

rating his work of restoring what the disobedience of Adam had destroyed.<sup>224</sup>

**533** The hidden life at Nazareth allows everyone to enter into fellowship with Jesus by the most ordinary events of daily life:

The home of Nazareth is the school where we begin to understand the life of Jesus – the school of the Gospel. First, then, a lesson of silence. May esteem for *silence*, that admirable and indispensable condition of mind, revive in us . . . A lesson on *family life*. May Nazareth teach us what family life is, its communion of love, its austere and simple beauty, and its sacred and inviolable character . . . A lesson of *work*. Nazareth, home of the “Carpenter’s Son,” in you I would choose to understand and proclaim the severe and redeeming law of human work. . . . To conclude, I want to greet all the workers of the world, holding up to them their great pattern, their brother who is God.<sup>225</sup>

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**534** The *finding of Jesus in the temple* is the only event that breaks the silence of the Gospels about the hidden years of Jesus.<sup>226</sup> Here Jesus lets us catch a glimpse of the mystery of his total consecration to a mission that flows from his divine sonship: “Did you not know that I must be about my Father’s work?”<sup>227</sup> Mary and Joseph did not understand these words, but they accepted them in faith. Mary “kept all these things in her heart” during the years Jesus remained hidden in the silence of an ordinary life.

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224 Cf. *Rom* 5:19.

225 Paul VI at Nazareth, January 5, 1964: *LH*, Feast of the Holy Family, OR.

226 Cf. *Lk* 2:41-52.

227 *Lk* 2:49 alt.

### III. THE MYSTERIES OF JESUS' PUBLIC LIFE

#### The baptism of Jesus

535 Jesus' public life begins with his baptism by John in the  
 719-720 Jordan.<sup>228</sup> John preaches "a baptism of repentance for the forgive-  
 ness of sins."<sup>229</sup> A crowd of sinners<sup>230</sup> – tax collectors and soldiers,  
 Pharisees and Sadducees, and prostitutes – come to be baptized by  
 him. "Then Jesus appears." The Baptist hesitates, but Jesus insists  
 and receives baptism. Then the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove,  
 701 comes upon Jesus and a voice from heaven proclaims, "This is my  
 438 beloved Son."<sup>231</sup> This is the manifestation ("Epiphany") of Jesus as  
 Messiah of Israel and Son of God.

536 The baptism of Jesus is on his part the acceptance and  
 inauguration of his mission as God's suffering Servant. He allows  
 606 himself to be numbered among sinners; he is already "the Lamb of  
 God, who takes away the sin of the world."<sup>232</sup> Already he is  
 anticipating the "baptism" of his bloody death.<sup>233</sup> Already he is  
 1224 coming to "fulfill all righteousness," that is, he is submitting him-  
 self entirely to his Father's will: out of love he consents to this  
 baptism of death for the remission of our sins.<sup>234</sup> The Father's voice  
 responds to the Son's acceptance, proclaiming his entire delight in  
 444 his Son.<sup>235</sup> The Spirit whom Jesus possessed in fullness from his  
 conception comes to "rest on him."<sup>236</sup> Jesus will be the source of  
 the Spirit for all mankind. At his baptism "the heavens were  
 727 opened"<sup>237</sup> – the heavens that Adam's sin had closed – and the  
 739 waters were sanctified by the descent of Jesus and the Spirit, a  
 prelude to the new creation.

537 Through Baptism the Christian is sacramentally assimi-  
 1262 lated to Jesus, who in his own baptism anticipates his death and  
 resurrection. The Christian must enter into this mystery of humble  
 self-abasement and repentance, go down into the water with Jesus  
 in order to rise with him, be reborn of water and the Spirit so as to

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228 Cf. *Lk* 3:23; *Acts* 1:22.

229 *Lk* 3:3.

230 Cf. *Lk* 3:10-14; *Mt* 3:7; 21:32.

231 *Mt* 3:13-17.

232 *Jn* 1:29; cf. *Isa* 53:12.

233 Cf. *Mk* 10:38; *Lk* 12:50.

234 *Mt* 3:15; cf. 26:39.

235 Cf. *Lk* 3:22; *Isa* 42:1.

236 *Jn* 1:32-33; cf. *Isa* 11:2.

237 *Mt* 3:16.

become the Father's beloved son in the Son and "walk in newness of life".<sup>238</sup>

Let us be buried with Christ by Baptism to rise with him; let us go down with him to be raised with him; and let us rise with him to be glorified with him.<sup>239</sup> 628

Everything that happened to Christ lets us know that, after the bath of water, the Holy Spirit swoops down upon us from high heaven and that, adopted by the Father's voice, we become sons of God.<sup>240</sup>

### Jesus' temptations

538 The Gospels speak of a time of solitude for Jesus in the desert immediately after his baptism by John. Driven by the Spirit into the desert, Jesus remains there for forty days without eating; he lives among wild beasts, and angels minister to him.<sup>241</sup> At the end of this time Satan tempts him three times, seeking to compromise his filial attitude toward God. Jesus rebuffs these attacks, 394 which recapitulate the temptations of Adam in Paradise and of 518 Israel in the desert, and the devil leaves him "until an opportune time."<sup>242</sup>

539 The evangelists indicate the salvific meaning of this mysterious event: Jesus is the new Adam who remained faithful just where the first Adam had given in to temptation. Jesus fulfills Israel's vocation perfectly: in contrast to those who had once provoked God during forty years in the desert, Christ reveals himself as God's Servant, totally obedient to the divine will. In this, 385 Jesus is the devil's conqueror: he "binds the strong man" to take back his plunder.<sup>243</sup> Jesus' victory over the tempter in the desert anticipates victory at the Passion, the supreme act of obedience of 609 his filial love for the Father.

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238 *Rom* 6:4.

239 St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio*. 40, 9: PG 36, 369.

240 St. Hilary of Poitiers, *In Matth.* 2, 5: PL 9, 927.

241 Cf. *Mk* 1:12-13.

242 *Lk* 4:13.

243 Cf. *Ps* 95:10; *Mk* 3:27.

540 Jesus' temptation reveals the way in which the Son of God  
 2119 is Messiah, contrary to the way Satan proposes to him and the way  
 519-2849 men wish to attribute to him.<sup>244</sup> This is why Christ vanquished the  
 Tempter *for us*: "For we have not a high priest who is unable to  
 sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has  
 been tested as we are, yet without sinning."<sup>245</sup> By the solemn forty  
 days of *Lent* the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of  
 1438 Jesus in the desert.

### "The Kingdom of God is at hand"

541 "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee,  
 preaching the gospel of God, and saying: 'The time is fulfilled, and  
 the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe in the gos-  
 2816 pel.'"<sup>246</sup> "To carry out the will of the Father Christ inaugurated the  
 763 kingdom of heaven on earth."<sup>247</sup> Now the Father's will is "to raise  
 669, 768 up men to share in his own divine life."<sup>248</sup> He does this by gather-  
 865 ing men around his Son Jesus Christ. This gathering is the Church,  
 "on earth the seed and beginning of that kingdom."<sup>249</sup>

542 Christ stands at the heart of this gathering of men into the  
 "family of God." By his word, through signs that manifest the reign  
 2233 of God, and by sending out his disciples, Jesus calls all people to  
 come together around him. But above all in the great Paschal  
 mystery – his death on the cross and his Resurrection – he would  
 accomplish the coming of his kingdom. "And I, when I am lifted  
 up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." Into this union  
 789 with Christ all men are called.<sup>250</sup>

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244 Cf. *Mt* 16:21-23.

245 *Heb* 4:15.

246 *Mk* 1:14-15.

247 *LG* 3.

248 *LG* 2.

249 *LG* 5.

250 *Jn* 12:32; cf. *LG* 3.

## The proclamation of the Kingdom of God

543 *Everyone* is called to enter the kingdom. First announced to the children of Israel, this messianic kingdom is intended to accept men of all nations.<sup>251</sup> To enter it, one must first accept Jesus' word: 764

The word of the Lord is compared to a seed which is sown in a field; those who hear it with faith and are numbered among the little flock of Christ have truly received the kingdom. Then, by its own power, the seed sprouts and grows until the harvest.<sup>252</sup>

544 The kingdom belongs *to the poor and lowly*, which means those who have accepted it with humble hearts. Jesus is sent to "preach good news to the poor";<sup>253</sup> he declares them blessed, for "theirs is the kingdom of heaven."<sup>254</sup> To them – the "little ones" – the Father is pleased to reveal what remains hidden from the wise and the learned.<sup>255</sup> Jesus shares the life of the poor, from the cradle to the cross; he experiences hunger, thirst, and privation.<sup>256</sup> Jesus identifies himself with the poor of every kind and makes active love toward them the condition for entering his kingdom.<sup>257</sup> 709  
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545 Jesus invites *sinners* to the table of the kingdom: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."<sup>258</sup> He invites them to that conversion without which one cannot enter the kingdom, but shows them in word and deed his Father's boundless mercy for them and the vast "joy in heaven over one sinner who repents."<sup>259</sup> The supreme proof of his love will be the sacrifice of his own life "for the forgiveness of sins."<sup>260</sup> 1443  
588, 1846  
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546 Jesus' invitation to enter his kingdom comes in the form of *parables*, a characteristic feature of his teaching.<sup>261</sup> Through his parables he invites people to the feast of the kingdom, but he also asks for a radical choice: to gain the kingdom, one must give everything.<sup>262</sup> Words are not enough; deeds are required.<sup>263</sup> The 2613  
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251 Cf. Mt 8:11; 10:5-7; 28:19.

252 LG 5; cf. Mk 4:14, 26-29; Lk 12:32.

253 Lk 4:18; cf. 7:22.

254 Mt 5:3.

255 Cf. Mt 11:25.

256 Cf. Mt 21:18; Mk 2:23-26; Jn 4:6-7; 19:28; Lk 9:58.

257 Cf. Mt 25:31-46.

258 Mk 2:17; cf. 1 Tim 1:15.

259 Lk 15:7; cf. 7:11-32.

260 Mt 26:28.

261 Cf. Mk 4:33-34.

262 Cf. Mt 13:44-45; 22:1-14.

parables are like mirrors for man: will he be hard soil or good earth for the word?<sup>264</sup> What use has he made of the talents he has received?<sup>265</sup> Jesus and the presence of the kingdom in this world are secretly at the heart of the parables. One must enter the kingdom, that is, become a disciple of Christ, in order to "know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven."<sup>266</sup> For those who stay "outside," everything remains enigmatic.<sup>267</sup>

### The signs of the Kingdom of God

547 Jesus accompanies his words with many "mighty works  
670, 439 and wonders and signs," which manifest that the kingdom is present in him and attest that he was the promised Messiah.<sup>268</sup>

548 The signs worked by Jesus attest that the Father has sent  
156, 2616 him. They invite belief in him.<sup>269</sup> To those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask.<sup>270</sup> So miracles strengthen faith in the One who does his Father's works; they bear witness that he is the Son of God.<sup>271</sup> But his miracles can also be occasions for "offense";<sup>272</sup>  
574 they are not intended to satisfy people's curiosity or desire for  
447 magic. Despite his evident miracles some people reject Jesus; he is even accused of acting by the power of demons.<sup>273</sup>

549 By freeing some individuals from the earthly evils of hun-  
1503 ger, injustice, illness, and death,<sup>274</sup> Jesus performed messianic signs. Nevertheless he did not come to abolish all evils here be-  
440 low,<sup>275</sup> but to free men from the gravest slavery, sin, which thwarts them in their vocation as God's sons and causes all forms of human bondage.<sup>276</sup>

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263 Cf. *Mt* 21:28-32.

264 Cf. *Mt* 13:3-9.

265 Cf. *Mt* 25:14-30.

266 *Mt* 13:11.

267 *Mk* 4:11; cf. *Mt* 13:10-15.

268 *Acts* 2:22; cf. *Lk* 7:18-23.

269 Cf. *Jn* 5:36; 10:25, 38.

270 Cf. *Mk* 5:25-34; 10:52; etc.

271 Cf. *Jn* 10:31-38.

272 *Mt* 11:6.

273 Cf. *Jn* 11:47-48; *Mk* 3:22.

274 Cf. *Jn* 6:5-15; *Lk* 19:8; *Mt* 11:5.

275 Cf. *Lk* 12:13-14; *Jn* 18:36.

276 Cf. *Jn* 8:34-36.

550 The coming of God's kingdom means the defeat of Satan's: "If it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."<sup>277</sup> Jesus' *exorcisms* free some individuals from the domination of demons. They anticipate Jesus' great victory over "the ruler of this world."<sup>278</sup> The kingdom of God will be definitively established through Christ's cross: "God reigned from the wood."<sup>279</sup> 394  
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### "The keys of the kingdom"

551 From the beginning of his public life Jesus chose certain men, twelve in number, to be with him and to participate in his mission.<sup>280</sup> He gives the Twelve a share in his authority and "sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal."<sup>281</sup> They remain associated for ever with Christ's kingdom, for through them he directs the Church: 858  
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As my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.<sup>282</sup>

552 Simon Peter holds the first place in the college of the Twelve;<sup>283</sup> Jesus entrusted a unique mission to him. Through a revelation from the Father, Peter had confessed: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Our Lord then declared to him: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it."<sup>284</sup> Christ, the "living stone,"<sup>285</sup> thus assures his Church, built on Peter, of victory over the powers of death. Because of the faith he confessed Peter will remain the unshakeable rock of the Church. His mission will be to keep this faith from every lapse and to strengthen his brothers in it.<sup>286</sup> 880  
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277 Mt 12:26, 28.

278 Jn 12:31; cf. Lk 8:26-39.

279 LH, Lent, Holy Week, Evening Prayer, Hymn *Vexilla Regis*: "Regnavit a ligno Deus."

280 Cf. Mk 3:13-19.

281 Lk 9:2.

282 Lk 22:29-30.

283 Cf. Mk 3:16; 9:2; Lk 24:34; 1 Cor 15:5.

284 Mt 16:18.

285 1 Pet 2:4.

286 Cf. Lk 22:32.

553 Jesus entrusted a specific authority to Peter: "I will give  
 881 you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on  
 earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth  
 shall be loosed in heaven."<sup>287</sup> The "power of the keys" designates  
 authority to govern the house of God, which is the Church. Jesus,  
 the Good Shepherd, confirmed this mandate after his Resurrection:  
 1445 "Feed my sheep."<sup>288</sup> The power to "bind and loose" connotes the  
 authority to absolve sins, to pronounce doctrinal judgments, and  
 to make disciplinary decisions in the Church. Jesus entrusted this  
 authority to the Church through the ministry of the apostles<sup>289</sup> and  
 641, 881 in particular through the ministry of Peter, the only one to whom  
 he specifically entrusted the keys of the kingdom.

### A foretaste of the Kingdom: the Transfiguration

554 From the day Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the  
 Son of the living God, the Master "began to show his disciples that  
 he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things . . . and be killed,  
 and on the third day be raised."<sup>290</sup> Peter scorns this prediction, nor  
 do the others understand it any better than he.<sup>291</sup> In this context  
 the mysterious episode of Jesus' Transfiguration takes place on a  
 high mountain,<sup>292</sup> before three witnesses chosen by himself: Peter,  
 697, 2600 James, and John. Jesus' face and clothes become dazzling with  
 light, and Moses and Elijah appear, speaking "of his departure,  
 which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem."<sup>293</sup> A cloud covers him  
 440 and a voice from heaven says: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen  
 to him!"<sup>294</sup>

555 For a moment Jesus discloses his divine glory, confirming  
 Peter's confession. He also reveals that he will have to go by the  
 way of the cross at Jerusalem in order to "enter into his glory."<sup>295</sup>  
 2576, 2583 Moses and Elijah had seen God's glory on the Mountain; the Law  
 and the Prophets had announced the Messiah's sufferings.<sup>296</sup>  
 Christ's Passion is the will of the Father: the Son acts as God's  
 257 servant;<sup>297</sup> the cloud indicates the presence of the Holy Spirit. "The

287 *Mt* 16:19.

288 *Jn* 21:15-17; cf. 10:11.

289 Cf. *Mt* 18:18.

290 *Mt* 16:21.

291 Cf. *Mt* 16:22-23; *Mt* 17:23; *Lk* 9:45.

292 Cf. *Mt* 17:1-8 and parallels; 2 *Pet* 1:16-18.

293 *Lk* 9:31.

294 *Lk* 9:35.

295 *Lk* 24:26.

296 Cf. *Lk* 24:27.



whole Trinity appeared: the Father in the voice; the Son in the man; the Spirit in the shining cloud."<sup>298</sup>

You were transfigured on the mountain, and your disciples, as much as they were capable of it, beheld your glory, O Christ our God, so that when they should see you crucified they would understand that your Passion was voluntary, and proclaim to the world that you truly are the splendor of the Father.<sup>299</sup>

556 On the threshold of the public life: the baptism; on the threshold of the Passover: the Transfiguration. Jesus' baptism proclaimed "the mystery of the first regeneration," namely, our Baptism; the Transfiguration "is the sacrament of the second regeneration": our own Resurrection.<sup>300</sup> From now on we share in the Lord's Resurrection through the Spirit who acts in the sacraments of the Body of Christ. The Transfiguration gives us a foretaste of Christ's glorious coming, when he "will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body."<sup>301</sup> But it also recalls that "it is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God".<sup>302</sup> 1003

Peter did not yet understand this when he wanted to remain with Christ on the mountain. It has been reserved for you, Peter, but for after death. For now, Jesus says: "Go down to toil on earth, to serve on earth, to be scorned and crucified on earth. Life goes down to be killed; Bread goes down to suffer hunger; the Way goes down to be exhausted on his journey; the Spring goes down to suffer thirst; and you refuse to suffer?"<sup>303</sup>

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297 Cf. *Isa* 42:1.

298 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III, 45, 4, *ad* 2.

299 Byzantine Liturgy, Feast of the Transfiguration, *Kontakion*.

300 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III, 45, 4, *ad* 2.

301 *Phil* 3:21.

302 *Acts* 14:22.

303 St. Augustine, *Sermo* 78, 6: PL 38, 492-493; cf. *Lk* 9:33.

### Jesus' ascent to Jerusalem

557 "When the days drew near for him to be taken up [Jesus] set his face to go to Jerusalem."<sup>304</sup> By this decision he indicated that he was going up to Jerusalem prepared to die there. Three times he had announced his Passion and Resurrection; now, heading toward Jerusalem, Jesus says: "It cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem."<sup>305</sup>

558 Jesus recalls the martyrdom of the prophets who had been put to death in Jerusalem. Nevertheless he persists in calling Jerusalem to gather around him: "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!"<sup>306</sup> When Jerusalem comes into view he weeps over her and expresses once again his heart's desire: "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes."<sup>307</sup>

### Jesus' messianic entrance into Jerusalem

559 How will Jerusalem welcome her Messiah? Although Jesus had always refused popular attempts to make him king, he chooses the time and prepares the details for his messianic entry into the city of "his father David."<sup>308</sup> Acclaimed as son of David, as the one who brings salvation (*Hosanna* means "Save!" or "Give salvation!"), the "King of glory" enters his City "riding on an ass."<sup>309</sup> Jesus conquers the Daughter of Zion, a figure of his Church, neither by ruse nor by violence, but by the humility that bears witness to the truth.<sup>310</sup> And so the subjects of his kingdom on that day are children and God's poor, who acclaim him as had the angels when they announced him to the shepherds.<sup>311</sup> Their  
 333 acclamation, "Blessed be he who comes in the name of the  
 1352 LORD,"<sup>312</sup> is taken up by the Church in the "Sanctus" of the Eucharistic liturgy that introduces the memorial of the Lord's Passover.

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304 *Lk* 9:51; cf. *Jn* 13:1.

305 *Lk* 13:33; cf. *Mk* 8:31-33; 9:31-32; 10:32-34.

306 *Mt* 23:37.

307 *Lk* 19:41-42.

308 *Lk* 1:32; cf. *Mt* 21:1-11; *Jn* 6:15.

309 *Ps* 24:7-10; *Zech* 9:9.

310 Cf. *Jn* 18:37.

311 Cf. *Mt* 21:15-16; cf. *Ps* 8:3; *Lk* 19:38; 2:14.

312 Cf. *Ps* 118:26.