

Handout Part III: Heaven

Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not ended. When the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death we gain an everlasting dwelling place in heaven.

Roman Missal, Preface of Christian Death I

What it means to be an “heir of heaven.” *When our Lord died we were left an inheritance and spiritual property. The inheritance was Heaven, which we had lost through the sin of Adam and regained by the death of Our Lord. The spiritual property was God’s grace, which He merited for us. [..]. The Church is the executor of Christ’s will, and it is its business to see that all men receive what Christ left them, namely, God’s grace and Heaven. It must also see that they are not cheated out of it by their enemies—the devil, the world, and the flesh [pages 140-41, Baltimore Catechism].*

The three states of the Church: See CCC# 954.

1. The Church glorified : in heaven
2. The Church purified [suffering]: in Purgatory
3. The pilgrim Church [also called the Church militant]: on earth

The Church glorified continually offers intercession for those on earth: *“Being more closely united to Christ, those who dwell in heaven fix the whole Church more firmly in holiness...[T]hey do not cease to intercede with the Father for us, as they proffer the merits which they acquired on earth through the one mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus... So by their fraternal concern is our weakness greatly helped.” CCC# 956*

CCC# 1023: *Those who die in God’s and friendship and are perfectly purified live for ever with Christ. They are like God for ever, for they “see him as he is,” face to face:...*

CCC #1024: *This perfect life with the Most Holy Trinity—this communion of life and love with the Trinity, with the Virgin Mary, the angels and all the blessed—is called “heaven.” Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness.*

CCC#1025: *To live in heaven is “to be with Christ.” The elect live “in Christ,” but they retain, or rather find, their true identity, their own name. “For life is to be with Christ; where Christ is, there is life, there is the kingdom.*

CCC# 1027: *This mystery of blessed communion with God and all who are in Christ is beyond all understanding and description. Scripture speaks of it in images: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the kingdom, the Father’s house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise: “no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him.”*

CCC# 1028: *Because of his transcendence, God cannot be seen as he is, unless he himself opens up his mystery to man’s immediate contemplation and given him the capacity for it. The Church calls this contemplation of God in his heavenly glory “the beautiful vision”: [..].*

CCC# 1029: *In the glory of heaven the blessed continue joyfully to fulfill God’s will in relation to other men and to all creation. Already they reign with Christ; with him “they shall reign for ever and ever.”* © Copyright www.AgapeBibleStudy.com