



## Session 36. Pilgrimage, Judgment, and Destiny

### 1) Welcome

- » How was your week? What's new or noteworthy—something that happened or an idea or discovery?
- » How might you imagine heaven?

### 2) Presentation of the Theme

Christians believe that the Kingdom of God, inaugurated by Jesus, will come to fullness when people are raised and the just will share in the fullness of life and love. Those who have consciously and consistently rejected God will not, however, share in this fullness. Catholics believe particularly that those who die united to Jesus but still imperfect will be able to go through a state of purification in order to attain the state of heaven. Purgatory is what Catholics refer to as this state of purification.

#### The Scriptures give us a powerful image of resurrection and the defeat of sin:

*But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead came also through a human being. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*

~1 Corinthians 15:20-26

#### From the *US Catechism*:

“Immediately after death, each person comes before God and is judged individually (the particular judgment) and enters heaven, Purgatory, or hell. Yet at the end of time when Christ returns in glory, a final judgment will occur when all are raised from the dead and assembled before God; then their relationship to him is made public (the general judgment)” (p. 156).

#### *How does the idea of judgment make you feel?*

### 3) Discussion and Sharing

- » Looking at your personal experience of death, how does the idea of an afterlife strike you? In what way does it make sense, and in what way does it stretch your imagination?
- » How do you think that our present human experience anticipates or looks toward something like heaven?
- » How do you react to the idea of a final judgment that our relationship with God is fixed and complete?
- » Can you imagine people permanently rejecting God?

### 4) Questions

What questions do you have about Catholic teaching on judgment? Here we can also discuss the Catholic idea of purgatory as a transition state of further purification after death in anticipation of heaven as well as the idea of the real possibility of hell. Furthermore, we can also look at Catholic customs of funerals and burials.



## 5) Catholic Factoid

Because Catholics profess belief in the “Communion of Saints,” they affirm that all believers, living and dead, can pray for the needs of others, especially for their salvation. Catholics pray for the deceased and proclaim that the deceased can pray for the living.

## 6) Prayer

Read (or listen to) this hymn from the Book of Revelation:

*A voice coming from the throne said:  
“Praise our God, all you his servants,  
[and] you who revere him, small and great.”  
Then I heard something like the sound of a great multitude  
or the sound of rushing water or mighty peals of thunder, as they said:  
“Alleluia!  
The Lord has established his reign,  
[our] God, the almighty.  
Let us rejoice and be glad  
and give him glory.  
For the wedding day of the Lamb has come,  
his bride has made herself ready.  
She was allowed to wear  
a bright, clean linen garment.”  
(The linen represents the righteous deeds of the holy ones.)*

~Revelation 19:5-8

As you are comfortable, offer aloud prayers for loved ones who have died.

## 7) Announcements

## 8) Hospitality

