

Two Main Points of Paul's writings to the Colossians

1. The Supremacy of Christ
2. The Completeness of Christians in Christ

1. Opening address (1:1-14)

- a. Greetings (1:1-2)
- b. Prayer and Thanksgiving (1:3-14)

2. Christian Belief (1:14-2:23)

- a. Preeminence of Christ (1:15-23)
- b. The Ministry of Paul (1:24-2:7)
- c. The Cross and the Circumcision of Christ (2:8-15)
- d. The Shadows of the Old Covenant (2:16-23)

3. Christian Behavior (3:1- 4:6)

- a. A New Mind in Christ (3:1-4)
- b. A New Life in Christ (3:5-17)
- c. Family Life in Christ (3:18-4:1)
- d. Prayer and Conversation in Christ (4:2-6)

4. Closing Farewell (4:7-18)

- a. The Commendation of Tychicus and Onesimus (4:7-9)
 - b. Final Greetings and Instructions (4:10-18)
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Colossians 1:3-8 - PRAYER OF PETITION

2632 Christian petition is centered on the desire and *search for the Kingdom to come*, in keeping with the teaching of Christ. There is a hierarchy in these petitions: we pray first for the Kingdom, then for what is necessary to welcome it and cooperate with its coming. This collaboration with the mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit, which is now that of the Church, is the object of the prayer of the apostolic community. It is the prayer of Paul, the apostle par excellence, which reveals to us

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how the divine solicitude for all the churches ought to inspire Christian prayer. By prayer every baptized person works for the coming of the Kingdom.

Colossians 1:14 - Characteristics common to Jesus' mysteries

517 Christ's whole life is a mystery of redemption. Redemption comes to us above all through the blood of his cross, but this mystery is at work throughout Christ's entire life:

- already in his Incarnation through which by becoming poor he enriches us with his poverty;
- in his hidden life which by his submission atones for our disobedience;
- in his word which purifies its hearers;
- in his healings and exorcisms by which "he took our infirmities and bore our diseases";
- and in his Resurrection by which he justifies us.

And forgive us our trespasses . . .

2839 With bold confidence, we began praying to our Father. In begging him that his name be hallowed, we were in fact asking him that we ourselves might be always made more holy. But though we are clothed with the baptismal garment, we do not cease to sin, to turn away from God. Now, in this new petition, we return to him like the prodigal son and, like the tax collector, recognize that we are sinners before him. Our petition begins with a "confession" of our wretchedness and his mercy. Our hope is firm because, in his Son, "we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." We find the efficacious and undoubted sign of his forgiveness in the sacraments of his Church.

Colossians 1:15-20 - God creates an ordered and good world

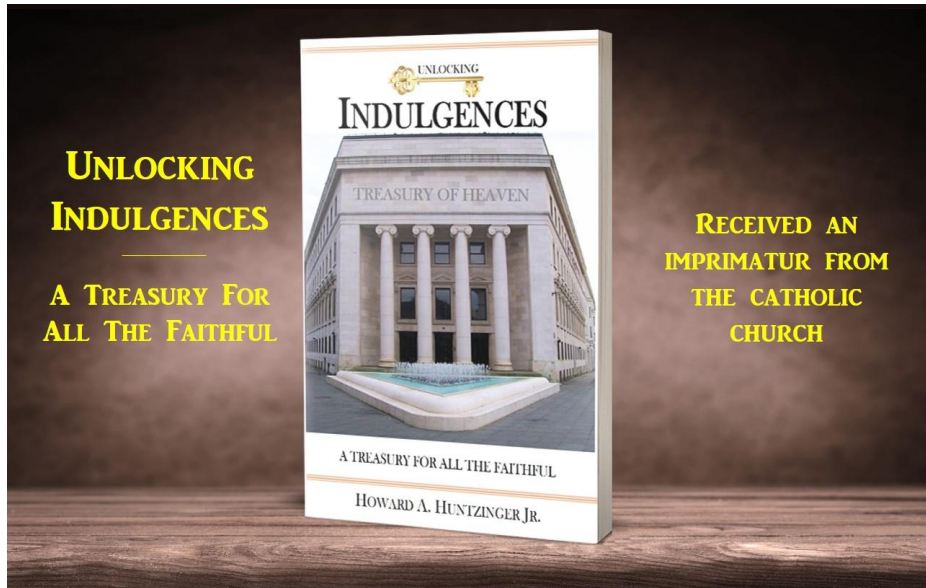
299 Because God creates through wisdom, his creation is ordered: "You have arranged all things by measure and number and weight." The universe, created in and by the eternal Word, the "image of the invisible God", is destined for and addressed to man, himself created in the "image of God" and called to a personal relationship with God. Our human understanding, which shares in the light of the divine intellect, can understand what God tells us by means of his creation, though not without great effort and only in a spirit of humility and respect before the Creator and his work. Because creation comes forth from God's goodness, it shares in that goodness - "And God saw that it was good. . . very good"- for God willed creation as a gift addressed to man, an inheritance destined for and entrusted to him. On many occasions the Church has had to defend the goodness of creation, including that of the physical world.

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Colossians 1:16 Christ "with all his angels"

331 Christ is the center of the angelic world. They are his angels: "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him. . "They belong to him because they were created through and for him: "for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through him and for him." They belong to him still more because he has made them messengers of his saving plan: "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?"

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