

a place of rest, where the souls of the just who died before Christ were detained. 65. Why were the souls of the just detained in Limbo? The souls of the just were detained in Limbo because they could not go up to the kingdom of heaven till Christ had opened it for them” In summary, after his death Christ did not descend to the kingdom of the Devil and his angels (Gehenna) but to Sheol (Hades) to enable the waiting souls of the just to enter into heaven.

Stephen S



“God always knocks at the door of hearts. He likes to do this. It comes from His heart. But, do you know what He likes best? To knock on the doors of families and find families that are united, to find families that love each other, to find the families that bring up their children and educate them and help them to keep going forward and that create a society of goodness, of truth,

and of beauty.” Pope Francis

Entrance antiphon: The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

First Reading: Ecclesiasticus 3 2-14

Psalm 127: Response: O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!

Second Reading: Colossians 3 12 -21

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts; let the message of Christ find a home with you. Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 2 :41-52

Memorial Acclamation:

Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free



The Holy Family Sunday Cycle C, 2021 Weekly reflection.

The Creed (2): What do we mean when we say: “...He descended into Hell”?

The above words do not appear in the Nicene Creed, only in the Apostles’ Creed. Yet they are an integral part of Catholic doctrine. At first blush it seems extraordinary to believe that Jesus descended into Hell populated by the Devil and his angels. Indeed, it would be if it meant that. However, it does not. In fact, hidden in these few words is a truth which is positive and full of optimism. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church clarifies (para 633):

“Scripture calls the abode of the dead, to which the dead Christ went down, “hell” - Sheol in Hebrew or Hades in Greek - because those who are there are deprived of the vision of God. Such is the case for all the dead, whether evil or righteous, while they await the Redeemer: which does not mean that their lot is identical.....It is precisely these holy souls, who awaited their Saviour in Abraham's bosom, whom Christ the Lord delivered when he descended into hell. Jesus did not descend into hell to deliver the damned, nor to destroy the hell of damnation, but to free the just who had gone before him...”Unfortunately, the English language translates as “Hell” two entirely different notions. The first is the destiny of the wicked which, biblically, is called ‘Gehenna’. The second is ‘Sheol’ (Hades) which was the place for the dead outside heaven prior to the coming of the Messiah. The just souls could not enter the vision of God in heaven until He died and descended into Sheol (Hades).

Sheol (Hades) has been referred to by theologians as “the limbo of the fathers”. This is not the limbo of unbaptised infants about which Catholics used to be taught at school. So long as we bear this in mind, the Penny Catechism is, as usual, accurate and precise. It says: “63. What do you mean by the words, 'he descended into hell'? By the words 'he descended into hell' I mean that, as soon as Christ was dead, his blessed Soul went down into that part of hell called Limbo. 64. What do you mean by Limbo? By Limbo I mean