



2323 Montgomery Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95405
(707) 542-6984

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Frank Epperson, Rector
Fr. Gabriel Sanchez, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Bala Putchakayala, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Jeffrey Keyes, In Residence
Deacon Mike Heinzelman
Deacon Gary Moore
Deacon Russ Bowden

WEBSITES

Parish: www.steugenes.com
School: www.steugenesch.org
Email Comments/Suggestions to:
Office@steugenes.com

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Parish Office Phone	(707) 542-6984
Parish Office Fax	(707) 542-1621
Religious Education	(707) 326-3408
Finance Council – Marty McCormick	(707) 526-1700
Choir Directress – Pam Zieminski	(707) 578-8848
School Office	(707) 545-7252
Preschool Office – Tess Mellor	(707) 528-9133
Homeschool Academy– Jessica Warner	(707) 206-5579

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Entrance is located at SW corner of Rectory

REGISTRATION IN THE PARISH

Our warmest welcome to all who worship in our community. If you are not registered in the parish, please complete a registration card. Cards are available at church entrances or at the parish office.

MARRIAGES & BAPTISMS

Please contact the office at least 12 months in advance for weddings and 3 months in advance for baptisms. Check the parish website for more information.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please call the parish office when a parishioner is home bound or hospitalized to arrange for Holy Communion and Anointing of the Sick.



MASS TIMES

Daily Mass: 6:45 and 8:00 a.m.
Saturday: 8:00a.m; 4:30 p.m. & Sp.6:30 p. m.
Sunday: 7:30, 9:00 & 10:30 a.m.
12:00 noon and 5:30 p.m.
Tuesday Latin Mass: 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Latin Mass: 1:30 p.m.

CONFESSIONS

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Saturday or by appointment

PERPETUAL ADORATION

Perpetual Adoration is in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To sign up for your hour with our Lord, call Annette (English) at: (707)542-3635 or Maria Vega (Spanish) at: (707)710-5094

Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament is held in the chapel every First Friday following 8:00 a.m. Mass. *During this time of Covid-19, Benediction is not being held.*

DEVOTIONS

Recitation of the Rosary is Monday – Saturday at 7:25 a.m. in the Cathedral

Chaplet of Divine Mercy is Saturday after the 8:00 a.m. Mass in the Cathedral

CATHEDRAL SHOPS

Cathedral Thrift Shop Hours: Tues & Wed. 9:30 am–2:30 pm

Cathedral Books & Gifts Hours: Wed-Sat 8:30 am-4:30pm & Sun 8:30am-1:30pm, Closed Mon/Tues -
Phone: (707)542-0250

MOST HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY – JUNE 4, 2023

PARISH CALENDAR

SUNDAY JUNE 4

Masses – Cathedral – 7:30 am, 9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:00 noon,
1:30 pm (Latin) & 5:30 pm
Coffee Social – PLC – 8:00 am – 12:00 noon

MONDAY JUNE 5

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am

TUESDAY JUNE 6

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am
Women of the Word – PLC – 9:00 am
Latin Mass – Cathedral – 5:30 pm

WEDNESDAY JUNE 7

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am
Outdoor Rosary – Fatima Grotto – 6:00 pm
Bible Study – PLC – 7:00 pm

THURSDAY JUNE 8

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am

FRIDAY JUNE 9

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am
Ordination to the Diaconate – Cathedral – 6:00 pm

SATURDAY JUNE 10

Morning Mass – Cathedral – 8:00 am
Confession – Cathedral 3:30 – 4:30 pm
Sunday Vigil Masses – Cathedral – 4:30 pm & 6:30 pm
(Spanish)

~PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION~

Register your child now for the Parish School of Religion (PSR) 2023-2024 school year! The Parish School of Religion partners with the Cathedral of St. Eugene families to bring the youth of the parish to Christ through authentic catechesis in the Beauty, Goodness, and Truth of the Catholic Faith. We offer: Ongoing Catholic formation for students 1st grade through high school; preparation for the Sacraments of Baptism, Confession, 1st Communion & Confirmation; dedicated teaching by the Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa & lay catechists.

Where: St. Eugene's School **When:** Tuesdays from 3:45 - 5:00pm; September through May. Pick up registration forms in the vestibules, at the parish office, or register online at our parish website (www.steugenes.com). ***Last day to register is Monday, July 31st.*** Contact Sr. Mary Emmanuel, MSSR with any questions at 707-326-3408 or srmariyemmanuel2@gmail.com

Hearing Aid Users, Switch to T-Coil

ADMINISTRATION

For the Week of: 5/21/23

Sunday Donations Received:	\$12,254.
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Second Collection: <i>No Second Collection</i>	
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~ CATHEDRAL BOOKS & GIFTS ~

May is the month of Mary, so our Special is 25% off all statues, pictures, and books of the Blessed Mother (sorry, no rosaries this month!). Stop in our store and get great deals! The shop hours are: Wed-Sat from 8:30 am-4:30 pm & Sun 8:30 am-1:30 pm. We are closed Mon./Tues. Call us at: 707-542-0250.

~VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR VBS~

As we have done in years past, we are hoping to once again have a Vacation Bible School (VBS) for the Parish children which would run for one week in mid-July. To accomplish this, we will need volunteers to help us with Bible Classes & various Bible centered games and crafts. Adults and teens welcome to help! Call Anna for more info at: (707) 539-5185. **Deadline to VOLUNTEER is JUNE 15th!**

SECOND COLLECTION INFORMATION

~PRIESTS' BENEFITS & WELFARE~

This weekend, June 3 & 4, our Second Collection is for the Diocesan Priests' Benefits & Welfare. Next weekend, June 10 & 11, our Second Collection will be for our Building & Grounds Maintenance Fund. Thank you for your continued generosity!

SCHOOL NEWS

~REGISTRATION HAS STARTED~

St. Eugene's Cathedral School has started its registration process for the 2023-24 school year. We are proud of our students and our school. We offer an excellent academic education with a challenging curriculum integrated with gospel values. We are accepting applications for all grades. Come by the school office to pick up an application or call 545-7252, and we'll send an application to you. You can also go to: www.steugenesch.org -"Admissions". For those who would like to tour the school, please come to the school office at 9:00 am on May 12th.

The bulletin submission deadline is Thursday @ 3:00pm for the Sunday after next bulletin. We reserve the right to edit or omit items. E-mail items to: office@steugenes.com.

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday	June 3
8:00 am	In honor of and in reparation for the offenses against the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus and for the living and deceased members of the Russell and Rinaldi families.
4:30 pm	Brigid Reilly, deceased
6:30 pm (Sp)	Alejandra Lopez, deceased
Sunday	June 4
7:30 am	Pope Benedict XVI, deceased
9:00 am	Anthony Joseph Raj Conley, living
10:30 am	Minerva Carrera, living
12:00 pm	People of St. Eugene's
1:30 pm (EF)	Darren Wallace, living
5:30 pm	Esther Royston, living
6:00pm Newman Ctr.	Ann Louis Mahoney & Maxine Knezovich, living
Monday	June 5
6:45 am	Thomas Cagwin, living
8:00 am	Carol Green, living
Tuesday	June 6
6:45 am	Thomas Cagwin, living
8:00 am	Felipa de Jesus Monterroso, deceased
5:30 pm (EF)	Dai Duong, living
Wednesday	June 7
6:45 am	Jose Maria Alvarez, deceased
8:00 am	Leo Pimentel, deceased
Thursday	June 8
6:45 am	Sheila Flanagan Kirby, deceased
8:00 am	Fr. Allen Acevedo, living
Friday	June 9
6:45 am	Bill Ruhl, deceased
8:00 am	Fr. Alan Acevedo, living
12:00 pm (Hosp)	Lisa Tran, living
Saturday	June 10
8:00 am	Linda Fowler, deceased
4:30 pm	James Skikos, deceased
6:30 (Sp)	Alberto Orozco, Ana Griselda Luis Alonso & Oswaldo Olvera, living

~FATHER'S DAY ENVELOPES~

Father's Day Remembrance envelopes are available on the tables in both vestibules. Use these envelopes to honor fathers living & deceased. Please return your envelope to the collection plate this weekend or June 10 & 11 (or to the Parish Office by 12:00 noon Monday, June 12) for publishing in the June 18th Father's Day Sunday bulletin.

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY

~ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE~

This Friday, June 9, at 6:00 pm, Bishop Robert F. Vasa will ordain Seminarians Christopher Girolo and Mauricio Rodriguez to the Transitional Diaconate at the Cathedral. Men who are to be ordained priests are ordained deacons prior to priesthood. These men are referred to as "transitional" deacons, because they are in the process of transition to the priesthood. All are invited to attend Holy Mass for this joyous occasion followed by light refreshments in the Becker Center (not the PLC).

~EUCCHARISTIC PROCESSION IN SR~

Celebrate Corpus Christi, June 8th, starting with 5:00pm Mass at **St. Rose of Lima Church**. After Mass, follow the Eucharistic Procession through Santa Rosa to St. Eugene's. For more information or to volunteer: Please contact Stephen Morris at: dsryouth@srдиоcese.org

~CORPUS CHRISTI PROCESSION~

On Sunday, June 11th, you are invited to join in a procession with The Blessed Sacrament **following the 10:30 am Mass as we celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi**. (The faithful who piously participate in a solemn Eucharistic procession, either inside or outside of a Church, especially on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, may receive a plenary indulgence.) What is a plenary indulgence? Even though confessed and forgiven sins will not send a person to hell, consequences remain to be paid on earth or in purgatory. An indulgence frees the recipient from those consequences. Reception of an indulgence always springs from sincere repentance, the desire to live a holy life, reception of the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion as soon as possible and prayer for the Holy Father. A partial indulgence covers part of the punishment due for sins; a plenary indulgence removes all of it.

SAVE THE DATE

~UPCOMING PROFESSION OF VOWS~

The Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa Cordially invite you to the Perpetual Profession of Vows of Sister Mary Emmanuel of Mary, Cause of our Joy, on the Feast of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus, **Saturday, July 1, at 10:30 a.m.** at the Cathedral of St. Eugene. Bishop Robert Vasa will be presiding. Refreshments will follow in the Becker Center. Please join us for special occasion!

~PLEASE PRAY FOR~

Those who are ill need your support and prayers: Tristan Humble, Samuel Agius, Marjorie Miles, Amelia Lansangan, Gail Brown, Leo Del Santo, Emeline Jane Smith, Rosalind Britto, Ken Davis, Rita Wyatt, Karen Mills, Eileen Carol, Nancy Amador, Patrick Welter, Cristeta Marentes, Jesus Navarro, Michael Boland, Stephen Warner, Aida Catapang, Bob Goldman, Pat Davenport, Paulita Castro, Jean L. Alfano, Theresa Pham, Rainey Olson, Michele Otten, Pauline Goslovich, Mary Gonzales, Nick Sidjakov, Sandi Picconi, Margaret Keifer, Joan Cosgrove, Denise Ealy, Becky Harber, Ernest Lanford, Daniel Bruce Moore, Megan Ingrassia and Art Haake.

MY CATHOLIC FAITH

THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

~FROM THE PASTOR~

Today, we celebrated a great mystery: The Holy Trinity. In this mystery, we find the truth that in the unity of the Godhead there are Three distinct Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Who better to explain this to us than the great St. Anthony of Padua, in a sermon given by him roughly 800 years ago. We follow this sermon with an article prompted by the Gospel passage, "Whoever believes in him will not be condemned." As Catholics, how do we explain to our Protestant friends that "once saved, always saved" is not a Biblical notion? Read on and find out!

SERMON BY ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

~THE ULTIMATE ORIGIN OF ALL THINGS~

"The first thing to note in this Gospel is the clear statement of faith in the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son; and these three are of one substance, and inseparably equal. Unity is found in the essence, plurality in the persons. Whence, "The Lord clearly implies the unity of the divine essence, and the Trinity of persons, when he says in Matthew: Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit [Mt 28.19]. He says, 'in the name', not 'in the names', to show the unity of essence; but by adding three names, he indicates that there are three persons." "In that Trinity there is the ultimate Origin of all things, the most perfect Beauty and the most blessed Delight. As St Augustine shows in his book, "On the true Religion," we understand the supreme Origin to be God the Father, from whom all things come, from whom come the Son and the Holy Spirit. We understand the most perfect Beauty to be the Son, the Truth of the Father, who resembles him in every way, and whom we worship with and in the Father himself. He is the form of all the things that are created from a single source, and which return to a single end. We understand the most blessed Delight and supreme Goodness to be the Holy Spirit, who is the gift of the Father and the Son. It is our duty to worship and hold on to this gift of God, as unchangeable as the Father and the Son. Thus by considering creation, we gain understanding of the Trinity in one substance, namely

one God the Father from whom we exist, the Son through whom we exist, and the Holy Spirit in whom we exist. The Beginning to which we return, the Form which we imitate and the Grace by which we are reconciled." So that our mind may extend itself to contemplate the Creator, and believe without hesitation the Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, let us see how the 'vestiges' of the Trinity appear in the mind itself.

~ST. AUGUSTINE~

St Augustine says in his book "On the Trinity," "Though human mind is not of the same nature as God, yet the image of him, than whom nothing is better, is to be sought and found in that part of our nature than which nothing is better: namely, the mind. See how the mind remembers itself, understands itself and loves itself. When we see this, we see a trinity; not God, but the image of God. There is a kind of trinity apparent in memory, understanding and love or will. These three are not three 'lives', but a single life. They are not three minds but a single mind, not three essences but a single essence. We attribute memory to a subject, and similarly understanding and will (or love) belong to a subject; but life, mind and essence are themselves that subject. These three are one: a single life, a single mind, a single essence."

~DISTINCT AMONG THEMSELVES~

"Although these three are distinct among themselves, we say they are one, because they exist substantially in the soul. The mind itself is, as it were, a parent; and its knowledge is, as it were, its offspring. When the mind knows itself, it begets an idea of itself, and it is the sole parent of that idea. The third thing is love, which proceeds from the mind itself and from its idea, as the mind knows itself and loves itself. It could not love itself unless it knew itself. It loves its beloved offspring, its idea of itself; so love is a kind of joining of parent and offspring. See in these words how there appears a certain 'vestige' of the Trinity." St. Anthony of Padua,

[h t t p s : / /](http://)



ONCE SAVED, ALWAYS SAVED?

~I'M SAVED?~

"Are you saved?" That's a question often heard from well-meaning Christians who want to help others know Jesus Christ. As Catholics whose faith is centered in Him, we can appreciate their good intentions and admire their willingness to talk about God. Even so, we may have trouble understanding what their question is really all about. What exactly do people mean when they talk of being already "saved"? Most often, Christians with this query view salvation as a past event that took place when they made a confession of faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. This act of faith, they believe, now guarantees them a place in heaven, no matter what they may do for the rest of their lives. They will never have to face the punishment of hell for their sins."

~A MISTAKEN NOTION~

"The teaching of the Catholic Church helps us understand that this is actually a mistaken notion of salvation. Jesus Christ came to give us much more than a kind of eternal fire insurance policy. Salvation in the fullest sense is an ongoing process that won't be complete until after we die. And in the meantime, it's still possible to turn away again from God. When someone asks us, then, whether we're "saved," perhaps the best short answer is this: "Well, I'm doing what the apostle Paul tells us to do in the Bible: I'm 'working out' my salvation day by day" (see Phil 2:12). If we want to follow up on that statement, we can assure the inquirer that we do in fact have faith in Jesus Christ, that we recognize Him as our Savior and Lord, and that our goal is to be counted one day among the saints in heaven. "

~WHAT IS SALVATION?~

"... According to the Catholic understanding of salvation, rooted in Scripture, we aren't just saved from sin. We're saved for eternal life with God. Why did God create us in the first place? He made us in certain ways like himself, able to think and choose, so we could be sons and daughters who live in friendship with Him. God created us for himself, for nothing less than to know, love, serve and enjoy Him — now and forever. Through sin, however, we've rebelled against God and rejected His friendship. As a result, His likeness in us has been marred, and we've separated ourselves from Him. Since He's the Source of all that's good, such separation can lead only to misery in both this life and the next. Because

God loved us so much, He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to save us from such a terrible fate. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus offer us, through the forgiveness of our sins, escape from eternal punishment. But that's not all. He also reconciles us to God, opening the door to a full restoration of our friendship with Him. In this way, Jesus begins the process of a complete renewal of God's likeness in us, a healing of the brokenness that comes from sin. So salvation isn't just a way to avoid hell, nor is it just a past event. On the contrary: Salvation, in its fullness, is God's new creation. To save us, He re-makes us in His likeness — a lifelong process requiring our cooperation — so that we can once again think and love as He thinks and loves. ... Consider this analogy. We're like the survivors of a shipwreck in a storm out in the middle of the ocean. We've been rescued from drowning and welcomed onboard the ship we call the Church. That ship is now taking us to a safe harbor — our home in heaven with God. But we're not home yet. You could say, then, that we've been "saved" in the sense of being rescued and taken aboard a safe vessel. But we can't really speak of being "saved" in the full sense until we reach our destination. We must humbly admit that we haven't yet arrived at final perfection. Meanwhile, we also must recognize the sobering possibility that — God forbid — we could choose someday to jump overboard again. Salvation isn't guaranteed just because of something we've done in the past. We continue to have a free will, which is part of God's likeness in us. So we still have the ability to turn away from God again. It's a chilling possibility. But it shouldn't make us perpetually worried that we'll be damned despite our best efforts to grow in grace. We can be confident that God desires our salvation, and He's faithful to help us. If we're tempted to forsake Him, He'll grant us the power to resist that temptation. Even so, the choice is still ours. In fact, we make choices every day that draw us closer to God or lead us farther away from Him. That's why simply believing in Jesus isn't enough. Friendship with God, like friendship of any kind, is more than just getting acquainted. It involves making a series of choices to love, over the long term, so that a committed relationship grows. Faith is useless, then, without good works. God must have our active cooperation, because both our mind and our will — the full likeness of God — must be renewed if we're to be saved in the end." By Paul Thigpen

For full article, go to: www.simplycatholic.com/are-you-saved/

CATEDRAL DE ST. EUGENE'S — 4 de Junio del 2023
Domingo de La Santísima Trinidad

LA SANTÍSIMA TRINIDAD

~DEL PÁRROCO~

Hoy celebramos un gran misterio: La Santísima Trinidad. En este misterio, encontramos la verdad de que en la unidad de la Divinidad hay Tres Personas distintas, el Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo. Quién mejor para explicárnoslo que el gran San Antonio de Padua, en un sermón pronunciado por él hace aproximadamente 800 años. Seguimos este sermón con un artículo suscitado por el pasaje evangélico: "Quien crea en Él no será condenado". Como católicos, ¿cómo explicar a nuestros amigos protestantes que "una vez salvado, siempre salvado" no es una noción bíblica? Siga leyendo y descúbralo.

SERMÓN DE SAN ANTONIO DE PADUA

~EL ORIGEN ÚLTIMO DE TODAS LAS COSAS~

"Lo primero que hay que notar en este Evangelio es la clara declaración de fe en la Santísima Trinidad. El Espíritu Santo es enviado por el Padre y el Hijo; y estos tres son de una sola sustancia, e inseparablemente iguales. La unidad se encuentra en la esencia, la pluralidad en las personas. De donde: "El Señor implica claramente la unidad de la esencia divina, y la Trinidad de personas, cuando dice en Mateo: Id, bautizad a todas las naciones en el nombre del Padre y del Hijo y del Espíritu Santo [Mt 28,19]. Dice 'en el nombre', no 'en los nombres', para mostrar la unidad de esencia; pero al añadir tres nombres, indica que hay tres personas." "En esa Trinidad está el Origen último de todas las cosas, la Belleza más perfecta y el Deleite más bendito. Como muestra San Agustín en su libro "Sobre la verdadera Religión", entendemos que el Origen supremo es Dios Padre, de quien proceden todas las cosas, de quien proceden el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo. Entendemos que la Belleza más perfecta es el Hijo, la Verdad del Padre, que se le asemeja en todo y a quien adoramos con y en el mismo Padre. Él es la forma de todas las cosas que son creadas a partir de una única fuente, y que vuelven a un único fin. Entendemos que el más bendito Deleite y la suprema Bondad es el Espíritu Santo, que es el don del Padre y del Hijo. Es nuestro deber adorar y aferrarnos a este don de Dios, tan inmutable como el Padre y el Hijo. Así, al considerar la creación, comprendemos la Trinidad en una sola sustancia, a saber un Dios Padre del que existimos, Hijo por el que existimos y Espíritu Santo en el que existimos. El Principio al que volvemos, la Forma que imitamos y la Gracia por la que nos reconciliamos". Para que nuestra mente se extienda a contemplar al Creador, y crea sin vacilación la Unidad en la Trinidad y la Trinidad en la Unidad, veamos cómo los "vestigios" de la Trinidad aparecen en la mente misma.

~SAN AGUSTÍN~

San Agustín dice en su libro "Sobre la Trinidad": "Aunque la mente humana no es de la misma naturaleza que Dios, sin embargo la imagen de Él, que nada es mejor, debe ser buscada y encontrada en aquella parte de nuestra naturaleza que nada es mejor: a saber, la mente. Observa cómo la mente se recuerda a sí misma, se comprende a sí misma y se ama a sí misma. Cuando vemos esto, vemos una trinidad; no Dios, sino la imagen de Dios. Hay una especie de trinidad aparente en la memoria, el entendimiento y el amor o la voluntad. Estos tres no son tres "vidas", sino una sola vida. No son tres mentes, sino una sola mente, no son tres esencias, sino una sola esencia. Atribuimos la memoria a un sujeto, y del mismo modo el entendimiento y la voluntad (o el amor) pertenecen a un sujeto; pero la vida, la mente y la esencia son en sí mismas ese sujeto. Estos tres son uno: una sola vida, una sola mente, una sola esencia".

~DISTINTOS ENTRE SÍ~

"Aunque estos tres son distintos entre sí, decimos que son uno, porque existen sustancialmente en el alma. La mente misma es, por así decirlo, un padre; y su conocimiento es, por así decirlo, su descendencia. Cuando la mente se conoce a sí misma, engendra una idea de sí misma, y es la única progenitora de esa idea. La tercera cosa es el amor, que procede de la mente misma y de su idea, ya que la mente se conoce a sí misma y se ama a sí misma. No podría amarse a sí misma si no se conociera a sí misma. Ama a su amado vástago, a la idea que tiene de sí misma, de modo que el amor es una especie de unión entre padre e hijo. Ved en estas palabras cómo aparece un cierto "vestigio" de la Trinidad". San Antonio de Padua

UNA VEZ SALVADO, ¿SIEMPRE SALVADO?

~¿ESTOY SALVO?~

"¿Eres salvo?" Esa es una pregunta que se oye a menudo de cristianos bien intencionados que quieren ayudar a otros a conocer a Jesucristo. Como católicos cuya fe se centra en Él, podemos apreciar sus buenas intenciones y admirar su voluntad de hablar de Dios. Aun así, puede que nos cueste entender a qué se refiere realmente su pregunta. ¿Qué quiere decir exactamente la gente cuando habla de estar ya "salvado"? En la mayoría de los casos, los cristianos que plantean esta pregunta ven la salvación como un acontecimiento pasado que tuvo lugar cuando confesaron su fe en Jesús como Salvador y Señor. Crean que este acto de fe les garantiza un lugar en el cielo, independientemente de lo que hagan el resto de sus vidas. Nunca tendrán que enfrentar el castigo del infierno por sus pecados".

~UNA NOCIÓN ERRÓNEA~

"La enseñanza de la Iglesia católica nos ayuda a comprender que, en realidad, ésta es una noción errónea de la salvación. Jesucristo vino a darnos mucho más que una especie de póliza eterna de seguro contra incendios. La salvación en su sentido más pleno es un proceso continuo que no se completará hasta después de nuestra muerte. Y mientras tanto, todavía es posible alejarse de nuevo de Dios. Cuando alguien nos pregunta, entonces, si estamos "salvados", tal vez la mejor respuesta corta sea esta: "Bueno, estoy haciendo lo que el apóstol Pablo nos dice que hagamos en la Biblia: Estoy 'trabajando' mi salvación día a día" (ver Fil 2:12). Si queremos seguir con esa afirmación, podemos asegurar al que nos pregunta que, de hecho, tenemos fe en Jesucristo, que le reconocemos como nuestro Salvador y Señor, y que nuestro objetivo es ser contados algún día entre los santos del cielo. "

~¿QUÉ ES LA SALVACIÓN?

"... Según la concepción católica de la salvación, arraigada en las Escrituras, no sólo nos salvamos del pecado. Estamos salvados para la vida eterna con Dios. ¿Por qué nos creó Dios en primer lugar? Nos hizo en cierto modo como Él, capaces de pensar y elegir, para que pudiéramos ser hijos e hijas que viven en amistad con Él. Dios nos creó para sí mismo, nada menos que para conocerle, amarle, servirle y disfrutar de Él, ahora y siempre. Sin embargo, a través del pecado, nos hemos rebelado contra Dios y hemos rechazado su amistad. Como resultado, Su semejanza en nosotros ha sido estropeada, y nos hemos separado de Él. Puesto que Él es la Fuente de todo lo bueno, tal separación sólo puede conducir a la miseria, tanto en esta vida como en la otra. Porque Dios nos amó tanto que envió a su Hijo, Jesucristo, para salvarnos de tan terrible destino. La vida, muerte y resurrección de Jesús nos ofrecen, mediante el perdón de nuestros pecados, escapar del castigo eterno. Pero eso no es todo. También nos reconcilia con Dios, abriendo la puerta a la plena restauración de nuestra amistad con Él. De este modo, Jesús inicia el proceso de una renovación completa de la semejanza de Dios en nosotros, una curación de la ruptura que proviene del pecado. Así que la salvación no es sólo una forma de evitar el infierno, ni tampoco un acontecimiento pasado. Al contrario: La salvación, en su plenitud, es la nueva creación de Dios. Para salvarnos, nos rehace a su semejanza -un proceso que dura toda la vida y que requiere nuestra cooperación- para que podamos volver a pensar y amar como Él piensa y ama. ... Considere esta analogía. Somos como los supervivientes de un naufragio en medio del océano. Hemos sido rescatados de morir ahogados y acogidos a bordo del barco que llamamos Iglesia. Ese barco nos lleva ahora a un puerto seguro: nuestro hogar en el cielo con Dios. Pero aún no estamos en casa. Se podría decir, entonces, que hemos sido "salvados" en el sentido de ser rescatados y llevados a bordo de un barco seguro. Pero no podemos hablar realmente de estar "salvados" en sentido pleno hasta que lleguemos a nuestro destino.

Debemos admitir con humildad que aún no hemos llegado a la perfección final. Mientras tanto, también debemos reconocer la aleccionadora posibilidad de que -Dios no lo quiera- podamos optar algún día por saltar de nuevo por la borda. La salvación no está garantizada sólo por algo que hayamos hecho en el pasado. Seguimos teniendo libre albedrío, que es parte de la semejanza de Dios en nosotros. Así que todavía tenemos la capacidad de alejarnos de Dios otra vez. Es una posibilidad escalofriante. Pero no debería hacernos estar perpetuamente preocupados de que seremos condenados a pesar de nuestros mejores esfuerzos por crecer en la gracia. Podemos confiar en que Dios desea nuestra salvación y es fiel para ayudarnos. Si nos sentimos tentados a abandonarle, Él nos dará el poder para resistir esa tentación. Aun así, la elección sigue siendo nuestra. De hecho, todos los días tomamos decisiones que nos acercan a Dios o nos alejan de Él. Por eso no basta con creer en Jesús. La amistad con Dios, como cualquier otro tipo de amistad, es algo más que conocerse. Implica hacer una serie de elecciones de amor, a largo plazo, para que crezca una relación comprometida. La fe es inútil, pues, sin buenas obras. Dios debe contar con nuestra cooperación activa, porque tanto nuestra mente como nuestra voluntad -la plena semejanza de Dios- deben ser renovadas si queremos salvarnos al final." Por Paul Thigpen

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