

Take-Home • Session Six

Always Be Prepared • 1 Peter 3:13-22

What We Found

The summit session. Every baptized person received the charter: always be prepared to give an answer for your hope, with gentleness and reverence, since the manner of the defense is part of its content. The Creed's strangest line found its source: Christ descended to the realm of the dead and proclaimed victory even there. And the study's oldest question closed: Noah's eight were saved through water, and baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the exact phrase of 1:3. Peter answered our Session One question himself: the new birth happens where the Resurrection is applied to a person, at the font.

Voices of the Church

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St. Justin Martyr (d. c. 165), First Apology 61

Explaining Christian initiation to the emperor, St. Justin writes that converts are brought where there is water and are regenerated, born again, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, citing Christ's word that unless you are born again you will not enter the kingdom. Within a century of Peter's letter, the Church publicly described baptism as the washing that regenerates, the same reality Peter proclaims in 3:21 when he writes that baptism now saves you.

Voices of the Church

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), Catechetical Lectures 3

Preparing candidates for baptism, St. Cyril teaches that the water is no mere water: the Spirit descends upon it, and what is born of water and the Spirit enters the kingdom; the body is washed while the soul is sealed. He treats 1 Peter's ark typology as standard catechesis: as Noah was saved through water, so are you.

Voices of the Church

An Ancient Holy Saturday Homily (author unknown, Office of Readings for Holy Saturday)

"Something strange is happening: there is a great silence on earth today." The Church's liturgy for Holy Saturday reads an ancient homily in which the victorious Christ descends to the dead, takes Adam by the hand, and says: awake, sleeper, I did not create you to be held prisoner. It is 1 Peter 3:19 preached:

the proclamation to the spirits in prison, prayed by the whole Church every Triduum.

Live It This Week

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This week: (1) Memorize 1 Peter 3:15. (2) Find your baptism date if you do not know it (ask family or the parish office) and mark it in your calendar as an anniversary to keep. (3) Write out your two-sentence account of your hope and pray for one chance to give it gently. (4) On entering church, sign yourself with holy water deliberately, as a reminder of your baptism and a renewal of your baptismal promises.

Scripture Memory

“Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence” (1 Peter 3:15, RSV2CE)

Before next session: Read 1 Peter 4:1-19 before Session Seven.

Go deeper in the Catechism: CCC 632-635; 845; 1094; 1257; 1265