

Introduction

- I. First week: the question “what is religion?”
 - A. What is the meaning of everything?
 - B. Religions each answer in a particular way
- II. Christianity’s answer, briefly, is drastically different than the rest
 - A. Our goal is theosis / divinization – to become like God in heaven.
 1. This is done both in the present life and fulfilled in the next
 2. Our worship and prayer brings us into relationship with God and assists us in this task
 - B. Afterlife is to be unlike any other religion’s claim
 1. United with the Divine
 2. Maintain individuality
 3. Afterlife is not awful
- III. Kerygma.
 - A. Why is there something rather than nothing? Created.
 - B. Why is everything so obviously messed up? Captured.
 - C. What, if anything, has God done about it? Rescued.
 - D. If God has done something, how should I respond? Response.
- IV. Today we talk about the most important human being who ever lived: Jesus of Nazareth.

Born of Mary

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly.

Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”
which means “God is with us.”

When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus. (Matthew 1:18-25)

- V. The Incarnation
- VI. Fully Human

Begotten by the Father

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

All things came to be through him,
and without him nothing came to be.

What came to be
through him was life,
and this life was the light of the human race;
the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.

A man named John was sent from God.

He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world,
and the world came to be through him,
but the world did not know him.

He came to what was his own,
but his own people did not accept him.

But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God.

And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us,
and we saw his glory,
the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.

John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'"

From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him. (John 1:1-18)

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him.

After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:13-17)

- VII. Begotten, not made
- VIII. consubstantial with the Father

The Christ

He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring glad tidings to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.”

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him.

He said to them, “Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.”

- IX. Mission of Salvation

Christological Councils

Nicea (AD 325): Jesus Christ is the Son of God by nature and not by adoption. He is “begotten,” not made, of the same substance as the Father.

Ephesus (AD 431): Since the one who was born of Mary is divine, Mary is rightly called “Mother of God.”

Chalcedon (AD 451): Jesus Christ, Son of God, is true God and true man. His divine and human natures remain together without confusion, change, division, or separation.

Second Constantinople (AD 553): There is only one person—a divine person—in Jesus Christ. The human acts of Jesus are also attributed to his divine person.

- X. Care for the poor
- XI. Heresies
 - A. Gnosticism
 - B. Arianism
 - C. Adoptionism
 - D. Nestorianism

Savior

If anyone has put his trust in Him as a Man without a human mind, he is really bereft of mind, and quite unworthy of salvation. For *that which He has not assumed He has not healed; but that which is united to His Godhead is also saved.* If only half Adam fell, then that which Christ assumes and saves may be half also;

but if the whole of his nature fell, it must be united to the whole nature of Him that was begotten, and so be saved as a whole. Let them not, then, begrudge us our complete salvation, or clothe the Saviour only with bones and nerves and the portraiture of humanity. (Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 101, “To Cledonius the Priest Against Apollinarius”)

- XII. Credal Statements about salvation
 - A. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried
 - B. He descended into Hell
 - C. On the third day he rose again, in fulfillment of the scriptures
 - D. He ascended into Heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty
- XIII. Savior of *all*

Wrap-up & Announcements

We are called Christians. We follow Christ. We need to know who he is. There is, as usual, so much more. I will send out a PDF with many more sources to you all. Chapter 7 in the US Catechism for Adults (pp. 105-115) is wonderful at elaborating all of this. Questions 422 – 570 in the Catechism of the Catholic Church cover all of this too.

Schedule

Date Time Topic

Sunday, October 29, 2023 at 2pm: What is Religion about? Why should I care?

Sunday, November 5, 2023 at 2pm: What makes Christianity different?

Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 2pm: The Kerygma; The Paschal Mystery

Sunday, November 19, 2023 at 2pm: Jesus!

Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 2pm: Where does the Bible come from? (topics: Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture, Inspiration, Divine Revelation)

Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 2pm: Catholic Stuff You Should Know (topics: Prayer, Going to Mass, Importance of Sunday, What’s a Catechumen?)

Sign-in Sheet

For those who have been here before, please mark next to your name if you're here this week.

- Cody Grisamore
- Kyle Sheahan
- Baylee Cox
- Rose Setzkorn
- Chris Kolaric
- Beverly Rancuret
- Tim Habiger
- Derek Schultz
- Ernestine Hallacy
- Tiffany Conner
- Alexis Ray
- Chase Pack
- Stephanie Pack

For those who are new this week, please sign in so we can stay in touch. If you're not Catholic and are interested in joining the Church, please put an "X" in the RCIA column. You are under no obligation to join the Church, but if you are interested Father Matt will contact you personally to discuss the process and more details about how it works.

Name	Email Address	Cell Phone	RCIA?
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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