

Of The Second Article Of Our Holy Christian Faith.

206. Which is the second article, concerning the redemption?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

207. What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

208. How many parts are contained in this Article and its explanation?

Chiefly two:

- [1] Of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ;
- [2] Of the Office of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I. Of The Person Of Christ.

209. Which words of this Article treat especially of Christ's Person?

The words: “And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost born of the Virgin Mary.”

210. Who accordingly is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the second person or the Godhead and true man, born in time of the Virgin Mary,— the only Redeemer of the human race; or: He is the Son of God and of Mary, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, my Lord.

2 Sam. 7:19; Rom. 9:5. (Qu. 213.)

211. Why is He called Jesus?

He is called Jesus, that is Saviour, by the angel, because He should save His people from their sins, and because there is salvation in no other, and there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Matt. 1:21. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.

Acts 4:12. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

212. Why is He called Christ?

He is called Christ, or Messiah, that is the Anointed, because He was anointed without measure by the Holy Ghost to be our Prophet, High Priest, and King.

Ps. 45:7. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. Acts 10:38; John 1:41-49; Is. 61:1-3. (Comp. Luke 4:17-21.)

Ex 23:41; 1 Kin. 19:15-16.

213. How do you prove that Christ is true God?

By the following evidence:

[1] In the Scriptures He is expressly and without any limitation called Lord (Jehovah) and God.

Jer. 23:6. This is His name whereby He shall be called The Lord our Righteousness. Gen. 4:1; Luke 2:11.

John 20:28. Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. 1:1.

Rom. 9:5. Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen.

1 John 5:20. This (Jesus Christ) is the true God and eternal life, Gal. 1:1.12.

[2] He is and is called God's own Son, the only begotten Son of God, and the eternal Son of the Father;

Rom. 8:32. God spared not His own Son. John 1:18

[3] The essential attributes of God are ascribed to Him; for He is

[a] Eternal:

Prov. 8:22-23. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old, and I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Micha 5:1; Is. 9:6.

John 1:1-2. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. same was in the beginning with God. John 8:58; Heb. 13:8.

[b] Unchangeable:

Ps. 102:26-28. (Comp. Heb. 1:10-12.)

[c] Omnipresent:

Matt. 18:20. Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matt. 28:30. To, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

[d] Almighty:

Matt. 28:18. All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.

[e] Omniscient:

John 2:25. For He knew what was in man. (Comp. Kin. 8:39.) John 21:17.

Col. 2:3. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

[f] Good, merciful, faithful, righteous, etc., as the Scriptures testify in various places.

[g] Equal with God:

John 14:9. He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.

John 10:30. I and My Father are one. John 5:18.

[4] He performs truly divine works by His own power, for His glory;

[a] The creation:

John 1:3. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. Col 1:16; Heb. 1:1-2.

[b] Preservation:

Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3

[c] Miracles:

Luke 7:14. Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. Comp. Acts 3:6, 12, 16. John 2:11. Acts 10:38.

[d] Foretelling future events:

Luke 18:31-33. Then He took unto Him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated and spitted on: and they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death: and the third day He shall rise again. Matt. 21:2; Luke 22:10; Matt. 24.

[e] The power to forgive sins and execute judgment:

Matt. 9:6. The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. v. 2.

John 5:27. The Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.

[5] Divine honor is ascribed to Him.

Heb. 1:6. When He bringeth in the First-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.

John 5:23. All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him. Phil. 2:10; Acts 7:58-59; 9:14; Matt. 10:37; John 3:16.

These and other evidences prove beyond doubt that Christ is truly, really and by nature God.

214. How do you prove that Christ is true man?

By the following evidence:

[1] He is expressly, truly, and literally called man;

1 Tim. 2:5-6. There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Luke 23:47; Ps. 45:3.

[2] Human attributes are ascribed to Him;

Gen. 3:15; 22:18; 2 Sam. 7:12; Is. 7:14; Matt. 1.

[3] The essential parts of man are found in Him, namely:

[a] A rational *soul*;

Matt. 26:38. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Luke 28:46.

[b] A true, natural body.

Luke 24:39. Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. Matt. 27:58; Heb. 2:14.

[4] That which is peculiar to these parts belong to Him; as, increase in wisdom and stature, sadness, weeping, emotion, thirst, hunger, weariness, etc.; also

[5] Human works and acts; as, knowing, willing, choosing, speaking, teaching, eating, drinking, walking, resting, suffering, dying, etc.

These and other evidences prove that Christ is truly, really and by nature man.

215. If Christ is true God and true man, how many natures has He, what are they?

Two: the divine and the human.

216. But are there not also two persons in Christ?

By no means; for there is one Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore but one such person, but He has two distinct natures, which are united. 1 Cor. 8:6.

Of The Personal Union.

[*] 217. What kind of a union is that between the two natures in Christ?

It is a *personal* union, because it takes place in the person of the Son of God, and in it both natures subsist.

[*] 218. What is the personal union?

The personal union consists in this, that the Son of God assumed into the unity of His person the true and perfect humanity from the essence of the Virgin Mary, so that God and man are one person, without a confusion of the natures.

Col. 2:9. In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily:

John 1:14. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

1 Tim. 3:16. Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh. 2 Cor. 5:19; Gal 4:4; 1 John 4:2-3.

[*] 219. Did this personal union take place without any communication?

Not at all; for as this union is entirely perfect, it does not consist merely in a mutual communication of the *natures*, which constitutes the proper essence of the personal union, but the communication of the *attributes* of both natures also follows as a consequence.

[*] 220. What is the communication of natures?

It is the most intimate mutual permeation and unspeakable communion of the natures themselves, on account of which God is truly and really predicated of man and man of God.

2 Sam. 7:19.

Jer. 23:5-6; Is. 9:6, (Everlasting Father.)

1 Cor. 15:47. The second man is the Lord from heaven.

Matt. 16:13.16. Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? — Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Of The Communication Of Attributes.

[*] 221. What is the communication of attributes?

The communication of attributes is the participation, resulting from the personal union, in that which is proper to the divine and the human nature, which takes place in Christ the God-Man, who is spoken of sometimes with reference to the one, sometimes with reference to the other nature, sometimes with reference to both.

John 6:62. Ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before.

Rom. 1:3. The Son of God was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.

Heb. 13:8. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

Rom. 9:5. Of the fathers concerning the flesh Christ came.

[*] 222. What is the nature of this communication?

It is real and true, and therefore personal; for the communication of attributes is of the same nature as the union.

[*] 223. Is there but one kind of such communication of attributes?

No; there are three different kinds or degrees, of which the *first* is called the communication of attributes, the *second* the communication of majesty, the *third* the communication of official works.

[*] 224. What is the first kind of communication of attributes?

That in which the properties of the natures are ascribed to the whole person. Thus it is said: God suffered, the Son of God was born of a woman, the Son of Mary was before Abraham, Christ created all things.

Acts 3:15. Ye killed the Prince of life.

1 Cor. 2:8 Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1 John 1:7. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. Acts 20:28; Rom. 8:32; John 8:58.

[*] 225. What is the second kind?

That in which, on account of the personal union, divine majesty, honor and power are ascribed to the human nature.

[*] 226. What is that majesty and given to Christ, and what is its character?

It is truly divine, unmeasurable and eternal, namely:

[1] Omnipotence:

Matt. 28:18, (Qu. 213.) 11:27; Heb 2:8.

[2] Omniscience:

Col. 2:3; John 2:25. (Qu. 213.)

John 21:17. Lord, Thou knowest all things. Comp. Is. 1:1-2.

[3] Power to give life:

John 6:51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

John 6:54. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.

John 6:26-27. As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself, because He is the Son of man.

[4] Power to forgive sin and execute judgment:

See passages under Qu. 213. No. 4.

[5] The honor of worship:

See Qu. 118, No. 5. Comp. Ps. 72:11; Rev. 5:12.

[6] Omnipresence:

John 3:13. No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the of man which is in heaven. 1:48

Eph. 4:10. Christ ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.

Comp. texts under Qu. 213, No. 3, c.

[*] 227. But according to which nature is this divine majesty given to Christ?

It is given to Him according to His human nature.

[*] 228. How do you prove this!

By the well-known and undeniable rule of all orthodox antiquity, that whatever the Scriptures declare to have been given to Christ *in time*, must be understood as having been given Him not according to His Divinity, but according to His assumed human nature.

Ps. 102:28. Thou art the same.

Dan. 7:13-14: Phil. 2:9: Heb. 1:4.

[*] 229 What is the third kind of communication of attributes?

That in which the works of His office are ascribed to Christ not according to one nature only, but, according to both natures. Thus Christ is called our Mediator, Prophet, High Priest, Redeemer, Saviour, King, Lord, etc.

[*] 230. But are both natures active in the same manner in these official works?

No; but each nature in Christ performs what is *proper* to itself in *communion* with the other.

[*] 231. If Christ then performs the works of His office according to both natures, is He not also our Mediator according to both natures?

Of course, according to both the Divine and the human natures, as the Scriptures expressly teach.

[*] 232. How do you prove that Christ is our Mediator according to the Divine nature?

Gal. 4:4-5. God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. 1 John 1:7.

1 John 3:8 For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

(Comp. Rom. 5:10; 8:32; 2 Cor. 5:19; Jer. 23:5-6; 33:16; Is. 35:4; Hos. 1:7; Acts 20:28.)

[*] 233. How do you prove that Christ is our Mediator according to the human nature?

Gen. 3:15. The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

Luke 9:56. The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.

1 Tim. 2:5-6, (Qu. 214); Heb, 2:14; 4:15.

[*] 234. Why was it necessary that Christ should be both true God and true man?

It was necessary for Him to be a man that He might suffer and die; but as no mere man could bear the sin of the human race, together with the wrath of God and the curse of the law, nor satisfy infinite divine justice, nor overcome death, hell and the devil, it was necessary that He should at the same time be true God.

Ps. 49:8-9. None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever. Rom. 8:3-4.

II. Of Christ's Office.

235. What is the office of Christ?

It is the office of Christ to redeem us from sin, to reconcile us with His heavenly Father, to govern and protect us, and finally to save us.

1 Tim. 2:5. (Qu. 214) Matt. 1:21. (Qu. 211.) 1 John 3:8. (Qu. 232.)

236. Of how many kinds is the office of Christ?

It is threefold: the prophetic, the priestly and the kingly.

237. What is the prophetic office of Christ?

It is that by which Christ reveals to us the will of His heavenly Father and teaches us the way of salvation.

Deut. 18:15. The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.

John 1:18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him.

238. How does Christ execute His prophetic office?

In two ways:

[1] By proclaiming, in His own person, through the Gospel, the counsel of God respecting the redemption of the human race;

[2] By instituting the ministry of the Word and the use of the Sacraments, and working effectually through them in the Church.

Eph, 2:17; Matt. 17:5. Mark 16:15, 16, 20; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; John 4:1-2

239. What is the priestly office of Christ?

It is that by which

[1] He rendered most perfect obedience to the divine law;

[2] He offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world; and

[3] He intercedes for us before His heavenly Father.

Gal. 4:4-5. When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Matt. 5:17; Rom. 5:19. (Active obedience.)

Is. 53:4-5. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. Phil. 2:8. (Passive obedience.)

1 Pet. 2:24. Christ His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Heb. 7:26. Such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. 4:15.

1 John 2:1-2. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:23-25.

240. What is the kingly office of Christ?

It is that by which He mightily reigns over all things in heaven and on earth, but especially governs and protects His Church.

John 18:37. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth, Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice. Ps. 2.

241. Of how many kinds is Christ's kingdom?

It is threefold:

- [1] The kingdom of power;
- [2] The kingdom of grace;
- [3] The kingdom of glory.

242. What is His kingdom of power?

It is the general sovereignty over all creatures in heaven and on earth.

Ps. 8:7-9; Dan. 7:13-14; Eph. 1:20-21; 1 Cor. 15:27; Ps. 110:1-2.

243. What is His kingdom of grace?

It is the special operation of the mercy and goodness of Christ in His Church.

Matt. 21:5. Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. Jer. 28:5-6.

244. What is His kingdom of glory?

It is the full possession of salvation in heaven, where Christ will crown the elect, after their resurrection from the dead, with heavenly glory, so that they shall live and reign with Him forever.

2 Tim. 4:18. The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom.

245. What is the nature of Christ's kingdom?

It is not temporal but

- [1] *Spiritual*, because it is administered in this life by the power of the Word;

John 18:36. Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, but I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 2 Cor. 10:4-5.

- [2] *Eternal*, because of His kingdom there shall be no end. Luke 1:88; Dan. 2:44.

Of The Two States Of Christ.

246. Did Christ always exercise His office in the same way?

No; for the Apostles' Creed, according to the Scriptures, mentions two different states, one of which is called the state of humiliation, the other the state of exaltation.

[*] **247. What is the state of humiliation?**

That in which Christ did not employ the divine majesty which He received according to His human nature, but for our sakes freely and deeply humbled Himself, so that in such humiliation He might redeem us by His obedience and suffering, which could not have been done if He had constantly and fully made use of His glory.

Phil. 2:5-8. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Heb. 12:2; John 10:18; Luke 2:51-52; Matt. 8:20.

John 1:14; 2:11; 11:40; 18:6. (Rays of glory in the state of humiliation.)

248. What belongs to the state of humiliation?

All that took place in the history of Christ, according to the Creed, from His conception to His burial.

249. What is the conception of the Son of God?

It is that act in which by a miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost, the Son of God was conceived a true man in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and thus purified us from our sinful conception.

Luke 1:35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee; and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. Ps. 51:7. (Qu. 132.)

250. What is the birth of Jesus Christ?

It is that act in which He, for our benefit and consolation, was brought forth by the Virgin Mary without injury to her virginity.

Is. 9:6. Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.

Luke 2:11. Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Is. 7:14.

251. What do we believe concerning the sufferings of Christ?

That He truly suffered, both externally in His body and internally in His soul, for us and for our sins; and all this took place under Pontius Pilate, which is added to indicate the certainty of the history of the passion. (Comp. the history of the passion in the four Evangelists.)

252. Why did Christ suffer and die?

That He might redeem me, a lost and condemned creature, purchase and win me from all sins, from death, from the power of the devil, not with silver and gold, but with His holy and precious blood, and with His innocent sufferings and death.

1 Pet. 1:18-19. Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Ps. 69:5. I restored that which I took not away. 2 Cor. 8:9; Is. 53:12

2 Cor. 5:21. He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Cor. 5:14; Is. 53:4-6; 43:24-25; Rev. 5:9-10; Gal. 3:13.

Heb. 2:14-15. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Hos. 13:14.

253. Whom then did Christ redeem?

Me, a lost and condemned creature, and therefore all other persons, as all are lost and condemned on account of sin.

Matt. 18:11. The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

John 1:29. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 1 John 2:1-2. (Qu. 289) 1 Tim. 2:5-8. (Qu. 214.)

254. But why do we say, I believe He has redeemed me?

Because I must appropriate to myself the universal redemption, and be certain in faith that He has also redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, from sin, death, and the devil.

Gal. 2:20.

255. For what purposes did He redeem, secure and deliver you?

That I might be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

2 Cor. 5:15. He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. Luke 1:74-75; Rom. 14:8-9.

256. Why was He buried?

[1] That it might be certain that He really died;

[2] That He might consecrate our graves as sleeping chambers until the resurrection day.

Is. 57:2. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness, Comp. Gen. 3:19. Matt. 12:40.

257. What is Christ's state of exaltation?

That in which He was exalted to a full and unceasing use, according to His human nature, of His communicated Divine majesty.

Phil. 2:9-11. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Luke 24:46; Heb. 2:9.

258. In which words of the Creed is this state of exaltation expressed?

In these: "He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead."

259. Why did He descend into hell?

That He might show Himself to the infernal spirits as the conqueror of the devil, of hell, and of all hellish foes, and mightily triumph over them.

1 Pet. 3:13-19. Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison. Col. 2:15; Eph. 4:9-10.

260. Why did Christ rise from the dead on the third day?

[1] That by the resurrection He might declare Himself with power to be the Son of God.

John 2:19. Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. (Comp. 5:18-22.) 10:17-18 Rom. 1:4.

[2] That He might show that He has made satisfaction for our sins and secured for us true righteousness.

1 Cor. 15:17-18. If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins, Then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

Rom. 4:25. Christ was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. 5:18.

[3] That He might also raise up our bodies on the last day and make us joint-heirs of all the treasures of His kingdom and glory.

John 11:25-26. I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in Me, shall never die.

John 14:19. Because I live, ye shall live also. 1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:10; Rom. 8:11; 1 Pet. 1:3-4; Job 19:25-97.

261. Why did He ascend into heaven?

That He might sit at the right hand of His Father and discharge the office of our Mediator and Advocate with Him.

Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9.

Ps. 68:18. Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also. (Comp. Eph. 4:8.)

John 12:26. Where I am, there shall also my servant be.

John 14:2. I go to prepare a place for you. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:24-25.

262. Where is that heaven to which Christ ascended, and what is its nature?

Where that heaven is, what is its nature, and how the body of Christ is in heaven, are overcurious and useless questions; for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard these things, nor have they entered into the heart of man. 1 Cor. 2:9.

[*] 263. What is meant by the right hand of God, at which Christ is seated?

The Scriptures mean by it nothing else than the eternal and truly infinite power and Divine Majesty, by which He works, governs, and fills all things.

(See Ps. 77:11; 118:16; Ex. 15:6; Is. 48:13: hence it is called the right hand of the Majesty on high, Heb. 1:3, and the right hand of power, Matt. 26:64.)

[*] 264. What is accordingly meant by sitting at the right hand of God?

It means ruling and reigning, with infinite and eternal majesty and power, over all creatures and works of God's hand, by virtue of the personal union

and the consequent exaltation.

Ps. 110:1. Sit Thou (the Father says to Christ) at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. (Comp. Matt. 22:41-45.)

Eph. 1:20-22. God set Him (Christ) at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet.

[*] 265. According to which nature was Christ exalted to the right hand of God?

According to that nature as to which He was born, suffered, died and was buried, rose again, ascended into heaven and could be exalted; for this is clearly shown by the order in which the articles of faith are mentioned in the Creed. But all this pertains to Christ according to His human nature; therefore He was also exalted according to His human nature.

Comp. the texts in Qu. 228.

[*] 266. Do you then believe that your Redeemer Jesus Christ, who has ascended into heaven, can be present with you on earth?

Certainly I believe this, with all my heart, because Jesus Christ my Lord, true God and man, Lord over all, is with me and all believers, according to His promise. He is also my Lord and King, and as He has redeemed me, so He governs and protects me, and will finally receive me and all believers into His eternal kingdom.

Matt. 18:20; 28:20. (Qu. 213, 3.)

[*] 267. Why then do we say in the Creed: From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead?

The words “from thence” do not denote a local inclusion in heaven, but indicate that Christ our Saviour will come again from heaven in a visible form, Acts 1:11, and will with great glory and majesty judge the living and the dead.

Acts 3:21. Whom the heaven must receive.

Eph. 4:10. He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.

[*] 268. Do you then believe that the judgment of the living and the dead will certainly take place?

Certainly I believe it, because this is proved by clear texts of Scripture.

Acts 17:31. God hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath ordained. 10:42; John 5:22; Matt. 24:30. (The Judge.)

1 Thess. 4:16. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Matt. 14:41; 24:81; 1 Cor. 6:2-3. (The instruments of the Judge.)

2 Cor. 5:10. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Rev. 20:12; Jude 14, 15, 6. (Who are judged.)

Eccl. 11:9. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. 12:14; Matt. 12:36; 1 Cor. 4:5. (What is to judged.)

John 12:48. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. Heb. 4:12; Rom. 2:16; Rev. 30:12. (Rule of judgment.)

Matt. 25:31-46; 6:4; 10:32-38; John 5:24; 2:18 Rom. 2:5-11. (Nature of the judgment.)

2 Pet. 3:10. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Rev. 20:11-15; 21:1.

Matt. 25:46. These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. (What allows after the judgment.)

269. When will the judgment take place?

That it will take place at the end of the world and on the last day, we know; but the year, the month, the day, and the hour, we do not know, that we may not be secure, but be ready ever day and hour for the coming of Christ, and vigilant, lest that day come upon us unawares.

Mark 31:32. Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Luke 21:34-36; 1 Thess. 5:1-3, Matt. 24:42-51; 25:1-12.

270. Should we believe that the coming of the Lord to judgment is near at hand?

Yes; as we know that it is the last time, that the end of all things is at hand, and that the signs which precede His coming have partly been fulfilled and are partly in process of fulfillment, the coming of the Lord is no doubt near.

1 John 2:18. Children, it is the last time.

1 Pet. 4:7. The end of all things is at hand. 1 Cor. 10:11; Jam. 5:8-9.

1 Tim. 4:1-8; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; Matt. 24:11-14; 37-39; 2 Pet. 3:3-12 (Signs of the last times.)

271. Why will Christ execute this judgment?

That every one may receive according to the deeds done in the body,
whether good or bad. 2 Cor. 5:10; Jude 15.

Of The Third Article Of The Holy Christian Faith.

272. Which is the third Article, of our Sanctification?

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints; the Forgiveness of Sins; the Resurrection of the Body; and the Life everlasting. Amen.

273. What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith: in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the last day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

274. How many members has this Article?

Chiefly five:

- [1] Of the Holy Ghost;
- [2] Of the Christian Church;
- [3] Of the Forgiveness of sins;
- [4] Of the Resurrection of the Body;
- [5] Of Eternal Life.

I. Of The Holy Ghost.

275. Which words of the third Article treat of the Holy Ghost?

“I believe in the Holy Ghost.”

276. Why do you say: I believe in the Holy Ghost?