

14. April 2026
TUESDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF EASTER
“The resurrection of the body (II)”

Let us now turn to the salvific teaching on the resurrection, which is so essential that St. Paul makes it clear: *“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.”* (1 Cor 15:13 ff)

Since our Catholic faith gives us the light of truth, it is salvific in the deepest sense of the word. Nothing leads a person more deeply toward his destiny than when, in God’s grace, he recognizes the truth and accepts the salvation that God offers him in His infinite mercy through Christ Jesus. If he lives in the truth, then the heavenly Father will shape him into what He intended when He created him. This will be fulfilled in eternity. Yet we must not conceal the truth that a person, through his own fault, can fail to reach his goal and must live forever separated from the vision of God, enduring the corresponding torments. This teaching is also salutary, for it is meant to awaken us and bring our responsibility for our lives into clear focus, so that we may choose life in the truth.

What happens at the moment of a person’s death?

The Catholic Church teaches:

Immediately after death the particular judgment takes place, in which, by a Divine Sentence of Judgment, the eternal fate of the deceased person is decided. (Sent. fidei proxima.)¹

Death occurs as soon as the soul separates from the body. Immediately thereafter, judgment is carried out, and depending on God’s verdict, the soul is either already with God, on its way to Him (the place of purification), or remains separated from Him and is subjected to the torments of hell. The body decays.

¹ Ludwig Ott, Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma, 1963.

Since God created us with body and soul, the state of separation between body and soul is intended only until the day of the general resurrection of the dead. Then the body will be reunited with the soul, so that the human being may be fully restored and, as such, share in the bliss of heaven or, conversely, suffer the pain of separation from God.

The Roman Catechism offers us a wonderful and comforting insight into what the resurrected body will be like:

“Not only will the body rise, but whatever belongs to the reality of its nature, and adorns and ornaments man will be restored. For this we have the admirable words of St. Augustine: There shall then be no deformity of body; if some have been overburdened with flesh, they shall not resume its entire weight. All that exceeds the proper proportion shall be deemed superfluous. On the other hand, should the body be wasted by disease or old age, or be emaciated from any other cause, it shall be repaired by the divine power of Christ, who will not only restore the body unto us, but will repair whatever it shall have lost through the wretchedness of this life.² In another place he says: Man shall not resume his former hair, but shall be adorned with such as will become him, according to the words: “The very hairs of your head are all numbered.” (Luke 12:7). God will restore them according to His wisdom.

But the members especially, because they belong to the integrity of human nature, shall all be restored at once. The blind from nature or disease, the lame, the maimed and the paralyzed in any of their members shall rise again with entire and perfect bodies. Otherwise the desires of the soul, which so strongly incline it to a union with the body, would be far from satisfied; but we are convinced that in the resurrection these desires will be fully realized. Besides, the resurrection, like the creation, is clearly to be numbered among the principal works of God. As, therefore, at the creation all things came perfect from the hand of God, we must admit that it will be the same in the resurrection.”
(Article XI)

What a sublime teaching is given to us by the Church and so lovingly explained by St. Augustine. Our heavenly Father has thought of everything and desires to have humanity with Him in all perfection for eternity. Man will not only delight in God Himself and be enraptured by the glory of the angels who have remained faithful to God. He will also admire the beauty of his human brothers and sisters in their

² The City of God 22, 19 [cf. Enchiridion 89 f]

splendor of glory. Without a trace of vanity, he will be able to delight in himself and thank the Lord forever that God called him into being and redeemed him. His praise of God will never cease, which he will offer to God in communion with all the angels and saints.

Tomorrow we will continue with this topic.

Meditation on the reading of the day: <https://en.elijamission.net/acts-of-the-apostles-acts-432-37-community-of-goods-of-the-early-church/>

Meditation on the Gospel of the Day: <https://en.elijamission.net/the-holy-spirit-interprets-the-scriptures/>