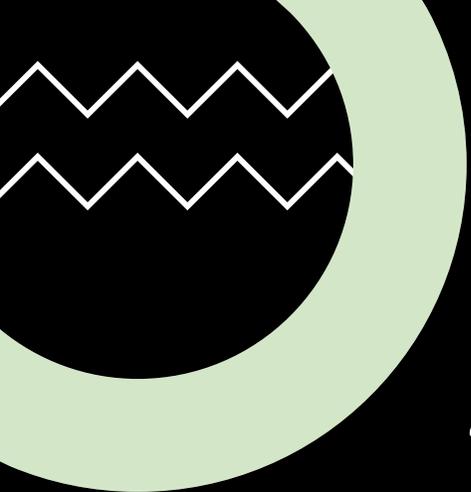




Christology, 2021

Jesus Christ Pantocrator, 13th c. Hagia Sophia, Istanbul



‘Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.’

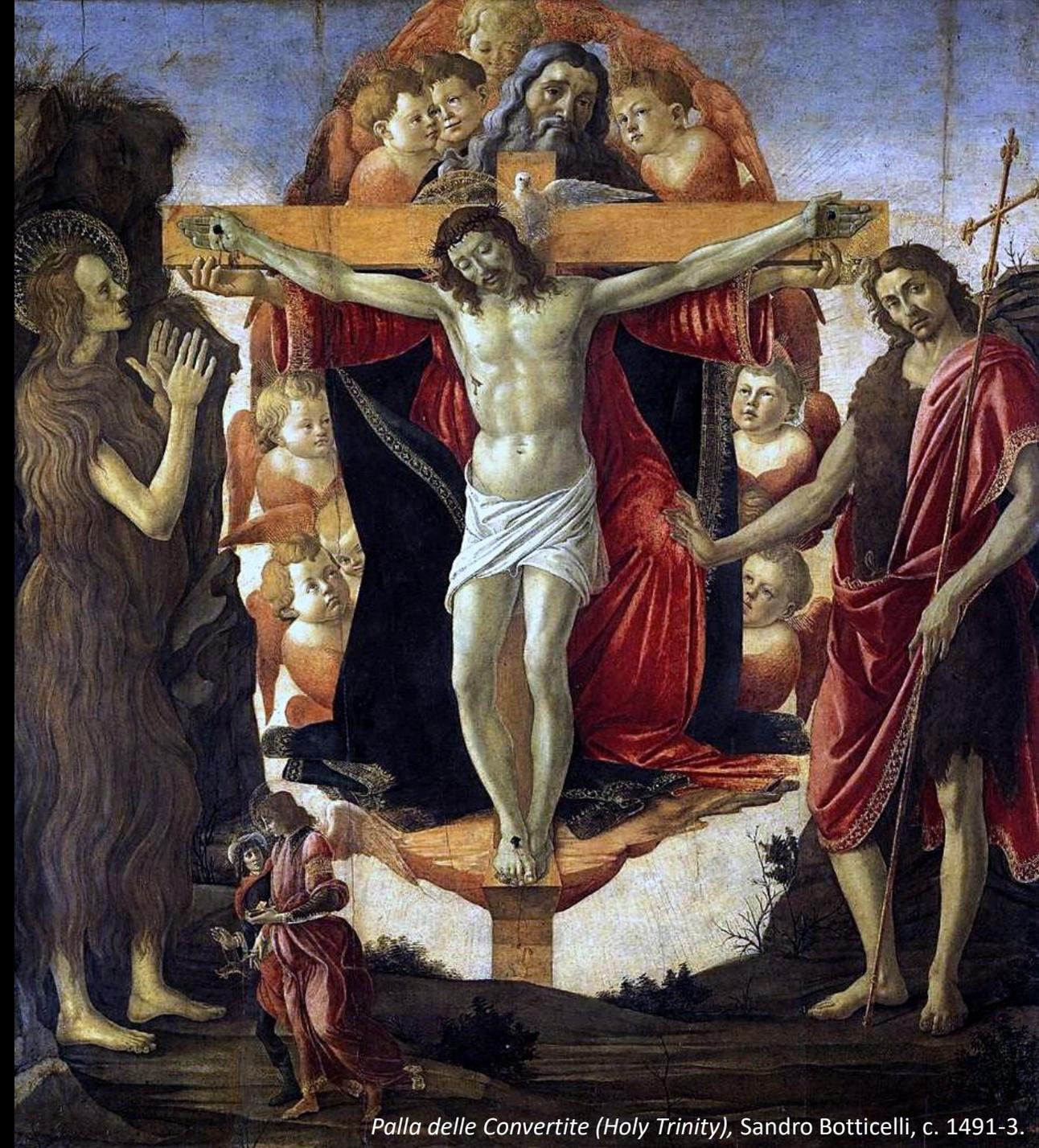
Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, Encyclical Letter, 25.12.2005, n. 1, cited in Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Apostolic Exhortation, 24.11.2013, n. 7.



The Work of Redemption

Knowing Jesus Christ includes understanding His mission, so, after studying the Person of the Redeemer, we now examine the work of Redemption.

- The Mystery of Redemption
- God's Plan of Salvation
- The Triple Ministry of Christ
- Christ's Glorification

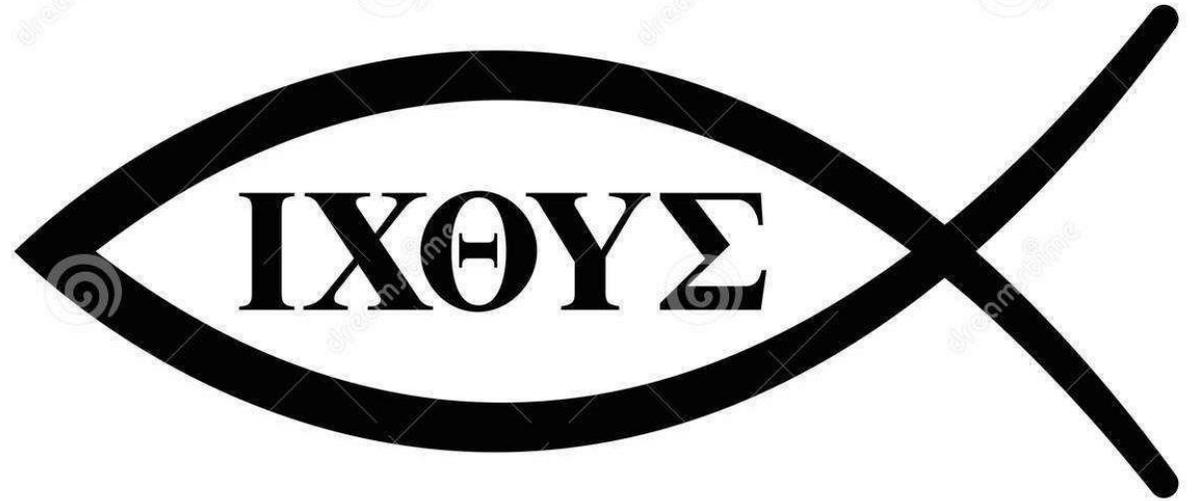


Palla delle Convertite (Holy Trinity), Sandro Botticelli, c. 1491-3.

ἰχθύς
ichthyios = fish

- Jesus
- Christ
- God's
- Son
- Saviour

- ἰ: 1st letter of *Iesous* (Ἰησοῦς, Jesus)
- Χ: 1st letter of *Christos* (Χριστός, anointed)
- Θε: 1st letter of *Theou* (Θεοῦ, God's),
- Υ: 1st letter of (*h*)*yios* (Υἱός, Son)
- ς : 1st letter of *sōtēr* (Σωτήρ, Saviour)



The Mystery of Redemption

- God created our first parents & elevated them to the supernatural order by grace.
- Due to original sin, humankind lost this original state of sanctity; our nature was wounded, & we were placed under the dominion of death & of the devil.
- God promised Adam & Eve a Savior who would free them from the dominion of sin.



The Holy Trinity Flanked by St Mark and St Anthony the Hermit, detail, Friedrich Pacher, detail, c. 1483.

Redemption & the Redeeming Mediation of Jesus

The Redemption: the forgiveness of the sins of the human race granted by God through Jesus Christ.

Because of original sin, we lost the original justice in which Adam & Eve were created

- Sin, death, suffering
- A state of eternal separation from God
- Subject to dominion of the devil

Promise of a saviour/redeemer (Gen 3:15)

Redemption literally means “to buy back”

- The human race was redeemed by Jesus Christ; he “bought” our salvation at the cost of his own blood

The redemption brings about

- the forgiveness of humanity’s sins granted through Jesus Christ.
- reconciliation with God through the one mediator Jesus Christ



Why Jesus Christ?

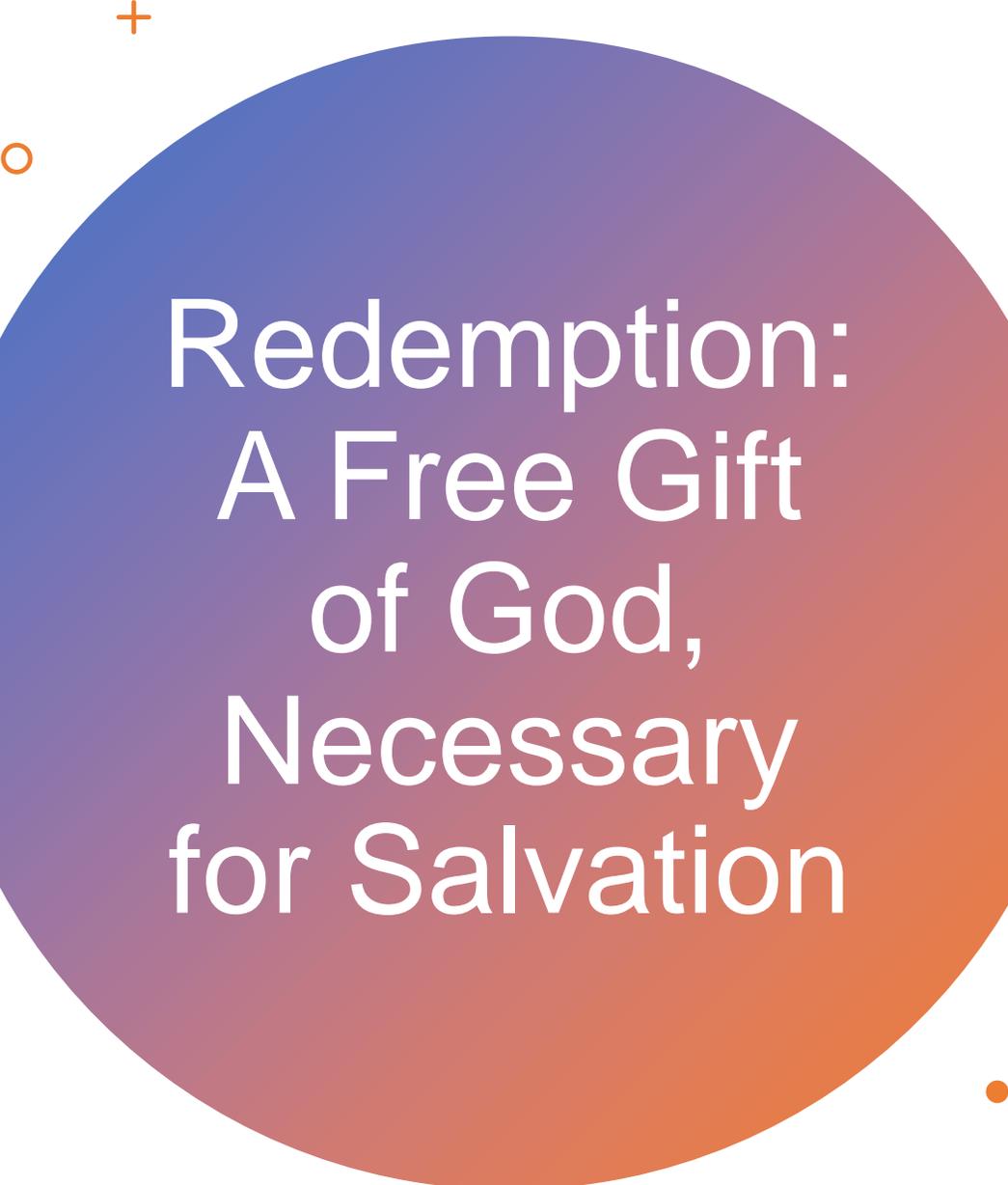
- The redemption was possible only because of His divine-human condition.
- He is the only one who can act as perfect redeemer & mediator between God & man
There is only one God and mediator between God & men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all (1 Tm 2:5–6).

Why Jesus Christ is the only mediator?

- He needed to “link” God & man, not just being one or the other, but both
- Only man could suffer & die in atonement, & only God could give this adequate value.
- The Word became incarnate precisely to become this mediator and to suffer in order to atone for sins.
- All salvation must come from God.
- Jesus’ actions & passions are endowed with a salvific value insofar as they belong to the Word.
- Jesus Christ’s priestly actions in particular manifest this salvific meditation.



The Holy Trinity Flanked by St Mark and St Anthony the Hermit, detail, Friedrich Pacher, detail, c. 1483.



Redemption: A Free Gift of God, Necessary for Salvation

Salvation: freeing man from the slavery of sin (bringing about of a state of humanity in which we are friends of God & free of sin & its effects)

Redemption: specific means God chose to carry out our salvation in light of the fall. God could have saved us without the Incarnation, Passion of our Lord, etc, but in his wisdom he chose this way.

We cannot redeem ourselves; only God can restore the supernatural order lost through sin. We are totally helpless in this regard. Naturally good actions or natural virtues in themselves do not save us (Pelagian heresy).



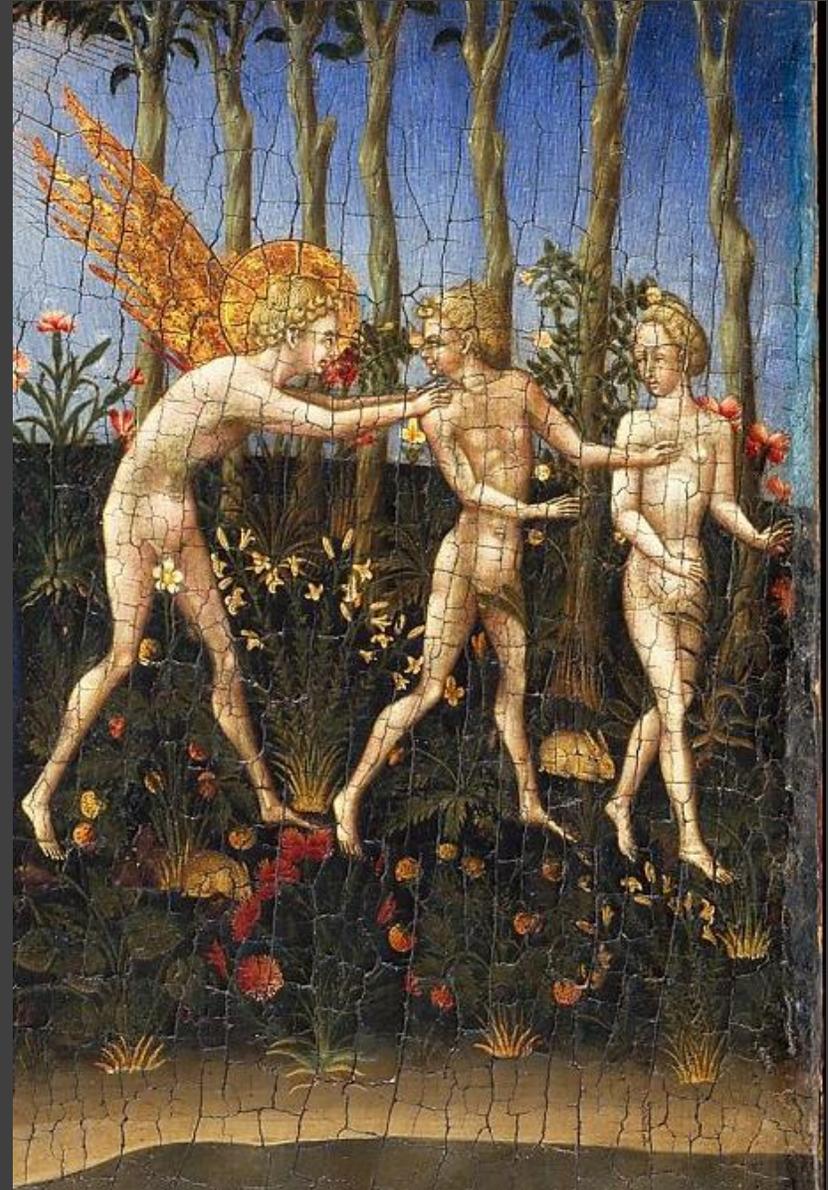


Why Can't We Save Ourselves By Our Own Efforts?

- Only the saving work of Jesus Christ frees men from their sins, not their own efforts.
 - All sins have an aspect of “infinite”
 - The action of man is finite, but God’s dignity (worthiness) is infinite.
 - So human sin in itself is a finite act, but as an offence to God, it is an infinite evil
 - No creature can atone for such sins.

Our Need for Redemption

- So, redemption can only be achieved if
 - God renounces just satisfaction, or
 - He Himself atones on behalf of humanity
 - The 1st is “easier” but leaves man out of the process
 - The 2nd leaves an opening for man to be involved via the Incarnation





D. God Acted Freely In Saving Us

- ▶ There was neither an internal nor an external obligation on God's part to redeem man
- ▶ A completely free act, just as were creation and the supernatural elevation of man.
- ▶ God could have excluded the entire human race from the Kingdom of heaven without committing any injustice whatsoever
- ▶ The mercy of God.

D. God Acted Freely In Saving Us

If it was not necessary, why did He do it?

- He was not indebted to humanity in any way
- Not to increase His glory
- But in order to manifest his goodness, mercy and love, in particular towards us.
- Just plain Love.



Christ the Redeemer, Brazil.



7. God's Plan of Salvation



The Annunciation, Fra Angelico, 1430.

The Eternal Decree of God

- Free decision to save us
- God decreed to redeem all men from eternity & this decree was promulgated in time
- God knew about the fall even before Creation
- From all eternity, he had planned to redeem man (God is “outside” time)
- He promised Adam & Eve a redeemer.
- The manner of this redemption was manifested through Jesus Christ



The Annunciation and Expulsion from Paradise, Giovanni di Paolo, 1435.



The Incarnation

- a) Jesus Christ, 'for us men and for our salvation ... came down, was made flesh, & became man.
- b) God could have redeemed us by another way.
- c) Would the Incarnation have taken place if Adam had not sinned?

Cur Deus Homo? Why the Incarnation

- Jesus “for us men and for our salvation ... came down, was made flesh, & became man” (Nicene Creed)

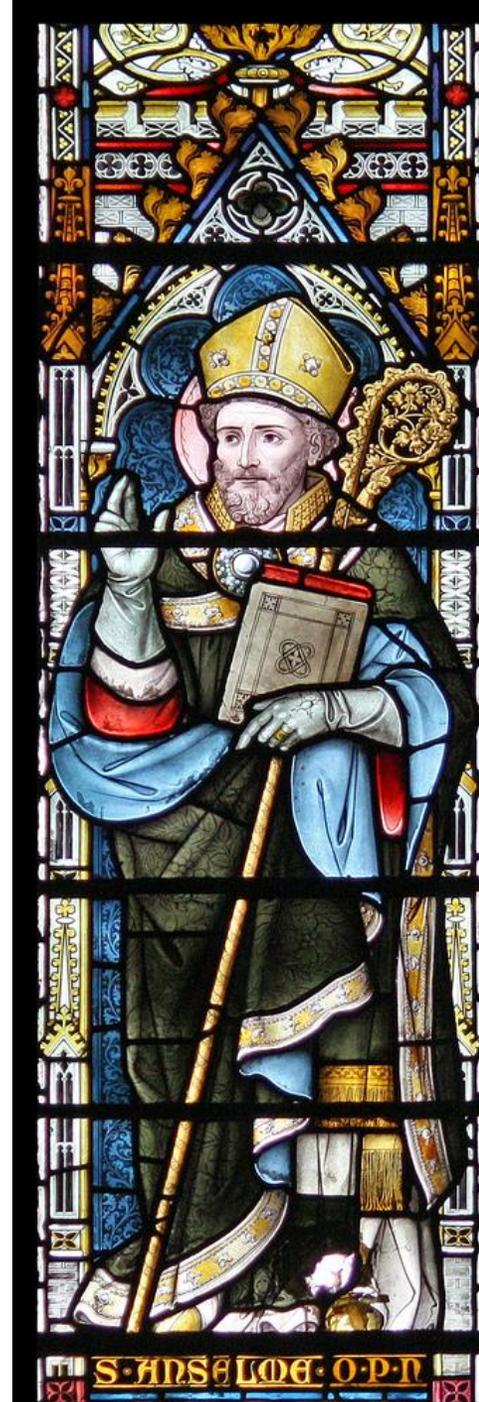
For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him (Jn 3:17)

- It was necessary for man’s salvation that the Word became incarnate (cf S Th III, q. 1, a. 2)

The Incarnation was always an intrinsic part of the decreed plan of salvation.

Q: could the redemption been performed by means other than the Incarnation?

A: of course. Otherwise we would be limiting the omnipotence of God. But it was the best way.



Saint Anselm, stained glass window, Church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs, Cambridge, England.

Cur Deus Homo? Why the Incarnation

Why better?

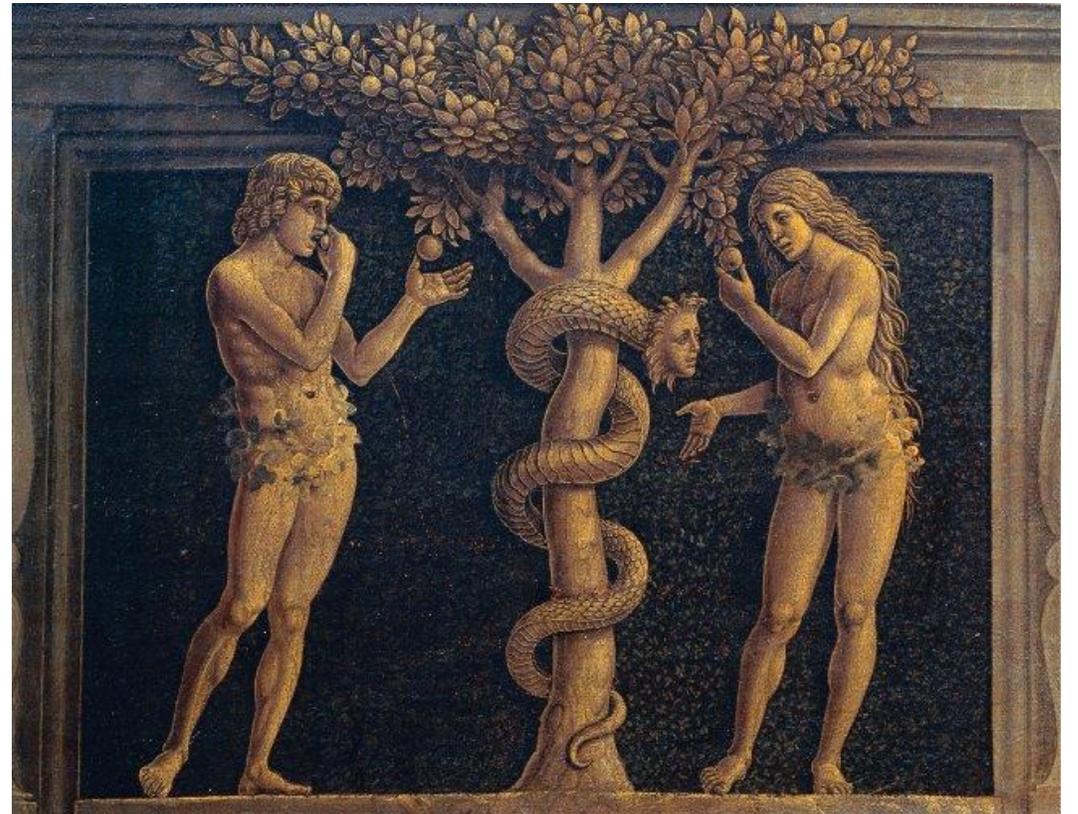
- If no satisfaction from sinful mankind was required, then Incarnation was not necessary
- But if God wanted adequate satisfaction, then the Incarnation of a divine Person was necessary.
- An infinite offense against God demanded an infinite satisfaction that could be offered only by God himself.



Cur Deus Homo? Why the Incarnation?

What if Adam had not sinned – would the Incarnation have taken place?

- Theologically debated
- But Scripture tends to emphasize the close link between Incarnation and redemption.
- If Adam had not sinned, the Son of God probably would not have been incarnated.



Preparing for the Redemption in the Old Testament

God prepared humankind for the coming of the Redeemer, choosing the People of Israel & revealing himself to it through the patriarchs & prophets.

The entire content of the Old Testament is a preparation for the coming of the Messiah.

Among the 1st teachings of Scripture is the promise of a Redeemer that God made to our first parents after the fall, in his words to the tempter. A descendant of Eve will vanquish the devil:

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed. She shall crush your head while you shall lie in wait for her heel” (Gen 3:15).

God established a Covenant with the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob, & renewed it with his Chosen People through Moses. ‘

God gradually revealed the traits of the promised Messiah.

The other peoples of the earth received a different, remote preparation, for the coming of the Messiah.



Timing of the Incarnation: The Centre of History

Time & place freely determined by God.

- ▶ *But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law...* (Gal 4:4-5)
- ▶ Incarnation took place at the fullness of time:
“Time is indeed fulfilled by the very fact that God, in the Incarnation, came down into human history. Eternity entered into time: what "fulfilment" could be greater than this?” (JP II, *Tertio millenio adveniente*, no. 9).





8. The Triple Ministry of Jesus

How did Jesus Redeem us?

Jesus Christ carried out his saving mission through his triple ministry as Teacher, Pastor, & Priest, as he Himself taught:

“I am the way [pastoral ministry], the truth [teaching ministry], and the life [priestly ministry]” (Jn 14:6).

Jesus, as teacher, exercised his doctrinal ministry by aiming at men’s understanding & by teaching them the truth.

Through his pastoral ministry, he aimed at the will, & obedience to God’s commandments. This pastoral ministry includes legislative, judicial, & governing powers.

All the moments of Jesus’ life may be considered acts of redemption, but Jesus reconciled man with God most especially through his priestly ministry. The supreme redeeming act of Christ’s Priesthood is the sacrifice of his death on the Cross.



Jesus Christ's Doctrinal or Prophetic Ministry

Jesus as Teacher
Jesus as Prophet



Entry into Jerusalem, Jean-Hippolyte Flandrin, 1846.

Jesus Christ's Pastoral or Royal Ministry

Jesus is
Pastor
King
Legislator
Judge



Jesus Christ's Priestly Ministry: Jesus is High Priest

The Passover

They shall take every man a lamb... a lamb for a household ... Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old; you shall take it from the sheep or from the goats; and .. the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs in the evening. Then they shall take some of the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat them. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it ... roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. And you shall let none of it remain until the morning, anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. In this manner you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.





The Lamb of God, Francisco de Zurbarán, 1635-40.

Christ's Priestly Sacrifice

What is a Sacrifice?

- There are five elements necessary for a true sacrifice. A sacrifice is the
- 1. offering (oblation), &
- 2. destruction (immolation)
- 3. of a sensible thing (a physical thing that can be seen, heard, touched, tasted or smelled)
- 4. carried out by a legitimate minister
- 5. to confess the supreme dominion of God

Jesus' Death on the Cross Was a True Sacrifice

Jesus' death on the Cross was a true sacrifice, because it contained all the essential elements:

1, 3: Offering of a sensible thing: Christ the man offered himself to God.

2: Destruction: Jesus died, shedding his blood

4: Minister: Jesus in his Humanity is the mediator between God & men. He offers the sacrifice.

5: Confessing the dominion of God: Jesus gave himself out of obedience to the will of the Father, to whom "he was obedient unto death" (Phil 2:8).



Jesus Christ's Vicarious Satisfaction

In order to forgive sins, God willed that an adequate satisfaction be offered by humanity. Only a satisfaction of infinite value could make up for the infinite offense committed against God through sin. Only Jesus Christ, a divine Person, true God & true man, could provide this satisfaction. Jesus Christ, however, is innocent of our sins. How could he satisfy for the sins of men, of which he was not guilty? Satisfaction is the reparation of an offense; it may be offered by the offender himself or his representative. In the latter case, it is called 'vicarious' satisfaction. Jesus Christ himself did not have anything to atone for, since he had not committed any sin. He offered a vicarious satisfaction for the sins of men.

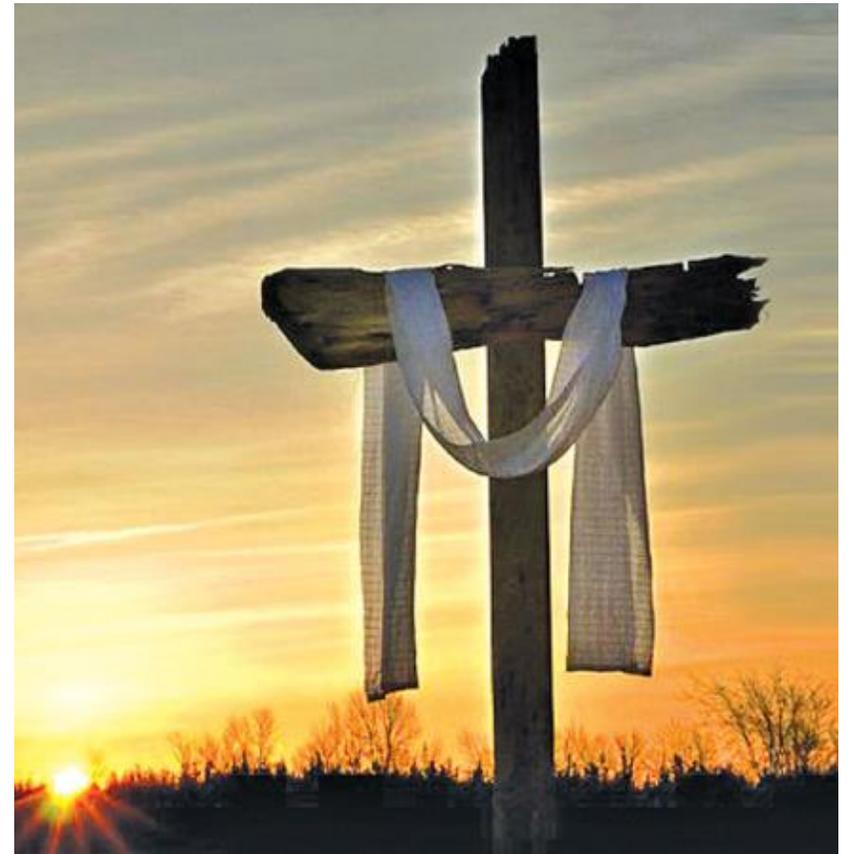
Objective & Subjective Redemption

- Objective redemption: the way in which the death of Christ redeemed sin
- Subjective redemption: the manner in which each individual benefits from that redemption.

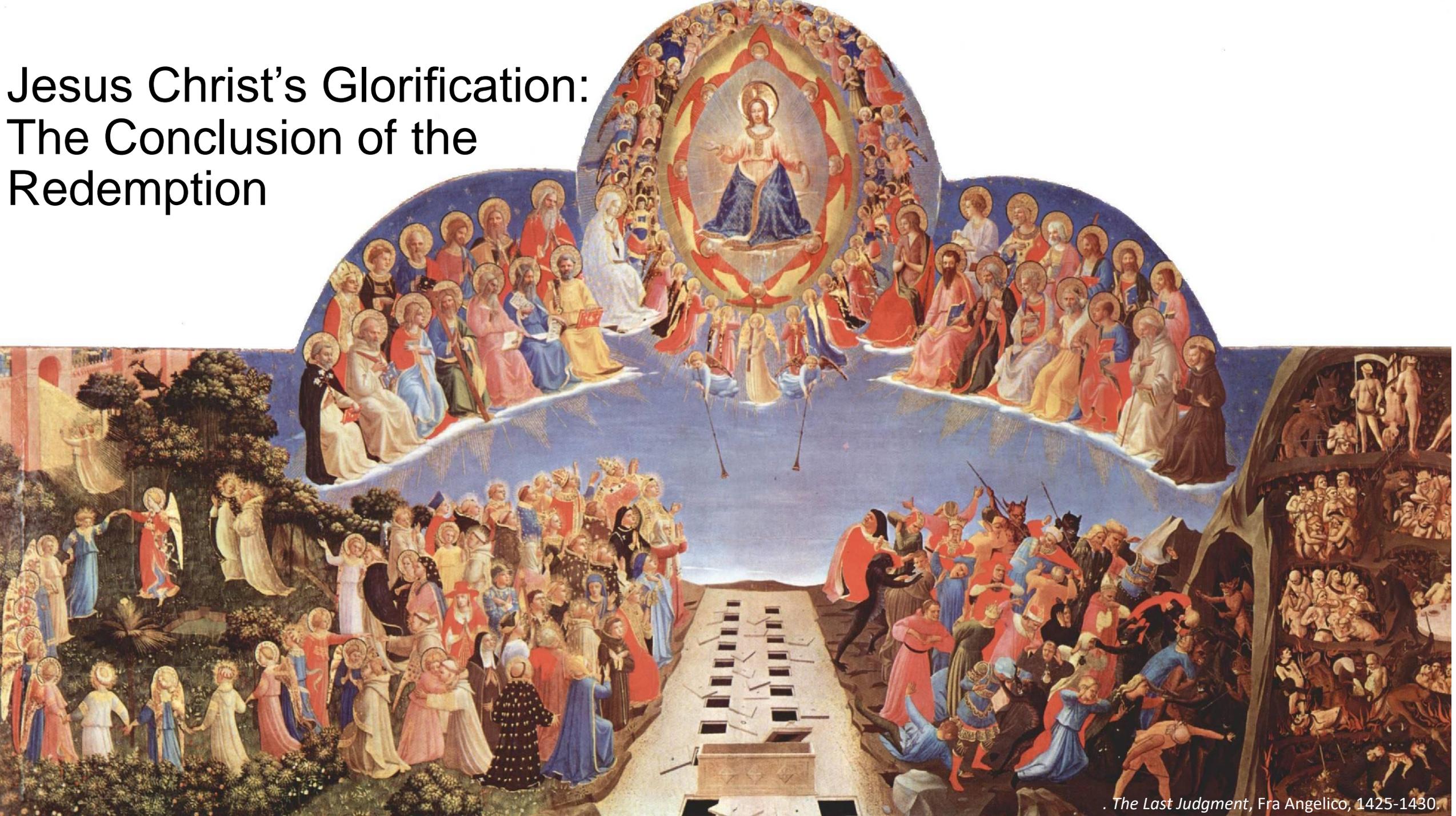
How the Passion of Jesus Brought About Our Salvation

Jesus Christ 'merited justification for us by his own most holy Passion on the wood of the Cross & made satisfaction for us to God the Father.' Knowing that through its fall due to sin, the human race was subject to the devil & separated from God, we may say that Jesus Christ caused our salvation through His death for the following reasons:

- i) He ransomed us from the dominion of the devil & of sin. Thus, Jesus Christ accomplished the satisfaction for our sins by way of redemption or ransom paid to satisfy the divine justice.
- ii) Jesus Christ's satisfaction gives us the sanctifying grace necessary for salvation. In short, our justification is carried out through the forgiveness of sins &, at the same time, through our elevation to the supernatural order through grace. The Passion of Jesus erases sin & sanctifies.



Jesus Christ's Glorification: The Conclusion of the Redemption

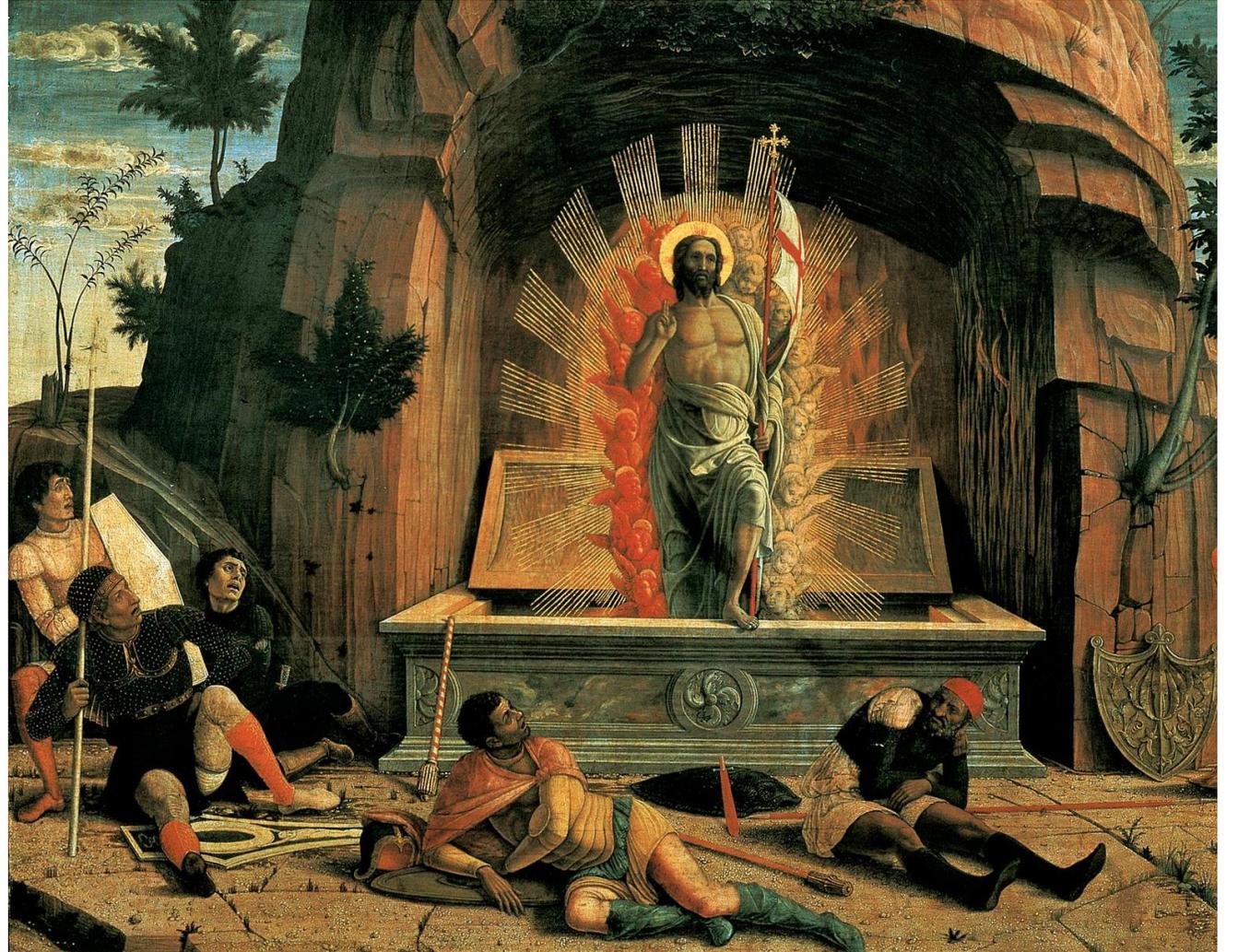


. The Last Judgment, Fra Angelico, 1425-1430.

Jesus Christ's
Descent into
Hell



The Resurrection



The Resurrection, Andrea Mantegna, 1457-1459.



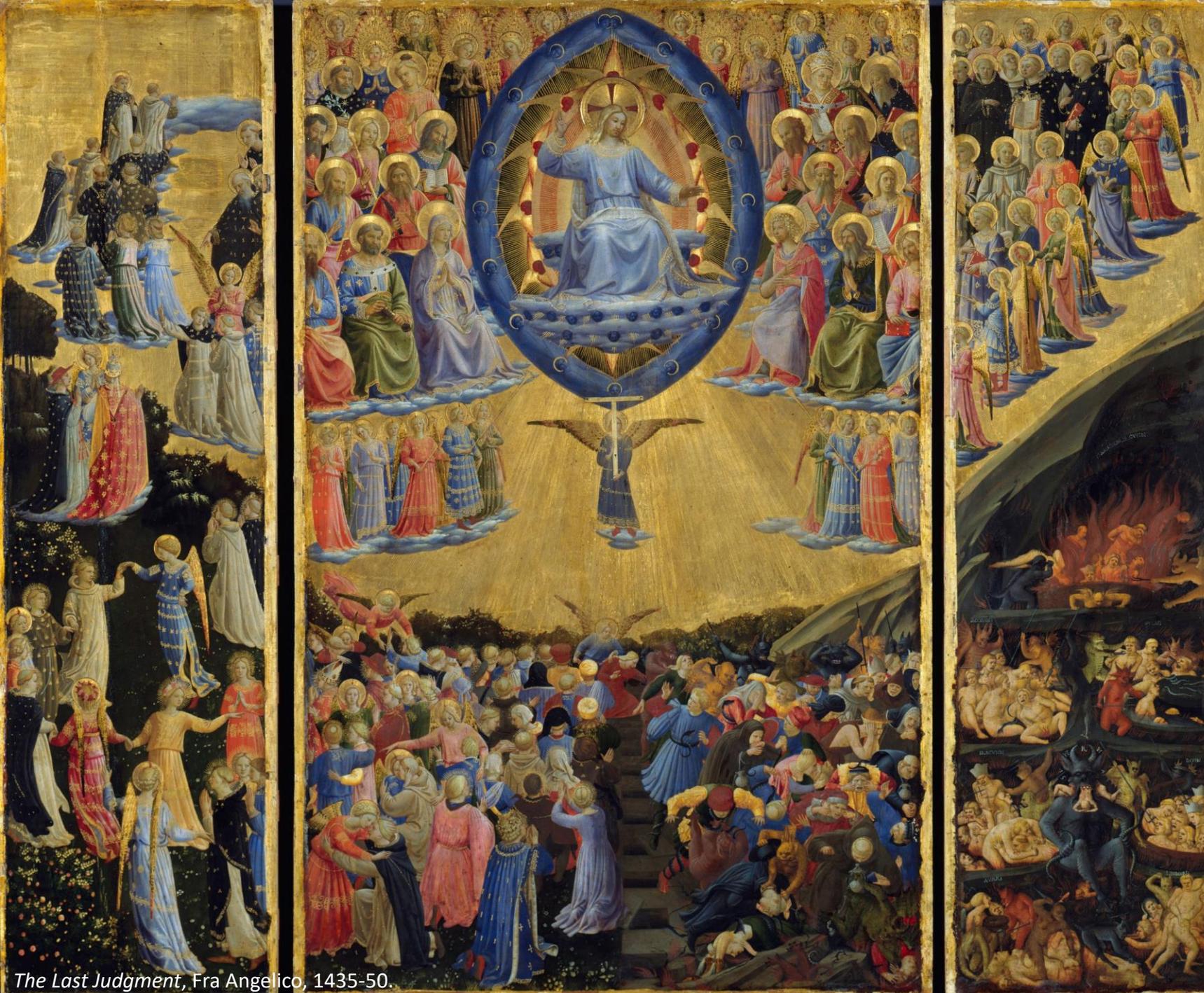
Christ's Risen Humanity

The Incredulity of Saint Thomas, Caravaggio, 1601.



Jesus Christ's Ascension into Heaven

The Ascension of Christ, Hans von Kulmbach, early 16th c.



The Second Coming of Jesus Christ or *Parousia*

Jesus Christ will come with glory & majesty 'to judge the living & the dead' at the end of time'.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that Christ, the Lord, reigns through the Church; but the things of this world are not yet subjected to him. The forces of evil will continue their attacks. On the Day of Judgment, at the end of the world, Christ will come in glory to accomplish the definitive triumph of good over evil. He will reveal the secret dispositions of men's hearts & reward each one according to their deeds & acceptance or rejection of God's grace.