

# Catholic Thinking

by Father John Catoir JCD, 5/12/17

In 1965, the Second Vatican Council explained Catholic thinking in this way: “Since Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted by the same Holy Spirit by whom it was written, one must take into account, in order to draw out the correct sense of the sacred texts, the Tradition of the whole Church.” Tradition is important because it protects historical accuracy.

We can count on the correct interpretation of the Lord’s words; for instance, from the Last Supper to this very day, Catholics have known that Jesus Christ is truly present in the Eucharist. “This is my Body.”-Matt. 26:26. In the Sixteenth Century, the Reformers denied this truth saying that it was only a matter of subjective belief. Not so! The People of God have always believed that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. This belief has been kept intact precisely by the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the teaching authority of the Church.

Jesus said this to St. Peter, our first Pope, “He who hears you, hears me,” Luke 10:16. This raises the question, who is Jesus Christ? Non-believers maintain that Jesus was an itinerant rabbi, a political rebel, but nothing more. The Church, however, has always taught that Jesus Christ is true God and true man. We genuflect before the tabernacle. In the Gospel of John: 3:16, we read, “God sent His only begotten Son that the world may be saved through Him.” Jesus Christ is Our Supreme Lord and Savior. He is God incarnate.

Secularists reject this truth, and refuse to be bound by any religious scruples. They brush aside the faith as fantasy. Their attacks, and those of the Atheist community, are based on their total denial of God. The Church rightly considers their views to be heretical. We can only pray for them, and try to follow the example of Jesus, who prayed for His enemies and forgave His persecutors, “Forgive them Father, for they know not what they do,” Luke 23:34.

We strive to love one another. We care for the least among us, as we bring God’s message of love to everyone we meet. St. Augustine said, “We are an Easter people, and alleluia is our song.” Jesus taught us that our lives on earth are a prelude to the joys of heaven. Death, therefore, is not the tragedy it appears to be. One could rightly say that death is an illusion. We pass from this world to the next, believing in the promises of Christ.

We are Children of the Light. The Church’s teaching authority helps us to transcend the darkness of this world. By God’s grace we have received an accurate understanding of supernatural revelation. The call to live joyfully is the final piece of the puzzle. Jesus pronounced His mission in this way, “I have come that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete,”- John 15:11.

Pope St. John Paul II has emphasized joy as he summarized the teachings of Jesus: “Joy is the keynote message of Christianity, and the recurring motif of the Gospel. Go therefore and become messengers of joy.” May the Lord be your strength and your joy.