

PURGATORY: GOOD NEWS
ABOUT THE AFTERLIFE
FOR THOSE
WHO AREN'T PERFECT YET
BASED ON A BOOK AND A SERIES
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SESSION 8: JULY 22, 2022

THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT PURGATORY

- CONSOLATION FOR BELIEVERS
- JOYS BEYOND THIS WORLD
- THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

❖ **CONSOLATION FOR BELIEVERS** Purgatory consoles believers who sin – that would be all of us.



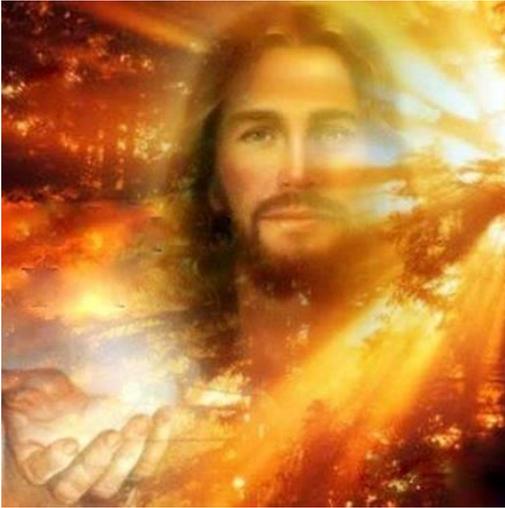
- **Death can come suddenly** – souls may not have an opportunity to make a last Confession, be absolved, and receive *Viaticum*, food for the journey. Purgatory assures us of our salvation if we turn to God as we die.
- **Purgatory assures us of God's love for us** – God loves us so much that even when we die with unconfessed sins or imperfect contrition, or with temporal punishment still due for sin, He offers us Purgatory as the final “field hospital” in which our diseased souls can receive the medicine of immortality and be prepared for the joys of Heaven.
- **Purgatory consoles believers who mourn the loss of a loved one**
- **Purgatory consoles believers with God's balance of mercy and justice** – a serial killer, rapist, or a lifelong atheist who turns to God in the last instant of their lives will be assured of salvation (God's mercy), while their Purgatorial experience will be in proportion to their contrition (God's justice).



➤ **Believers are consoled by praying for the souls in Purgatory** – this is a beautiful and simple spiritual work of mercy which helps us as much as it helps the souls for whom we pray. When that soul gets to Heaven, we can be assured of their continued prayers for us.

- ❖ **Purgatory’s consolations go beyond this world** – into the next. Our prayers and suffrages for the souls in Purgatory bit by bit remove the obstacles which obscure the Beatific Vision from them. Their souls are cleansed and purified until they can enter fully into the joys of Heaven.
- ❖ **God’s order of justice satisfies us** – Our nature inclines toward order and justice – until we want to sin, that is. Then we’re all about God’s mercy! God alone is capable of marrying perfect justice and perfect mercy. We can thank God for His merciful gift of Purgatory which restores the order of justice.
 - At death, our wills are fixed and we receive God’s verdict on us at our Particular Judgement. Since souls in Purgatory have their wills fixed on God, they will not resent the pains of Purgatory, but will comprehend God’s mercy in allowing this time of purification as they look forward to Heaven.
 - Joy and love naturally go hand-in-hand. The joy of a soul who has seen God and been judged by Him worthy of Heaven leaps and overflows with love for God. Joy, love, and peace are three fruits of the Holy Spirit mentioned one after the other in St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians 5:22.
 - We receive joy when we possess a “good.” God is the ultimate “good” for a soul; therefore, knowing that they are Heaven-bound, souls rejoice in God.
 - Love and joy are more intense in Purgatory once our affections are no longer divided. We can then concentrate all of our joy and love on God.





- Love of neighbor is also intensified in Purgatory. Souls rejoice when they see neighboring souls freed from Purgatory and on the way to Heaven. Love is “willing the good of the other.” Since the ultimate “good” is God, love wills that the souls of their neighbor are freed to fly to Him in Heaven.
- Souls in Purgatory take joy in the prayers and sufferings offered on their behalf.

❖ **Assurance of Heaven** – In this life, we have many choices; in eternity, there are only two: Heaven and Hell.

- Those who die in God’s friendship, even if imperfectly detached from created goods or who die with unconfessed sins or with a debt of temporal punishment remaining, are **assured of their salvation**, thanks to Purgatory.
- **While we live, we can** turn away from God and **lose the salvation** Jesus won for us. See 1 Corinthians 9:27, where St. Paul warns that he might be “disqualified” unless he vigilantly “pummels his body...to subdue it.” See also 1 Corinthians 10:12 where St. Paul starkly warns: “Let anyone who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” See Romans 11:22: St. Paul warns that the faithful can be “cut off” unless they continue to live in charity. See Philippians 2:12: “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.”



❖ JOYS BEYOND THIS WORLD AND THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

“God, in a plan of sheer goodness, freely created Man” (CCC 1) and draws man to Himself. “Man is created by and for God...only in God will he find the truth and happiness (for which) he never stops searching.” (CCC 27).

- God’s mercy is shown in the doctrine of Purgatory: even those who die imperfectly loving God, but in His friendship, are assured of eternal Beatitude.
- Purgatory ought to inspire us to seek to discharge all debt of temporal punishment and to detach ourselves from created goods, to focus all of our love on God such that we can enter immediately into the Beatific Vision before death. Purgatory brings us joy as we realize that as lost sheep who long for their Shepherd, He will bring us to Himself by degrees through the purgatorial fire.



- Purgatory spurs us to the pursuit of holiness:
 - ✦ Praying for the souls in Purgatory is a spiritual work of mercy and is a reminder that charity exceeds the boundary of death.
 - ✦ Frequent and worthy reception of the sacraments and cooperation with the graces received through the sacraments facilitates our pursuit of holiness. Especially through Confession, which heals our relationship with God and through our penance discharge of our debts, and the Eucharist, which nourishes us and girds us against temptation.
 - ✦ Daily examination of conscience highlights where we fall short; it

“helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies...we are healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit.” (CCC 1458). This daily examen spurs us to avoid evil and to do the good and fosters a spirit of contrition within us.

- ✦ Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving keep our wills in line with God’s Will.

- ✦ Embracing the suffering which accompanies our lives and uniting it with the Cross of Christ helps us to order our attachments rightly. Voluntary acts of penance undertaken for the good of others satisfies some of the debt due for sin and blesses our neighbors. It is a

participation in Christ’s redemptive work; Jesus “desires to associate with His redeeming sacrifice those who were to be its first beneficiaries.” (CCC 618)

