) *Faith and science*: "Though faith is above reason, there can never be any real discrepancy between faith and reason. Since the same God who reveals mysteries and infuses faith has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind, God cannot deny himself, nor can truth ever contradict truth" (*Dei Filius* 4: DS 3017). "Consequently, methodical research in all branches of knowledge, provided it is carried out in a truly scientific manner and does not override moral laws, can never conflict with the faith, because the things of the world and the things of faith derive from the same God. The humble and persevering investigator of the secrets of nature is being led, as it were, by the hand of God in spite of himself, for it is God, the conserver of all things, who made them what they are" (GS 36 § 1). (CCC 2293) Basic scientific research, as well as applied research, is a significant expression of man's dominion over creation. Science and technology are precious resources when placed at the service of man and promote his integral development for the benefit of all. By themselves however they cannot disclose the meaning of existence and of human progress. Science and technology are ordered to man, from whom they take their origin and development; hence they find in the person and in his moral values both evidence of their purpose and awareness of their limits.

(Rm 1, 23) Exchanged the glory of God

[23] and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for the likeness of an image of mortal man or of birds or of four-legged animals or of snakes.

(CCC 2294) It is an illusion to claim moral neutrality in scientific research and its applications. On the other hand, guiding principles cannot be inferred from simple technical efficiency, or from the usefulness accruing to some at the expense of others or, even worse, from prevailing ideologies. Science and technology by their very nature require unconditional respect for fundamental moral criteria. They must be at the service of the human person, of his inalienable rights, of his true and integral good, in conformity with the plan and the will of God. (CCC 2113) Idolatry not only refers to false pagan worship. It remains a constant temptation to faith. Idolatry consists in divinizing what is not God. Man commits idolatry whenever he honors and reveres a creature in place of God, whether this be gods or demons (for example, satanism), power, pleasure, race, ancestors, the state, money, etc. Jesus says, "You cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt 6:24). Many martyrs died for not adoring "the Beast" (Cf. Rev 13-14) refusing even to simulate such worship. Idolatry rejects the unique Lordship of God; it is therefore incompatible with communion with God (Cf. Gal 5:20; Eph 5:5). (CCC 2114) Human life finds its unity in the adoration of the one God. The commandment to worship the Lord alone integrates man and saves him from an endless disintegration. Idolatry is a perversion of man's innate religious sense. An idolater is someone who "transfers his indestructible notion of God to anything other than God" (Origen, *Contra Celsum* 2, 40: PG 11, 861).

(Rm 1, 24-27) They worshiped the creature

[24] Therefore, God handed them over to impurity through the lusts of their hearts for the mutual degradation of their bodies. [25] They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and revered and worshiped the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. [26] Therefore, God handed them over to degrading passions. Their females exchanged natural relations for unnatural, [27] and the males likewise gave up natural relations with females and burned with lust for one another. Males did shameful things with males and thus received in their own persons the due penalty for their perversity.

(CCC 2357) Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity (Cf. Gen 19:1-29; Rom 1:24-27; 1 Cor 6:10; 1 Tim 1:10), tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered" (CDF, *Persona humana* 8). They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved. (CCC 2358) The number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. This inclination, which is objectively disordered, constitutes for most of them a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition. (CCC 2359) Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection.

(Rm 1, 28-32) Full of envy, murder, rivalry, treachery

[28] And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God handed them over to their undiscerning mind to do what is improper. [29] They are filled with every form of wickedness, evil, greed, and malice; full of envy, murder, rivalry, treachery, and spite. They are gossips [30] and scandalmongers and they hate God. They are insolent, haughty, boastful, ingenious in their wickedness, and rebellious toward their parents. [31] They are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. [32] Although they know the just decree of God that all who practice such things deserve death, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

(CCC 1852) There are a great many kinds of sins. Scripture provides several lists of them. The *Letter to the Galatians* contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit: "Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God" (Gal 5:19-21; cf. Rom 1:28-32; 1 Cor 9:10; Eph 5:3-5; Col 3:5-8; 1 Tim 9-10; 2 Tim 2-5). (CCC 1849) Sin is an offense against reason, truth,

and right conscience; it is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods. It wounds the nature of man and injures human solidarity. It has been defined as "an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law" (St. Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 22: PL 42, 418; St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 71, 6). (CCC 1850) Sin is an offense against God: "Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in your sight" (Ps 51:4). Sin sets itself against God's love for us and turns our hearts away from it. Like the first sin, it is disobedience, a revolt against God through the will to become "like gods" (Gen 3:5), knowing and determining good and evil. Sin is thus "love of oneself even to contempt of God" (St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 14, 28: PL 41, 436). In this proud self-exaltation, sin is diametrically opposed to the obedience of Jesus, which achieves our salvation (cf. Phil 2:6-9).

Romans 2

(Rm 2, 1-6) Revelation of the just judgment of God

[1] Therefore, you are without excuse, every one of you who passes judgment. For by the standard by which you judge another you condemn yourself, since you, the judge, do the very same things. [2] We know that the judgment of God on those who do such things is true. [3] Do you suppose, then, you who judge those who engage in such things and yet do them yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? [4] Or do you hold his priceless kindness, forbearance, and patience in low esteem, unaware that the kindness of God would lead you to repentance? [5] By your stubbornness and impenitent heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself for the day of wrath and revelation of the just judgment of God, [6] who will repay everyone according to his works:

(CCC 679) Christ is Lord of eternal life. Full right to pass definitive judgment 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). (CCC 1776) "Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment.... For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God.... His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths" (GS 16).

(Rm 2, 7-11) There is no partiality with God

[7] Eternal life to those who seek glory, honor, and immortality through perseverance in good works, [8] but wrath and fury to those who selfishly disobey the truth and obey wickedness. [9] Yes, affliction and distress will come upon every human being who does evil, Jew first and then Greek. [10] But there will be glory, honor, and peace for everyone who does good, Jew first and then Greek. [11] There is no partiality with God.

(CCC 1778) Conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed. In all he says and does, man is obliged to follow faithfully what he knows to be just and right. It is by the judgment of his conscience that man perceives and recognizes the prescriptions of the divine law: Conscience is a law of the mind; yet [Christians] would not grant that it is nothing more; I mean that it was not a dictate, nor conveyed the notion of responsibility, of duty, of a threat and a promise.... [Conscience] is a messenger of him, who, both in nature and in grace, speaks to us behind a veil, and teaches and rules us by his representatives. Conscience is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ (John Henry Cardinal Newman, "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk," V, in *Certain Difficulties felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching II* (London: Longmans Green, 1885), 248). (CCC 1783) Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened. A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It formulates its judgments according to reason, in conformity with the true good willed by the wisdom of the Creator. The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings. (CCC 1785) In the formation of conscience the Word of God is the light for our path (cf. Ps 119:105), we must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice. We must also examine our conscience before the Lord's Cross. We are assisted by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, aided by the witness or advice of others and guided by the authoritative teaching of the Church (Cf. *DH* 14).

(Rm 2, 12-16) God will judge people's hidden works

[12] All who sin outside the law will also perish without reference to it, and all who sin under the law will be judged in accordance with it. [13] For it is not those who hear the law who are just in the sight of God; rather, those who observe the law will be justified. [14] For when the Gentiles who do not have the law by nature observe the prescriptions of the law, they are a law for themselves even though they do not have the law. [15] They show that the demands of the law are written in their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even defend them [16] on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge people's hidden works through Christ Jesus.

(CCC 1777) Moral conscience (cf. Rom 2:14-16), present at the heart of the person, enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil. It also judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil (cf. Rom 1:32). It bears witness to the authority of truth in reference to the supreme Good to which the human person is drawn, and it welcomes the commandments. When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking. (CCC 678) Following in the steps of the prophets and John the Baptist, Jesus announced the judgement of the Last Day in his preaching (cf. Dan 7:10; Joel 3-4; Mal 3:19; Mt 3:7-12). Then will the conduct of each one and the secrets of hearts be brought to light (cf. Mk 12:38-40; Lk 12:1-3; Jn 3:20-21; Rom 2:16; 1 Cor 4:5). Then will the culpable unbelief that counted the offer of God's grace as nothing be condemned (cf. Mt 11:20-24; 12:41-42). Our attitude to our neighbour will disclose acceptance or refusal of grace and divine love (cf. Mt 5:22; 7:1-5). On the Last Day Jesus will say: "Truly I say to

you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25:40).

(Rm 2, 17-24) You are a trainer of the foolish

[17] Now if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast of God [18] and know his will and are able to discern what is important since you are instructed from the law, [19] and if you are confident that you are a guide for the blind and a light for those in darkness, [20] that you are a trainer of the foolish and teacher of the simple, because in the law you have the formulation of knowledge and truth – [21] then you who teach another, are you failing to teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? [22] You who forbid adultery, do you commit adultery? You who detest idols, do you rob temples? [23] You who boast of the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? [24] For, as it is written, "Because of you the name of God is reviled among the Gentiles."

2811 In spite of the holy Law that again and again their Holy God gives them - "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" - and although the Lord shows patience for the sake of his name, the people turn away from the Holy One of Israel and profane his name among the nations (Ezek 20:9, 14, 22, 39; cf. Lev 19:2). For this reason the just ones of the old covenant, the poor survivors returned from exile, and the prophets burned with passion for the name. (CCC 2814 The sanctification of his name among the nations depends inseparably on our *life* and our *prayer*: We ask God to hallow his name, which by its own holiness saves and makes holy all creation It is this name that gives salvation to a lost world. But we ask that this name of God should be hallowed in us through our actions. For God's name is blessed when we live well, but is blasphemed when we live wickedly. As the Apostle says: "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." We ask then that, just as the name of God is holy, so we may obtain his holiness in our souls (St. Peter Chrysologus, *Sermo* 71, 4: PL 52:402A; cf. Rom 2:24; Ezek 36:20-22). When we say "hallowed be thy name," we ask that it should be hallowed in us, who are in him; but also in others whom God's grace still awaits, that we may obey the precept that obliges us to pray for everyone, even our enemies. That is why we do not say expressly "hallowed be thy name 'in us,'" for we ask that it be so in all men (Tertullian, *De orat.* 3: PL 1:1157A).

(Rm 2, 25-29) Circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit

[25] Circumcision, to be sure, has value if you observe the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. [26] Again, if an uncircumcised man keeps the precepts of the law, will he not be considered circumcised? [27] Indeed, those who are physically uncircumcised but carry out the law will pass judgment on you, with your written law and circumcision, who break the law. [28] One is not a Jew outwardly. True circumcision is not outward, in the flesh. [29] Rather, one is a Jew inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, not the letter; his praise is not from human beings but from God.

(CCC 1150) *Signs of the covenant*. The Chosen People received from God distinctive signs and symbols that marked its liturgical life. These are no longer solely celebrations of cosmic cycles and social gestures, but signs of the covenant, symbols of God's mighty deeds for his people. Among these liturgical

signs from the Old Covenant are circumcision, anointing and consecration of kings and priests, laying on of hands, sacrifices, and above all the Passover. The Church sees in these signs a prefiguring of the sacraments of the New Covenant. (CCC 527) Jesus' *circumcision*, on the eighth day after his birth (Cf. Lk 2:21), is the sign of his incorporation into Abraham's descendants, into the people of the covenant. It is the sign of his submission to the Law (Cf. Gal 4:4) and his deputation to Israel's worship, in which he will participate throughout his life. This sign prefigures that "circumcision of Christ" which is Baptism (Cf. Col 2:11-13). (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 1152) *Sacramental signs*. Since Pentecost, it is through the sacramental signs of his Church that the Holy Spirit carries on the work of sanctification. The sacraments of the Church do not abolish but purify and integrate all the richness of the signs and symbols of the cosmos and of social life. Further, they fulfill the types and figures of the Old Covenant, signify and make actively present the salvation wrought by Christ, and prefigure and anticipate the glory of heaven.

Romans 3

(Rm 3, 1-4) God must be true

[1] What advantage is there then in being a Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? [2] Much, in every respect. (For) in the first place, they were entrusted with the utterances of God. [3] What if some were unfaithful? Will their infidelity nullify the fidelity of God? [4] Of course not! God must be true, though every human being is a liar, as it is written: "That you may be justified in your words, and conquer when you are judged."

(CCC 2465) The Old Testament attests that *God is the source of all truth*. His Word is truth. His Law is truth. His "faithfulness endures to all generations" (Ps 119:90; Cf. Prov 8:7; 2 Sam 7:28; Ps 119:142; Lk 1:50). Since God is "true," the members of his people are called to live in the truth (Rom 3:4; cf. Ps 119:30). (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).

(Rm 3, 5-11) They are all under the domination of sin

[5] But if our wickedness provides proof of God's righteousness, what can we say? Is God unjust, humanly speaking, to inflict his wrath? [6] Of course not! For how else is God to judge the world? [7] But if God's truth redounds to his glory through my falsehood, why am I still being

condemned as a sinner? [8] And why not say - as we are accused and as some claim we say - that we should do evil that good may come of it? Their penalty is what they deserve. [9] Well, then, are we better off? Not entirely, for we have already brought the charge against Jews and Greeks alike that they are all under the domination of sin, [10] as it is written: "There is no one just, not one, [11] there is no one who understands, there is no one who seeks God.

(CCC 397) Man, tempted by the devil, let his trust in his Creator die in his heart and, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God's command. This is what man's first sin consisted of (Cf. Gen 3:1-11; Rom 5:19). All subsequent sin would be disobedience toward God and lack of trust in his goodness. (CCC 398) In that sin man *preferred* himself to God and by that very act scorned him. He chose himself over and against God, against the requirements of his creaturely status and therefore against his own good. Constituted in a state of holiness, man was destined to be fully "divinized" by God in glory. Seduced by the devil, he wanted to "be like God", but "without God, before God, and not in accordance with God" (St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*: PG 91, 1156C; cf. Gen 3:5).

(Rm 3, 12-19) All have gone astray

[12] All have gone astray; all alike are worthless; there is not one who does good, (there is not) even one. [13] Their throats are open graves; they deceive with their tongues; the venom of asps is on their lips; [14] their mouths are full of bitter cursing. [15] Their feet are quick to shed blood; [16] ruin and misery are in their ways, [17] and the way of peace they know not. [18] There is no fear of God before their eyes." [19] Now we know that what the law says is addressed to those under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world stand accountable to God,

(CCC 401) After that first sin, the world is virtually inundated by sin. There is Cain's murder of his brother Abel and the universal corruption which follows in the wake of sin. Likewise, sin frequently manifests itself in the history of Israel, especially as infidelity to the God of the Covenant and as transgression of the Law of Moses. And even after Christ's atonement, sin raises its head in countless ways among Christians (cf. Gen 4:3-15; 6:5, 12; Rom 1:18-32; 1 Cor 1-6; Rev 2-3). Scripture and the Church's Tradition continually recall the presence and *universality of sin in man's history*: What Revelation makes known to us is confirmed by our own experience. For when man looks into his own heart he finds that he is drawn towards what is wrong and sunk in many evils which cannot come from his good creator. Often refusing to acknowledge God as his source, man has also upset the relationship which should link him to his last end; and at the same time he has broken the right order that should reign within himself as well as between himself and other men and all creatures (GS 13 § 1).

(Rm 3, 20) Through the law the consciousness of sin

[20] since no human being will be justified in his sight by observing the law; for through the law comes consciousness of sin.

(CCC 708) This divine pedagogy appears especially in the gift of the Law (Cf. Ex 19- 20; Deut 1-11; 29-30). God gave the Law as a "pedagogue" to lead his people towards Christ (Gal 3:24). But the Law's powerlessness to save man deprived of the divine "likeness," along with the growing awareness of sin that it

imparts (Cf. Rom 3:20), enkindles a desire for the Holy Spirit. The lamentations of the Psalms bear witness to this.

(Rm 3, 21-22) The righteousness of God through faith

[21] But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, though testified to by the law and the prophets, [22] the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction;

(CCC 2543) "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (Rom 3:21-22). Henceforth, Christ's faithful "have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires"; they are led by the Spirit and follow the desires of the Spirit (Gal 5:24; cf. Rom 8:14, 27). (CCC 1987) The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is, to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" and through Baptism (Rom 3:22; cf. 6:3-4): But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves as dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:8-11).

(Rm 3, 23-24) They are justified freely by his grace

[23] all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God. [24] They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus,

(CCC 399) Scripture portrays the tragic consequences of this first disobedience. Adam and Eve immediately lose the grace of original holiness (Cf. Rom 3:23). They become afraid of the God of whom they have conceived a distorted image--that of a God jealous of his prerogatives (Cf. Gen 3:5-10). (CCC 705) Disfigured by sin and death, man remains "in the image of God," in the image of the Son, but is deprived "of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23) of his "likeness." The promise made to Abraham inaugurates the economy of salvation, at the culmination of which the Son himself will assume that "image" (Cf. Jn 1:14; Phil 2:7) and restore it in the Father's "likeness" by giving it again its Glory, the Spirit who is "the giver of life." (CCC 2809) The holiness of God is the inaccessible center of his eternal mystery. What is revealed of it in creation and history, Scripture calls "glory," the radiance of his majesty (Cf. Ps 8; Isa 6:3). In making man in his image and likeness, God "crowned him with glory and honor," but by sinning, man fell "short of the glory of God" (Ps 8:5; Rom 3:23; cf. Gen 1:26). From that time on, God was to manifest his holiness by revealing and giving his name, in order to restore man to the image of his Creator (Col 3:10).

(Rm 3, 25-26) Whom God set forth as an expiation

[25] whom God set forth as an expiation, through faith, by his blood, to prove his righteousness because of the forgiveness of sins previously committed, [26] through the forbearance of God - to prove his righteousness in the present time, that he might be righteous and justify the one who has faith in Jesus.

(CCC 433) The name of the Savior God was invoked only once in the year by the high priest in atonement for the sins of Israel, after he had sprinkled the

mercy seat in the Holy of Holies with the sacrificial blood. The mercy seat was the place of God's presence (Cf. Ex 25:22; Lev 16:2,15-16; Num 7:89; Sir 50:20; Heb 9:5,7). When St. Paul speaks of Jesus whom "God put forward as an expiation by his blood", he means that in Christ's humanity "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (Rom 3:25; 2 Cor 5:19). (CCC 432) The name "Jesus" signifies that the very name of God is present in the person of his Son, made man for the universal and definitive redemption from sins. It is the divine name that alone brings salvation, and henceforth all can invoke his name, for Jesus united himself to all men through his Incarnation (Cf. Jn 3:18; Acts 2:21; 5:41; 3 Jn 7; Rom 10:6-13), so that "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12; cf. 9:14; Jas 2:7).

(Rm 3, 27-28) A person is justified by faith

[27] What occasion is there then for boasting? It is ruled out. On what principle, that of works? No, rather on the principle of faith. [28] For we consider that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

(CCC 1992) Justification has been *merited for us by the Passion of Christ* who offered himself on the cross as a living victim, holy and pleasing to God, and whose blood has become the instrument of atonement for the sins of all men. Justification is conferred in Baptism, the sacrament of faith. It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy. Its purpose is the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal life (Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1529): But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus (Rom 3:21-26).

(Rm 3, 29-31) For God is one

[29] Does God belong to Jews alone? Does he not belong to Gentiles, too? Yes, also to Gentiles, [30] for God is one and will justify the circumcised on the basis of faith and the uncircumcised through faith. [31] Are we then annulling the law by this faith? Of course not! On the contrary, we are) supporting the law.

(CCC 2543 "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (Rom 3:21-22). Henceforth, Christ's faithful "have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires"; they are led by the Spirit and follow the desires of the Spirit (Gal 5:24; cf. Rom 8:14, 27). (CCC 1987) The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is, to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" and through Baptism (Rom 3:22; cf. 6:3-4): But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin,

once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves as dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:8-11).

Romans 4

(Rm 4, 1-9) Abraham believed God

[1] What then can we say that Abraham found, our ancestor according to the flesh? [2] Indeed, if Abraham was justified on the basis of his works, he has reason to boast; but this was not so in the sight of God. [3] For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." [4] A worker's wage is credited not as a gift, but as something due. [5] But when one does not work, yet believes in the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness. [6] So also David declares the blessedness of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: [7] "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. [8] Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not record." [9] Does this blessedness apply only to the circumcised, or to the uncircumcised as well? Now we assert that "faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness."

(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. (CCC 145) The *Letter to the Hebrews*, in its great eulogy of the faith of Israel's ancestors, lays special emphasis on Abraham's faith: "By faith, Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go" (Heb 11:8; cf. Gen 12:1-4). By faith, he lived as a stranger and pilgrim in the promised land (Cf. Gen 23:4). By faith, Sarah was given to conceive the son of the promise. And by faith Abraham offered his only son in sacrifice (Cf. Heb 11:17).

(Rm 4, 11-14) Father of all uncircumcised who believe

[10] Under what circumstances was it credited? Was he circumcised or not? He was not circumcised, but uncircumcised. [11] And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal on the righteousness received through faith while he was uncircumcised. Thus he was to be the father of all the uncircumcised who believe, so that to them (also) righteousness might be credited, [12] as well as the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised, but also follow the path of faith that our father Abraham walked while still uncircumcised. [13] It was not through the law that the promise was made to Abraham and his descendants that he would inherit the world, but through the righteousness that comes from faith. [14] For if those who adhere to the law are the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.

(CCC 146) Abraham thus fulfils the definition of faith in *Hebrews* 11:1: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1): "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" (Rom 4:3; cf. Gen 15:6). Because he was "strong in his faith", Abraham became the "father of all who believe" (Rom 4:11, 18; 4:20; cf. Gen 15:5).

(Rm 4, 15-17) Those who follow the faith of Abraham

[15] For the law produces wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. [16] For this reason, it depends on faith, so that it may be a gift, and the promise may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not to those who only adhere to the law but to those who follow the faith of Abraham, who is the father of all of us, [17] as it is written, "I have made you father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into being what does not exist.

(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).

(Rm 4, 18) He believed, hoping against hope

[18] He believed, hoping against hope, that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "Thus shall your descendants be."

(CCC 706) Against all human hope, God promises descendants to Abraham, as the fruit of faith and of the power of the Holy Spirit (Cf. Gen 18:1-15; Lk 1:26-38. 54-55; Jn 1:12-13; Rom 4:16-21). In Abraham's progeny all the nations of the earth will be blessed. This progeny will be Christ himself (Cf. Gen 12:3; Gal 3:16), in whom the outpouring of the Holy Spirit will "gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad" (Cf. In 11:52). God commits himself by his own solemn oath to giving his beloved Son and "the promised Holy Spirit... [who is] the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it" (Eph 1:13-14; cf. Gen 22:17-19; Lk 1:73; Jn 3:16; Rom 8:32; Gal 3:14). (CCC 165) It is then we must turn to the *witnesses of faith*: to Abraham, who "in hope... believed against hope" (Rom 4:18); to the Virgin Mary, who, in "her pilgrimage of faith", walked into the "night of faith" (LG 58; John Paul II, RMat 18) in sharing the darkness of her son's suffering and death; and to so many others: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (Heb 12:1-2). (CCC 1819) Christian hope takes up and fulfills the hope of the chosen people which has its origin and model in the *hope of Abraham*, who was blessed abundantly by the promises of God fulfilled in Isaac, and who was purified by the test of the sacrifice (Cf. Gen 17:4-8; 22:1-18). "Hoping against hope, he believed, and thus became the father of many nations" (Rom 4:18).

(Rm 4, 19-21) He did not weaken in faith

[19] He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body as (already) dead (for he was almost a hundred years old) and the dead womb of Sarah. [20] He did not doubt God's promise in unbelief; rather, he was empowered by faith and gave glory to God [21] and was fully convinced that what he had promised he was also able to do.

(CCC 2572) As a final stage in the purification of his faith, Abraham, "who had received the promises" (Heb 11:17) is asked to sacrifice the son God had given him. Abraham's faith does not weaken ("God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering."), for he "considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead" (Gen 22:8; Heb 11:19) and so the father of believers is conformed to the likeness of the Father who will not spare his own Son but will deliver him up for us all (Rom 8:32). Prayer restores man to God's likeness and enables him to share in the power of God's love that saves the multitude (Cf. Rom 8:16-21).

(Rm 4, 22-25) It was credited to him as righteousness

[22] That is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." [23] But it was not for him alone that it was written that "it was credited to him"; [24] it was also for us, to whom it will be credited, who believe in the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, [25] who was handed over for our transgressions and was raised for our justification.

(CCC 517) Christ's whole life is a mystery of *redemption*. Redemption comes to us above all through the blood of his cross (Cf. Eph 1:7; Col 1:13-14; 2 Pt 1:18-19), but this mystery is at work throughout Christ's entire life: - already in his Incarnation through which by becoming poor he enriches us with his poverty (Cf. 2 Cor 8:9); - in his hidden life which by his submission atones for our disobedience (Cf. Lk 2:51); - in his word which purifies its hearers (Cf. Jn 15:3); - in his healings and exorcisms by which "he took our infirmities and bore our diseases" (Mt 8:17; cf. Isa 53:4); - and in his Resurrection by which he justifies us (Cf. Rom 4:25). (CCC 519) All Christ's riches "are for every individual and are everybody's property" (John Paul II, RH II). Christ did not live his life for himself but for us, from his Incarnation "for us men and for our salvation" to his death "for our sins" and Resurrection "for our justification" (Cor 15:3; Rom 4:25). He is still "our advocate with the Father", who "always lives to make intercession" for us (1 Jn 2:1; Heb 7:25). He remains ever "in the presence of God on our behalf, bringing before him all that he lived and suffered for us" (Heb 9:24).

Romans 5

(Rm 5, 1-4) We have been justified by faith

[1] Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, [2] through whom we have gained access (by faith) to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God. [3] Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, [4] and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope,

(CCC 2734) Filial trust is tested - it proves itself - in tribulation (Cf. Rom 5:3-5). The principal difficulty concerns the *prayer of petition*, for oneself or for others in intercession. Some even stop praying because they think their petition is not heard. Here two questions should be asked: Why do we think our petition has not been heard? How is our prayer heard, how is it "efficacious"? (CCC 2847) The Holy Spirit makes us *discern* between trials, which are necessary for the growth of the inner man (Cf. Lk. 8:13-15; Acts 14:22; Rom 5:3-5; 2 Tim 3:12), and temptation, which leads to sin and death (Cf. Jas 1:14-15). We must also discern between being tempted and consenting to temptation. Finally,

discernment unmasks the lie of temptation, whose object appears to be good, a "delight to the eyes" and desirable (Cf. Gen 3:6), when in reality its fruit is death. God does not want to impose the good, but wants free beings.... There is a certain usefulness to temptation. No one but God knows what our soul has received from him, not even we ourselves. But temptation reveals it in order to teach us to know ourselves, and in this way we discover our evil inclinations and are obliged to give thanks for the goods that temptation has revealed to us (Origen, *De orat.* 29 PG 11, 544CD).

(Rm 5, 5a) Hope does not disappoint

[5a] and hope does not disappoint,

(CCC 2658) "Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom 5:5). Prayer, formed by the liturgical life, draws everything into the love by which we are loved in Christ and which enables us to respond to him by loving as he has loved us. Love is the source of prayer; whoever draws from it reaches the summit of prayer. In the words of the Curé of Ars: I love you, O my God, and my only desire is to love you until the last breath of my life. I love you, O my infinitely lovable God, and I would rather die loving you, than live without loving you. I love you, Lord, and the only grace I ask is to love you eternally.... My God, if my tongue cannot say in every moment that I love you, I want my heart to repeat it to you as often as I draw breath (St. John Vianney, *Prayer*). (CCC 1820) Christian hope unfolds from the beginning of Jesus' preaching in the proclamation of the beatitudes. The *beatitudes* raise our hope toward heaven as the new Promised Land; they trace the path that leads through the trials that await the disciples of Jesus. But through the merits of Jesus Christ and of his Passion, God keeps us in the "hope that does not disappoint" (Rom 5:5). Hope is the "sure and steadfast anchor of the soul... that enters... where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf" (Heb 6:19-20). Hope is also a weapon that protects us in the struggle of salvation: "Let us... put on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation" (1 Thess 5:8). It affords us joy even under trial: "Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation" (Rom 12:12). Hope is expressed and nourished in prayer, especially in the Our Father, the summary of everything that hope leads us to desire.

(Rm 5, 5a) The love of God has been poured out

because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us.

(CCC 733) "God is Love" (1 Jn 4:8,16) and love is his first gift, containing all others. "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom 5:5).733 (CCC 368) The spiritual tradition of the Church also emphasizes the *heart*, in the biblical sense of the depths of one's being, where the person decides for or against God (Cf. Jer 31:33; Dt 6:5; 29:3; Isa 29:13; Ezek 36:26; Mt 6:21; Lk 8:15; Rom 5:5). (CCC 1964) The Old Law is a *preparation for the Gospel*. "The Law is a pedagogy and a prophecy of things to come" (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 15, 1: PG 7/1, 1012). It prophesies and presages the work of liberation from sin which will be fulfilled in Christ: it provides the New Testament with images, "types," and symbols for expressing the life according to the Spirit. Finally, the Law is completed by the teaching of the sapiential books and the prophets which set its course toward the New

Covenant and the Kingdom of heaven. There were . . . under the regimen of the Old Covenant, people who possessed the charity and grace of the Holy Spirit and longed above all for the spiritual and eternal promises by which they were associated with the New Law. Conversely, there exist carnal men under the New Covenant still distanced from the perfection of the New Law: the fear of punishment and certain temporal promises have been necessary, even under the New Covenant, to incite them to virtuous works. In any case, even though the Old Law prescribed charity, it did not give the Holy Spirit, through whom "God's charity has been poured into our hearts" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 107, 1 ad 2; cf. Rom 5:5).

(Rm 5, 6-11) We were still sinners Christ died for us

[6] For Christ, while we were still helpless, yet died at the appointed time for the ungodly. [7] Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. [8] But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. [9] How much more then, since we are now justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath. [10] Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life. [11] Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

(CCC 604) By giving up his own Son for our sins, God manifests that his plan for us is one of benevolent love, prior to any merit on our part: "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10; 4:19). God "shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). (CCC 603) Jesus did not experience reprobation as if he himself had sinned (Cf. Jn 8:46). But in the redeeming love that always united him to the Father, he assumed us in the state of our waywardness of sin, to the point that he could say in our name from the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mk 15:34; Ps 22:2; cf. Jn 8:29). Having thus established him in solidarity with us sinners, God "did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all", so that we might be "reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom 8:32; 5:10). (CCC 1825) Christ died out of love for us, while we were still "enemies" (Rom 5:10). The Lord asks us to love as he does, even our *enemies*, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself (Cf. Mt 5:44; Lk 10:27-37; Mk 9:37; Mt 25:40, 45). The Apostle Paul has given an incomparable depiction of charity: "charity is patient and kind, charity is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Charity does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Charity bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Cor 13:4-7).

(Rm 5, 12-14) Death reigned from Adam to Moses

[12] Therefore, just as through one person sin entered the world, and through sin, death, and thus death came to all, inasmuch as all sinned – [13] for up to the time of the law, sin was in the world, though sin is not accounted when there is no law. [14] But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin after the pattern of the trespass of Adam, who is the type of the one who was to come.

(CCC 399) Scripture portrays the tragic consequences of this first disobedience. Adam and Eve immediately lose the grace of original holiness (Cf. Rom 3:23). They become afraid of the God of whom they have conceived a distorted image--that of a God jealous of his prerogatives (Cf. Gen 3:5-10). (CCC 400) The harmony in which they had found themselves, thanks to original justice, is now destroyed: the control of the soul's spiritual faculties over the body is shattered; the union of man and woman becomes subject to tensions, their relations henceforth marked by lust and domination (Cf. Gen 3:7-16). Harmony with creation is broken: visible creation has become alien and hostile to man (Cf. Gen 3:17, 19). Because of man, creation is now subject "to its bondage to decay" (Rom 8:21). Finally, the consequence explicitly foretold for this disobedience will come true: man will "return to the ground"(Gen 3:19; cf. 2:17), for out of it he was taken. Death makes its entrance into human history (Cf. Rom 5:12). (CCC 402) All men are implicated in Adam's sin, as St. Paul affirms: "By one man's disobedience many (that is, all men) were made sinners": "sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned" (Rom 5:12, 19). The Apostle contrasts the universality of sin and death with the universality of salvation in Christ. "Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men" (Rom 5:18). (CCC 1008) *Death is a consequence of sin*. The Church's Magisterium, as authentic interpreter of the affirmations of Scripture and Tradition, teaches that death entered the world on account of man's sin (Cf. Gen 2:17; 3:3; 3:19; Wis 1:13; Rom 5:12; 6:23; DS 1511). Even though man's nature is mortal God had destined him not to die. Death was therefore contrary to the plans of God the Creator and entered the world as a consequence of sin (Cf. Wis 2:23-24). "Bodily death, from which man would have been immune had he not sinned" is thus "the last enemy" of man left to be conquered (GS 18 § 2; cf. 1 Cor 15:26).

(Rm 5, 15-17) The gift is not like the transgression

[15] But the gift is not like the transgression. For if by that one person's transgression the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gracious gift of the one person Jesus Christ overflow for the many. [16] And the gift is not like the result of the one person's sinning. For after one sin there was the judgment that brought condemnation; but the gift, after many transgressions, brought acquittal. [17] For if, by the transgression of one person, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one person Jesus Christ.

(CCC 602) Consequently, St. Peter can formulate the apostolic faith in the divine plan of salvation in this way: "You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers... with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake" (1 Pet 1:18-20). Man's sins, following on original sin, are punishable by death (Cf. Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 15:56). By sending his own Son in the form of a slave, in the form of a fallen humanity, on account of sin, God "made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor 5:21; cf. Phil 2:7; Rom 8:3). (CCC 612) The cup of the New Covenant, which Jesus anticipated when he offered himself at the Last Supper, is afterwards accepted by him from his

Father's hands in his agony in the garden at Gethsemani (Cf. Mt 26:42; Lk 22:20), making himself "obedient unto death". Jesus prays: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me..." (Phil 2:8; Mt 26:39; cf. Heb 5:7-8). Thus he expresses the horror that death represented for his human nature. Like ours, his human nature is destined for eternal life; but unlike ours, it is perfectly exempt from sin, the cause of death (Cf. Rom 5:12; Heb 4:15). Above all, his human nature has been assumed by the divine person of the "Author of life", the "Living One" (Cf. Acts 3:15; Rev 1:17; Jn 1:4; 5:26). By accepting in his human will that the Father's will be done, he accepts his death as redemptive, for "he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree" (1 Pt 2:24; cf. Mt 26:42).

(Rm 5, 18) Acquittal and life came to all

[18] In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all.

(CCC 388) With the progress of Revelation, the reality of sin is also illuminated. Although to some extent the People of God in the Old Testament had tried to understand the pathos of the human condition in the light of the history of the fall narrated in Genesis, they could not grasp this story's ultimate meaning, which is revealed only in the light of the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (Cf. Rom 5:12-21). We must know Christ as the source of grace in order to know Adam as the source of sin. The Spirit-Paraclete, sent by the risen Christ, came to "convict the world concerning sin" (Jn 16:8), by revealing him who is its Redeemer. (CCC 402) All men are implicated in Adam's sin, as St. Paul affirms: "By one man's disobedience many (that is, all men) were made sinners": "sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned..." (Rom 5:12, 19). The Apostle contrasts the universality of sin and death with the universality of salvation in Christ. "Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men" (Rom 5:18). (CCC 604) By giving up his own Son for our sins, God manifests that his plan for us is one of benevolent love, prior to any merit on our part: "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10; 4:19). God "shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). (CCC 605) At the end of the parable of the lost sheep Jesus recalled that God's love excludes no one: "So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish" (Mt 18:14). He affirms that he came "to give his life as a ransom for many"; this last term is not restrictive, but contrasts the whole of humanity with the unique person of the redeemer who hands himself over to save us (Mt 20:28; cf. Rom 5:18-19). The Church, following the apostles, teaches that Christ died for all men without exception: "There is not, never has been, and never will be a single human being for whom Christ did not suffer" (Council of Quiercy (853): DS 624; cf. 2 Cor 5:15; 1 Jn 2:2).

(Rm 5, 19) Many will be made righteous

[19] For just as through the disobedience of one person the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one the many will be made righteous.

(CCC 397) Man, tempted by the devil, let his trust in his Creator die in his heart and, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God's command. This is what man's

first sin consisted of (Cf. Gen 3:1-11; Rom 5:19). All subsequent sin would be disobedience toward God and lack of trust in his goodness. (CCC 532) Jesus' obedience to his mother and legal father fulfills the fourth commandment perfectly and was the temporal image of his filial obedience to his Father in heaven. The everyday obedience of Jesus to Joseph and Mary both announced and anticipated the obedience of Holy Thursday: "Not my will..." (Lk 22:42). The obedience of Christ in the daily routine of his hidden life was already inaugurating his work of restoring what the disobedience of Adam had destroyed (Cf. Rom 5:19). (CCC 516) Christ's whole earthly life - his words and deeds, his silences and sufferings, indeed his manner of being and speaking - is *Revelation* of the Father. Jesus can say: "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father", and the Father can say: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (Jn 14:9; Lk 9:35; cf. Mt 17:5; Mk 9:7, "my beloved Son"). Because our Lord became man in order to do his Father's will, even the least characteristics of his mysteries manifest "God's love... among us" (Jn 4:9). (CCC 623) By his loving obedience to the Father, "unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8), Jesus fulfills the atoning mission (cf. Isa 53:10) of the suffering Servant, who will "make many righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities" (Isa 53:11; cf. Rom 5:19). (CCC 410) After his fall, man was not abandoned by God. On the contrary, God calls him and in a mysterious way heralds the coming victory over evil and his restoration from his fall (Cf. Gen 3:9, 15). This passage in Genesis is called the *Protoevangelium* ("first gospel"): the first announcement of the Messiah and Redeemer, of a battle between the serpent and the Woman, and of the final victory of a descendant of hers. (CCC 411) The Christian tradition sees in this passage an announcement of the "New Adam" who, because he "became obedient unto death, even death on a cross", makes amends superabundantly for the disobedience of Adam (Cf. 1 Cor 15:21-22, 45; Phil 2:8; Rom 5:19-20). Furthermore many Fathers and Doctors of the Church have seen the woman announced in the "*Proto-evangelium*" as Mary, the mother of Christ, the "new Eve". Mary benefited first of all and uniquely from Christ's victory over sin: she was preserved from all stain of original sin and by a special grace of God committed no sin of any kind during her whole earthly life (Cf. Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*: DS 2803; Council of Trent: DS 1573).

(Rm 5, 20) Grace overflowed all the more

[20] The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more,

(CCC 312) In time we can discover that God in his almighty providence can bring a good from the consequences of an evil, even a moral evil, caused by his creatures: "It was not you", said Joseph to his brothers, "who sent me here, but God.... You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive" (Gen 45:8; 50:20; cf. Tob 2:12 (Vulg.)). From the greatest moral evil ever committed - the rejection and murder of God's only Son, caused by the sins of all men - God, by his grace that "abounded all the more" (Cf. Rom 5:20), brought the greatest of goods: the glorification of Christ and our redemption. But for all that, evil never becomes a good. (CCC 385) God is infinitely good and all his works are good. Yet no one can escape the experience of suffering or the evils in nature which seem to be linked to the limitations proper to creatures: and above all to the question of moral evil. Where does evil come from? "I sought whence evil comes and there was no solution", said St. Augustine (St. Augustine, *Conf.* 7, 7, 11: PL 32, 739), and his own

painful quest would only be resolved by his conversion to the living God. For "the mystery of lawlessness" is clarified only in the light of the "mystery of our religion" (2 Thess 2:7; 1 Tim 3:16). The revelation of divine love in Christ manifested at the same time the extent of evil and the superabundance of grace (Cf. Rom 5:20). We must therefore approach the question of the origin of evil by fixing the eyes of our faith on him who alone is its conqueror (Cf. Lk 11:21-22; Jn 16:11; 1 Jn 3:8).

(Rm 5, 21) Grace also might reign through Jesus

[21] So that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(CCC 412) *But why did God not prevent the first man from sinning?* St. Leo the Great responds, "Christ's inexpressible grace gave us blessings better than those the demon's envy had taken away" (St. Leo the Great, *Sermo* 73, 4: PL 54, 396), and St. Thomas Aquinas wrote, "There is nothing to prevent human nature's being raised up to something greater, even after sin; God permits evil in order to draw forth some greater good. Thus St. Paul says, 'Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more'; and the Exsultet sings, 'O happy fault,...which gained for us so great a Redeemer!'" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III, I, 3, *ad* 3; cf. Rom 5:20). (CCC 420) The victory that Christ won over sin has given us greater blessings than those which sin had taken from us: "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Rom 5:20). (CCC 1848) As St. Paul affirms, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Rom 5:20). But to do its work grace must uncover sin so as to convert our hearts and bestow on us "righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 5:21). Like a physician who probes the wound before treating it, God, by his Word and by his Spirit, casts a living light on sin: Conversion *requires convincing of sin*; it includes the interior judgment of conscience, and this, being a proof of the action of the Spirit of truth in man's inmost being, becomes at the same time the start of a new grant of grace and love: "Receive the Holy Spirit." Thus in this "convincing concerning sin" we discover a *double gift*: the gift of the truth of conscience and the gift of the certainty of redemption. The Spirit of truth is the Consoler (John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, 31 § 2).

Romans 6

(Rm 6, 1-6) We too might live in newness of life

[1] What then shall we say? Shall we persist in sin that grace may abound? Of course not! [2] How can we who died to sin yet live in it? [3] Or are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? [4] We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. [5] For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. [6] We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin.

(CCC 1214) This sacrament is called *Baptism*, after the central rite by which it is carried out: to baptize (Greek *baptizein*) means to "plunge" or "immerse"; the "plunge" into the water symbolizes the catechumen's burial into

Christ's death, from which he rises up by resurrection with him, as "a new creature" (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Cf. Rom 6:34; Col 2:12). (CCC 1227) According to the Apostle Paul, the believer enters through Baptism into communion with Christ's death, is buried with him, and rises with him: Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (Rom 6:3-4; cf. Col 2:12). The baptized have "put on Christ" (Gal 3:27). Through the Holy Spirit, Baptism is a bath that purifies, justifies, and sanctifies (Cf. 1 Cor 6:11; 12:13). (CCC 1987) The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is, to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" and through Baptism (Rom 3:22; cf. 6:3-4): But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves as dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:8-11).

(Rm 6, 7-14) Dead to sin and living for God in Christ

[7] For a dead person has been absolved from sin. [8] If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. [9] We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. [10] As to his death, he died to sin once and for all; as to his life, he lives for God. [11] Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as (being) dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus. [12] Therefore, sin must not reign over your mortal bodies so that you obey their desires. [13] And do not present the parts of your bodies to sin as weapons for wickedness, but present yourselves to God as raised from the dead to life and the parts of your bodies to God as weapons for righteousness. [14] For sin is not to have any power over you, since you are not under the law but under grace.

(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). (CCC 977) Our Lord tied the forgiveness of sins to faith and Baptism: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mk 16:15-16). Baptism is the first and chief sacrament of forgiveness of sins because it unites us with Christ, who died for our sins and rose for our justification, so that "we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:4; cf. 4:25).

(Rm 6, 15-19) As slaves to righteousness

[15] What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? Of course not! [16] Do you not know that if you present yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? [17] But thanks be to God that, although you were once slaves of sin, you have become obedient from the heart to the pattern of teaching to which you were entrusted. [18] Freed from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. [19] I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your nature. For just as you presented the parts of your bodies as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness for lawlessness, so now present them as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

(CCC 197) As on the day of our Baptism, when our whole life was entrusted to the "standard of teaching" (Rom 6:17), let us embrace the Creed of our life-giving faith. To say the Credo with faith is to enter into communion with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and also with the whole Church which transmits the faith to us and in whose midst we believe: "This Creed is the spiritual seal, our heart's meditation and an ever-present guardian; it is, unquestionably, the treasure of our soul" (St. Ambrose, *Expl. symb.* I: PL 17, 1193). (CCC 1733) The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to "the slavery of sin" (Cf. Rom 6:17). (CCC 1995) The Holy Spirit is the master of the interior life. By giving birth to the "inner man" (Cf. Rom 7:22; Eph 3:16), justification entails the *sanctification* of his whole being: Just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.... But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life (Rom 6:19, 22).

(Rm 6, 20-23) The gift of God is eternal life in Christ

[20] For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. [21] But what profit did you get then from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. [22] But now that you have been freed from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit that you have leads to sanctification, and its end is eternal life. [23] For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(CCC 1006) "It is in regard to death that man's condition is most shrouded in doubt" (GS 18). In a sense bodily death is natural, but for faith it is in fact "the wages of sin" (Rom 6:23; cf. Gen 2:17). For those who die in Christ's grace it is a participation in the death of the Lord, so that they can also share his Resurrection (Cf. Rom 6:3-9; Phil 3:10-11). (CCC 1010) Because of Christ, Christian death has a positive meaning: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil 1:21). "The saying is sure: if we have died with him, we will also live with him (2 Tim 2:11). What is essentially new about Christian death is this: through Baptism, the Christian has already "died with Christ" sacramentally, in order to live a new life; and if we die in Christ's grace, physical death completes this "dying with Christ" and so completes our incorporation into him in his redeeming act: It is better for me to die in (*eis*) Christ Jesus than to reign over the ends of the earth. Him it is I

seek - who died for us. Him it is I desire - who rose for us. I am on the point of giving birth.... Let me receive pure light; when I shall have arrived there, then shall I be a man (St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Rom.*, 6, 1-2: *Apostolic Fathers*, II/2, 217-220).

Romans 7

(Rm 7, 1-6) But now we are released from the law

[1] Are you unaware, brothers (for I am speaking to people who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over one as long as one lives? [2] Thus a married woman is bound by law to her living husband; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law in respect to her husband. [3] Consequently, while her husband is alive she will be called an adulteress if she consorts with another man. But if her husband dies she is free from that law, and she is not an adulteress if she consorts with another man. [4] In the same way, my brothers, you also were put to death to the law through the body of Christ, so that you might belong to another, to the one who was raised from the dead in order that we might bear fruit for God. [5] For when we were in the flesh, our sinful passions, awakened by the law, worked in our members to bear fruit for death. [6] But now we are released from the law, dead to what held us captive, so that we may serve in the newness of the spirit and not under the obsolete letter.

(CCC 1963) According to Christian tradition, the Law is holy, spiritual, and good (Cf. Rom 7:12, 14, 16), yet still imperfect. Like a tutor (Cf. Gal 3:24) it shows what must be done, but does not of itself give the strength, the grace of the Spirit, to fulfill it. Because of sin, which it cannot remove, it remains a law of bondage. According to St. Paul, its special function is to denounce and *disclose sin*, which constitutes a "law of concupiscence" in the human heart (Cf. Rom 7). However, the Law remains the first stage on the way to the kingdom. It prepares and disposes the chosen people and each Christian for conversion and faith in the Savior God. It provides a teaching which endures for ever, like the Word of God.

(Rm 7, 7-13) Apart from the law sin is dead

[7] What then can we say? That the law is sin? Of course not! Yet I did not know sin except through the law, and I did not know what it is to covet except that the law said, "You shall not covet." [8] But sin, finding an opportunity in the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetousness. Apart from the law sin is dead. [9] I once lived outside the law, but when the commandment came, sin became alive; [10] then I died, and the commandment that was for life turned out to be death for me. [11] For sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and through it put me to death. [12] So then the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. [13] Did the good, then, become death for me? Of course not! Sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin, worked death in me through the good, so that sin might become sinful beyond measure through the commandment.

(CCC 2542) The Law entrusted to Israel never sufficed to justify those subject to it; it even became the instrument of "lust" (Cf. Rom 7:7). The gap between wanting and doing points to the conflict between God's Law which is the "law of my mind," and another law "making me captive to the law of sin which

dwells in my members" (Rom 7:23; cf. 7:10). (CCC 1994) Justification is the *most excellent work of God's love* made manifest in Christ Jesus and granted by the Holy Spirit. It is the opinion of St. Augustine that "the justification of the wicked is a greater work than the creation of heaven and earth," because "heaven and earth will pass away but the salvation and justification of the elect... will not pass away" (St. Augustine, *In Jo. ev.* 72, 3: PL 35, 1823). He holds also that the justification of sinners surpasses the creation of the angels in justice, in that it bears witness to a greater mercy.

(Rm 7, 14-25) When I want to do right, evil is at hand

[14] We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold into slavery to sin. [15] What I do, I do not understand. For I do not do what I want, but I do what I hate. [16] Now if I do what I do not want, I concur that the law is good. [17] So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. [18] For I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh. The willing is ready at hand, but doing the good is not. [19] For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want. [20] Now if (I) do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. [21] So, then, I discover the principle that when I want to do right, evil is at hand. [22] For I take delight in the law of God, in my inner self, [23] but I see in my members another principle at war with the law of my mind, taking me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. [24] Miserable one that I am! Who will deliver me from this mortal body? [25] Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, I myself, with my mind, serve the law of God but, with my flesh, the law of sin.

(CCC 405) Although it is proper to each individual (Cf. Council of Trent: DS 1513), original sin does not have the character of a personal fault in any of Adam's descendants. It is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted: it is wounded in the natural powers proper to it, subject to ignorance, suffering and the dominion of death, and inclined to sin - an inclination to evil that is called concupiscence". Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ's grace, erases original sin and turns a man back towards God, but the consequences for nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and summon him to spiritual battle. (CCC 408) The consequences of original sin and of all men's personal sins put the world as a whole in the sinful condition aptly described in St. John's expression, "the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29). This expression can also refer to the negative influence exerted on people by communal situations and social structures that are the fruit of men's sins (Cf. John Paul II, RP 16). (CCC 1741) *Liberation and salvation*. By his glorious Cross Christ has won salvation for all men. He redeemed them from the sin that held them in bondage. "For freedom Christ has set us free" (Gal 5: 1). In him we have communion with the "truth that makes us free" (Cf. In 8:32). The Holy Spirit has been given to us and, as the Apostle teaches, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3:17). Already we glory in the "liberty of the children of God" (Rom 8:21).

Romans 8

(Rm 8, 1-9) But you are not in the flesh

[1] Hence, now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. [2] For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed you from the law of sin and death. [3] For what the law, weakened by the flesh, was powerless to do, this God has done: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for the sake of sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, [4] so that the righteous decree of the law might be fulfilled in us, who live not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. [5] For those who live according to the flesh are concerned with the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit with the things of the spirit. [6] The concern of the flesh is death, but the concern of the spirit is life and peace. [7] For the concern of the flesh is hostility toward God; it does not submit to the law of God, nor can it; [8] and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. [9] But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

(CCC 691) "Holy Spirit" is the proper name of the one whom we adore and glorify with the Father and the Son. The Church has received this name from the Lord and professes it in the Baptism of her new children (Cf. Mt 28:19). The term "Spirit" translates the Hebrew word *ruah*, which, in its primary sense, means breath, air, wind. Jesus indeed uses the sensory image of the wind to suggest to Nicodemus the transcendent newness of him who is personally God's breath, the divine Spirit (Jn 3:5-8). On the other hand, "Spirit" and "Holy" are divine attributes common to the three divine persons. By joining the two terms, Scripture, liturgy, and theological language designate the inexpressible person of the Holy Spirit, without any possible equivocation with other uses of the terms "spirit" and "holy." (CCC 693) Besides the proper name of "Holy Spirit," which is most frequently used in the *Acts of the Apostles* and in the Epistles, we also find in St. Paul the titles: the Spirit of the promise (Cf. Gal 3:14; Eph 1:13), the Spirit of adoption (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6), the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9), the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor 3:17), and the Spirit of God (Rom 8:9, 14; 15:19; 1 Cor 6:11; 7:40), - and, in St. Peter, the Spirit of glory (1 Pet 4:14).

(Rm 8, 10-13) His Spirit that dwells in you

[10] But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness. [11] If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit that dwells in you. [12] Consequently, brothers, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. [13] For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

(CCC 658) Christ, "the first-born from the dead" (Col 1:18), is the principle of our own resurrection, even now by the justification of our souls (cf. Rom 6:4), and one day by the new life he will impart to our bodies (cf. Rom 8:11). (CCC 990) The term "flesh" refers to man in his state of weakness and mortality (Cf. Gen 6:3; Ps 56:5; Isa 40:6). The "resurrection of the flesh" (the literal formulation

of the Apostles' Creed) means not only that the immortal soul will live on after death, but that even our "mortal body" will come to life again (Rom 8:11).

(Rm 8, 14-17) We are children of God, then heirs

[14] For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. [15] For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, "Abba, Father!" [16] The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [17] and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

(CCC 1996) Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is *favor*, the *free and undeserved help* that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life (Cf. Jn 1:12-18; 17:3; Rom 8:14-17; 2 Pet 1:3-4). (CCC 1997) Grace is a *participation in the life of God*. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body. As an "adopted son" he can henceforth call God "Father," in union with the only Son. He receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church. (CCC 1265) Baptism not only purifies from all sins, but also makes the neophyte "a new creature," an adopted son of God, who has become a "partaker of the divine nature" (2 Cor 5:17; 2 Pet 1:4; cf. Gal 4:5-7), member of Christ and coheir with him (Cf. 1 Cor 6:15; 12:27; Rom 8:17), and a temple of the Holy Spirit (Cf. 1 Cor 6:19).

(Rm 8, 18-23) All creation is groaning in labor pains

[18] I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. [19] For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; [20] for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope [21] that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. [22] We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; [23] and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

(CCC 293) Scripture and Tradition never cease to teach and celebrate this fundamental truth: "The world was made for the glory of God" (*Dei Filius*, can. § 5: DS 3025). St. Bonaventure explains that God created all things "not to increase his glory, but to show it forth and to communicate it" (St. Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* I, 2, 2, 1), for God has no other reason for creating than his love and goodness: "Creatures came into existence when the key of love opened his hand" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sent.* II, prol.). The First Vatican Council explains: This one, true God, of his own goodness and "almighty power", not for increasing his own beatitude, nor for attaining his perfection, but in order to manifest this perfection through the benefits which he bestows on creatures, with absolute freedom of counsel "and from the beginning of time, made out of nothing both orders of creatures, the spiritual and the corporeal..." (*Dei Filius* I: DS 3002; cf. Lateran Council IV (1215): DS 800). (CCC 294) The glory of God consists in the realization of this manifestation and communication of his goodness, for which the world was created. God made us "to be his sons through Jesus Christ,

according to the purpose of his will, *to the praise of his glorious grace*" (Eph 1:5-6), for "the glory of God is man fully alive; moreover man's life is the vision of God: if God's revelation through creation has already obtained life for all the beings that dwell on earth, how much more will the Word's manifestation of the Father obtain life for those who see God" (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 20, 7: PG 7/1, 1037). The ultimate purpose of creation is that God "who is the creator of all things may at last become "all in all", thus simultaneously assuring his own glory and our beatitude" (AG 2; cf. 1 Cor 15:28).

(Rm 8, 24-25) For in hope we were saved

[24] For in hope we were saved. Now hope that sees for itself is not hope. For who hopes for what one sees? [25] But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance.

(CCC 1817) Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful" (Heb 10:23). "The Holy Spirit... he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:6-7). (CCC 1818) The virtue of hope responds to the aspiration to happiness which God has placed in the heart of every man; it takes up the hopes that inspire men's activities and purifies them so as to order them to the Kingdom of heaven; it keeps man from discouragement; it sustains him during times of abandonment; it opens up his heart in expectation of eternal beatitude. Buoyed up by hope, he is preserved from selfishness and led to the happiness that flows from charity. (CCC 2016) The children of our holy mother the Church rightly hope *for the grace of final perseverance and the recompense* of God their Father for the good works accomplished with his grace in communion with Jesus (Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1576). Keeping the same rule of life, believers share the "blessed hope" of those whom the divine mercy gathers into the "holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev 21:2). ***

(Rm 8, 26-27) The Spirit intercedes for the holy ones

[26] In the same way, the Spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings. [27] And the one who searches hearts knows what is the intention of the Spirit, because it intercedes for the holy ones according to God's will.

(CCC 741) "The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with sighs too deep for words" (Rom 8:26). The Holy Spirit, the artisan of God's works, is the master of prayer. (CCC 2735) In the first place, we ought to be astonished by this fact: when we praise God or give him thanks for his benefits in general, we are not particularly concerned whether or not our prayer is acceptable to him. On the other hand, we demand to see the results of our petitions. What is the image of God that motivates our prayer: an instrument to be used? or the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? (CCC 2736) Are we convinced that "we do not know how to pray as we ought"? (Rom 8:26). Are we asking God for "what is good for us"? Our Father knows what we need before we ask him (Cf. Mt 6:8), but he awaits

our petition because the dignity of his children lies in their freedom. We must pray, then, with his Spirit of freedom, to be able truly to know what he wants (Cf. Rom 8:27). (CCC 2737) "You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions" (Jas 4:3; cf. The whole context: Jas 4:1-10; 1:5-8; 5:16). If we ask with a divided heart, we are "adulterers" (Jas 4:4); God cannot answer us, for he desires our well-being, our life. "Or do you suppose that it is in vain that the scripture says, 'He yearns jealously over the spirit which he has made to dwell in us?'" (Jas 4:5). That our God is "jealous" for us is the sign of how true his love is. If we enter into the desire of his Spirit, we shall be heard. Do not be troubled if you do not immediately receive from God what you ask him; for he desires to do something even greater for you, while you cling to him in prayer (Evagrius Ponticus, *De oratione* 34: PG 79, 1173). God wills that our desire should be exercised in prayer, that we may be able to receive what he is prepared to give (St. Augustine, *Ep.* 130, 8, 17: PL 33, 500).

(Rm 8, 28-31) Those he justified he also glorified

[28] We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. [29] For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. [30] And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified. [31] What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

(CCC 381) Man is predestined to reproduce the image of God's Son made man, the "image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15), so that Christ shall be the first-born of a multitude of brothers and sisters (cf. Eph 1:3-6; Rom 8:29). (CCC 313) "We know that in everything God works for good for those who love him" (Rom 8:28). The constant witness of the saints confirms this truth: St. Catherine of Siena said to "those who are scandalized and rebel against what happens to them": "Everything comes from love, all is ordained for the salvation of man, God does nothing without this goal in mind" (St. Catherine of Siena, *Dialogue on Providence*, ch. IV, 138). St. Thomas More, shortly before his martyrdom, consoled his daughter: "Nothing can come but that that God wills. And I make me very sure that whatsoever that be, seem it never so bad in sight, it shall indeed be the best" [*The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More*, ed. Elizabeth F. Rogers (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), letter 206, lines 661-663]. Dame Julian of Norwich: "Here I was taught by the grace of God that I should steadfastly keep me in the faith... And that at the same time I should take my stand on and earnestly believe in what our Lord shewed in this time - that 'all manner [of] thing shall be well'" (Julian of Norwich, *The Revelations of Divine Love*, tr. James Walshe SJ (London: 1961), ch. 32, 99-100). (CCC 314) We firmly believe that God is master of the world and of its history. But the ways of his providence are often unknown to us. Only at the end, when our partial knowledge ceases, when we see God "face to face" (1 Cor 13:12), will we fully know the ways by which - even through the dramas of evil and sin - God has guided his creation to that definitive sabbath rest (Cf. Gen 2:2) for which he created heaven and earth.

(Rm 8, 32-36) It is God who acquits us

[32] He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him? [33] Who

will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. [34] Who will condemn? It is Christ (Jesus) who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. [35] What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? [36] As it is written: "For your sake we are being slain all the day; we are looked upon as sheep to be slaughtered."

(CCC 1741) *Liberation and salvation*. By his glorious Cross Christ has won salvation for all men. He redeemed them from the sin that held them in bondage. "For freedom Christ has set us free" (Gal 5: 1). In him we have communion with the "truth that makes us free" (Cf. In 8:32). The Holy Spirit has been given to us and, as the Apostle teaches, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3:17). Already we glory in the "liberty of the children of God" (Rom 8:21). (CCC 381) Man is predestined to reproduce the image of God's Son made man, the "image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15), so that Christ shall be the first-born of a multitude of brothers and sisters (cf. Eph 1:3-6; Rom 8:29). (CCC 2013) "All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity" (LG 40 § 2). All are called to holiness: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). In order to reach this perfection the faithful should use the strength dealt out to them by Christ's gift, so that... Doing the will of the Father in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbor. Thus the holiness of the People of God will grow in fruitful abundance, as is clearly shown in the history of the Church through the lives of so many saints (LG 40 § 2).

(Rm 8, 37-39) To separate us from the love of God

[37] No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. [38] For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, [39] nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(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 736) By this power of the Spirit, God's children can bear much fruit. He who has grafted us onto the true vine will make us bear "the fruit of the Spirit:... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal 5:22-23). "We live by the Spirit"; the more we renounce ourselves, the more we "walk by the Spirit" (Gal 5:25; cf. Mt 16:24-26). Through the Holy Spirit we are restored to paradise, led back to the Kingdom of heaven, and adopted as children, given confidence to call God "Father" and to share in Christ's grace, called children of light and given

a share in eternal glory (St. Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 15, 36: PG 32, 132). (CCC 735) He, then, gives us the "pledge" or "first fruits" of our inheritance: the very life of the Holy Trinity, which is to love as "God [has] loved us" (1 Jn 4:11-12; cf. Rom 8:23; 2 Cor 1:21). This love (the "charity" of 1 Cor 13) is the source of the new life in Christ, made possible because we have received "power" from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; cf. 1 Cor 13).