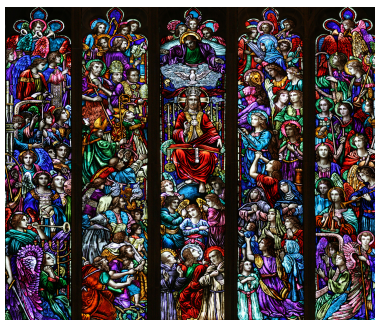




The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: Profession of Faith
Resurrection of the Dead – Part II



Communion of Saints
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Introduction

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names]

Our panelists represent a rather broad background in catechesis gained in support of various parishes as well as a variety of age and spiritual interest groups. So, welcome to our panelists as well as to our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise for this opportunity to open and share your Holy Word this day. We pray that You are with us and all our listeners as we share with one another the blessings of faith. We pray You will grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to learn Your Holy Truth.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray.

Discussion:

We concluded part I of our discussion of our **belief in the resurrection of the dead** with a quote from John 11:25-26, where Jesus said to Martha:

25 "I am the **resurrection** and the life; whoever **believes** in me, even if he dies, will live, 26 and everyone who lives and **believes** in me will never die. Do you **believe** this?"
– Jesus Christ (John 11:25-26)

This question, "Do you **believe** in this?" Jesus asked of Martha, but what He asked of Martha, He also asks of us, and so, in our profession of **faith**, we proclaim, "...I look forward to the **resurrection of the dead**..." This statement reveals to us the opportunity for everlasting life, but as we also saw in Mark 9:2-10, that after Peter, James, and John witnessed the Transfiguration of Jesus, as well as Moses and Elijah standing before them, that they were somewhat bewildered, and as they came down the mountain, we are told that "...they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what **rising from the dead** meant." (Mark 9:10)

While we examined some scriptural examples from both the Old and New Testaments, the threads of this element of **faith** exist in many places. I mentioned that for the fullness of our understanding, we must look beyond one verse, passage, or book of the Bible. I also pointed out that one of the fundamental missions of the Church is to help us unlock, for our modern day comprehension, the elements of our **faith**. One means by which this mission is fulfilled is through the Catechism of the Catholic Church, so today, we will spend some time there.

(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 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." 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.

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**. 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. (Romans 4:13-17)

(**Question 1:** In this paragraph of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we see the reference to the fact that God created everything out of nothing. What does this tell us about the power of God over both death and life and what does **faith**, righteousness, and the law got to do with it?)

7 [But] whatever gains I had, these I have come to consider a loss because of Christ. 8 More than that, I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, **not having any righteousness of my own based on the law but that which comes through **faith** in Christ**, the righteousness from God, depending on **faith** 10 to know him and the

power of his **resurrection** and [the] sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death, *11 if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.* (Philippians 3:7-11)

(CCC: 428) Whoever is called “to teach Christ” must first seek “the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus”; he must suffer “the loss of all things . . .” in order to “gain Christ and be found in him,” and “to know him and the power of his **resurrection**, and [to] share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible [he] may attain the **resurrection from the dead.**”

(CCC: 429) From this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to “evangelize,” and to lead others to the “yes” of **faith** in Jesus Christ. But at the same time the need to know this **faith** better makes itself felt.

(Question 2: These paragraphs of the Catechism of the Catholic Church carry a message, not only for those listeners who are parents, catechists, or who are engaged in any other vocation or ministry responsible for teaching and evangelizing our **faith**, but for all of us who profess our **faith**, for in professing, we should also have a desire for sharing the fullness of the good news of the Lord. Why do we think Paul, one of the greatest evangelists of the Word, qualifies his observation with the words, “*if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead,*” and why must we know Jesus if we are to explain the power of His **resurrection**?)

(CCC: 991) **Belief** in the **resurrection of the dead** has been an essential element of the Christian **faith** from its beginnings. “The confidence of Christians is the **resurrection of the dead; believing this we live.**”

How can some of you say that there is no **resurrection** of the dead? But if there is no **resurrection of the dead**, then Christ has not been **raised**; if Christ has not been **raised**, then our preaching is in vain and your **faith** is in vain. . . . But in fact Christ has been **raised from the dead**, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. (1 Corinthians 15:12-14)

(Question 3: In this paragraph of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, it cites our confidence as Christians, but it references scripture where Paul is speaking to a crowd where some do not **believe**. What might be the reason some would say there is no **resurrection** and what rational does Paul give in response to the assertion?)

(CCC: 992) God revealed the **resurrection of the dead** to his people progressively. Hope in the bodily **resurrection of the dead** established itself as a consequence intrinsic to **faith** in God as creator of the whole man, soul and body. The creator of heaven and earth is also the one who **faithfully** maintains his covenant with Abraham and his posterity. It was in this double perspective that **faith** in the **resurrection** came to be expressed. In their trials, the Maccabean martyrs confessed:

The King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws. One cannot but choose to die at the hands of men and to cherish the hope that God gives of being **raised** again by him.

13 After he had died, they tortured and maltreated the fourth brother in the same way.
14 When he was near death, he said, “It is my choice to die at the hands of mortals with the hope that God will restore me to life; but for you, there will be no resurrection to life.” (2 Maccabees 7:13-14)

(Question 4: During our last discussion, we walked through scriptural examples from both the Old and New Testaments in relation to our **belief in the resurrection of the dead**. From that examination, we can see the progression of what is revealed to us in scripture about the **resurrection of the dead**. Why is the word, “hope,” as it is used in this paragraph of the Catechism of the Catholic Church as well as 2 Maccabees 7:14, important to our understanding? What is the significance of hope and what does it imply in this context?)

(CCC: 996) From the beginning, Christian **faith** in the resurrection has met with incomprehension and opposition. “On no point does the Christian **faith** encounter more opposition than on the **resurrection of the body**.” It is very commonly accepted that the life of the human person continues in a spiritual fashion after death. But how can we believe that this body, so clearly mortal, could **rise to everlasting life**?

(CCC: 997) What is “**rising**”? In death, the separation of the soul from the body, the human body decays and the soul goes to meet God, while awaiting its reunion with its **glorified body**. God, in his almighty power, will definitively grant **incorruptible life** to our bodies by reuniting them with our souls, through the power of Jesus’ **Resurrection**.

(Question 5: Here, we see reference to the “glorified body.” What might we expect of the “glorified body” which will be reunified with our soul?)

49 Just as we have borne the image of the earthly one, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one. (1 Corinthians 15:49)

13 Then one of the elders spoke up and said to me, “Who are these wearing white robes, and where did they come from?” 14 I said to him, “My lord, you are the one who knows.” He said to me, “These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 “For this reason they stand before God’s throne and worship him day and night in his temple. The one who sits on the throne will shelter them.

16 They will not hunger or thirst anymore, nor will the sun or any heat strike them.

17 For the Lamb who is in the center of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

(Revelation 7:13-17)

(CCC: 998) Who will rise? **All the dead will rise**, “those who have done good, to the **resurrection** of life, and those who have done evil, to the **resurrection** of judgment.”

(Question 6: We profess the **resurrection of the dead**, but we often think in terms of **resurrection** to heaven. **What does this paragraph of the Catechism reveal to us?)**

*Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;
Some to everlasting life, others to reproach and everlasting disgrace.
(Daniel 12:2)*

[Jesus said:] 24 **Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life.** 25 **Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.** 26 *For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to his Son the possession of life in himself.* 27 *And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man.* 28 **Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation.**
(John 5:24-29)

(CCC: 999) How? **Christ is raised with his own body**: “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself”; but he did not return to an earthly life. So, in him, “all of them will rise again with their own bodies which they now bear,” but Christ “**will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body,**” into a “**spiritual body**”: But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” You foolish man! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body which is to be, but a bare kernel What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. . . . **The dead will be raised imperishable. . . . For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality.**

(CCC: 1000) **This “how” exceeds our imagination and understanding; it is accessible only to faith.** Yet our participation in the Eucharist already gives us a foretaste of Christ’s transfiguration of our bodies: Just as bread that comes from the earth, after God’s blessing has been invoked upon it, is no longer ordinary bread, but Eucharist, formed of two things, **the one earthly and the other heavenly: so too our bodies, which partake of the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, but possess the hope of resurrection.**

(Question 7: We often inquire about the “how” of our earthly existence. That is the function of science, to study and try to understand the “how things work in God’s creation.” Considering how we struggle to understand that which we can physically experience, it should not be a surprise to us that it is a greater challenge to comprehend the kingdom we have not yet experienced. **What does this paragraph of the Catechism reveal to us as to the “how” we might experience our passing from this world to our existence in the next?)**

36 While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." 37 But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. 38 Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? 39 Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have."
(Luke 24:36-39)

35 But someone may say, "How are **the dead raised**? With what kind of body will they come back?" 36 You fool! What you sow is not brought to life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be but a bare kernel of wheat, perhaps, or of some other kind; 38 but God gives it a body as he chooses, and to each of the seeds its own body. (1 Corinthians 15:35-38)

(CCC: 1001) When? Definitely "at the last day," "at the end of the world." Indeed, the **resurrection of the dead** is closely associated with Christ's Parousia:

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the **dead in Christ will rise first.**

(Question 8: The old joke when one begins a trip is, "Are we there, yet?" "When" is a matter of the relationship of time and events. The Catechism tells us the **resurrection** will definitely happen on "the last day" and "at the end of the world." Are these references, "the last day" and "the end of the world," one and the same?)

(CCC: 1002) Christ will raise us up "on the last day"; but it is also true that, in a certain way, we have already risen with Christ. For, by virtue of the Holy Spirit, Christian life is already now on earth a participation in the **death and Resurrection** of Christ: And you were buried with him in Baptism, in which you were also raised with him through **faith** in the working of God, who **raised him from the dead** If then you have been **raised** with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

(CCC: 1007) Death is the end of earthly life. Our lives are measured by time, in the course of which we change, grow old and, as with all living beings on earth, death seems like the normal end of life. That aspect of death lends urgency to our lives: remembering our mortality helps us realize that we have only a limited time in which to bring our lives to fulfillment: Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, . . . before the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

(Question 9: This paragraph of the Catechism reminds us that earthly death lends urgency to our lives. What might this urgency be?)

32 "But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge,

each with his work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch. 35 Watch, therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning. 36 **May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.** 37 What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!'" (Mark 13:32-36)

Quotes:

"Perish the thought that the omnipotence of the Creator is unable, for the **raising of our bodies** and for the **restoring of them to life**, to recall all [their] parts, which were consumed by beasts or by fire, or which disintegrated into dust or ashes, or were melted away into a fluid, or were evaporated away in vapors"

– *Saint Augustine*

"[W]hoever perverts the sayings of the Lord for his own desires, and says that there is neither **resurrection** nor judgment, such a one is the firstborn of Satan. Let us, therefore, leave the foolishness and the false teaching of the crowd and turn back to the word which was delivered to us in the beginning"

– *Saint Polycarp of Smyrna*

"God will raise up your flesh immortal with your soul; and then, having become immortal, you shall see the immortal, if you will **believe** in him now; and then you will realize that you have spoken against him unjustly. But you do not **believe** that **the dead will be raised**. When it happens, then you will **believe**, whether you want to or not; but unless you **believe** now, your **faith** then will be reckoned as **unbelief**"

– *Theophilus of Antioch*

Final Thoughts:

Today we asked questions about our trust in God's power, our hope, our reasoning, and the nature of the **resurrected body**. We also discussed questions about who, how, and when, as well as the urgency before us for no one knows for certain the duration of their life.

There are a number of opinions about this **belief** and we could discuss a number of stories about things like near death experiences, but even the raising of Lazarus is not about life beyond this world, but restoring life to this world. The path which Jesus reveals through His **resurrection** is the path to His kingdom.

We are confident in the **resurrection**. Indeed, the question is not whether we shall **rise**, but to where. The warnings are many that we must be watchful with our lives, but so too, we are told that if we **believe** in Him, we shall be called to His kingdom. That brings us back to previous discussions as to what **belief** in the Son of God really means, for we are told even the demons **believe**, (James 2:19) but to the netherworld they are still condemned.

There are many things to ponder here, but there is reason for our hope, and if we truly **believe** in the One who calls us to Him, then, we must also consider the responsibilities of our **belief**. We must realize, His commandments are not only about us as individuals, but our relationship with God and those with whom He has surrounded us. As we profess and reflect upon our **faith**, let

us consider our responsibilities in this life as they prepare us for the life of the world to come. Speaking of which, that is the subject of our next discussion.

Wrap Up: My, another hour has passed. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we pick up our discussion with the examination of the last line of our Profession of Faith, which is our **belief** in “the life of the world to come.”

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. We pray that as we go our separate ways, You will continue to walk with us and help us to see how we may put on the armor of **truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation**, and the **Word** of the gospel not only for the benefit of our lives, but also the lives of all who cross our path. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: Profession of Faith: The Life of the World to Come.