

## April Jubilee Reflections 2025

### Article 5: Descended into Hell...Rose Again from the Dead by Fr Stanislaus Muyebe OP

#### DESCENDED INTO HELL

The New Testament clearly states that Jesus was "raised from the dead." You can find references to this in various passages, such as Rom 6:8-11, Acts 3:5, Rom 10:9, Mt 28:2-7, 1 Pt 1:3, and Rev 1:5. When the New Testament says Jesus was "raised from the dead," it implies he had first descended into the realm of the dead. This means the crucified Jesus experienced death like all human beings, and his soul joined those in the underworld. However, Jesus descended there as the Savior, proclaiming the Good News to the spirits imprisoned there

Scripture refers to the abode of the dead as "hell" - Sheol in Hebrew or Hades in Greek - because those there are deprived of the vision of God. This applies to all the dead, both evil and righteous, as they await the Redeemer. However, their situations are not identical for, as shown in Jesus' parable of Lazarus and the rich man, the just souls awaited their Savior in "Abraham's bosom." It was these holy souls awaiting their Saviour that Jesus delivered when He descended into hell.

As such, Jesus did not descend into hell to deliver the damned or destroy hell itself, but to free the righteous who had gone before him. His descent completed the fulfillment of the Gospel message of salvation, spreading the reach of his redemptive work to all people of all times and places.

**In summary:** The Church's teaching on Christ's descent into hell emphasizes that He truly experienced death, conquered it, and liberated the righteous from its grip. Through His death for us, He destroyed the devil's power over death (Heb 2:14), thereby freeing all who were subject to the fear of death. Now the risen Christ holds "the keys of Death and Hades" (Rev 1:18), ensuring all will one day bow before him, so that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Phil 2: 10-11).

(Reference: Catechism of the Catholic Church, CC632-637).

#### ROSE AGAIN

The phrase "...rose again" in the Creed reminds us that the miracle of Jesus' resurrection was accomplished by the entire Holy Trinity working together. All three divine Persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit - played distinct yet vital roles to accomplish this miraculous event. The Bible makes it clear that all three Persons of the Trinity were involved in raising Jesus from the dead.

- **The role of God the Father:** Several passages show that God the Father raised Jesus through His divine power, perfectly reuniting Christ's human nature, including his physical body, with the Triune Godhead (Gal 1:1, Rom 6:4, Acts 2:24, 1 Pt 1:3, Phil 2:8-11).
- **The role of God the Holy Spirit:** Other passages reveal the Holy Spirit's life-giving power breathed new life into Jesus' humanity and called it to the glorious state of Lordship (1 Pt 3:18, Rom 1:4, Rom 8:11). The Spirit's life-giving power gave life back to

Jesus's dead humanity and revealed Him as the "Son of God in power" through the resurrection.

- **The role of God the Son:** The role of God the Son in the resurrection is emphasized in the Creed, where it says, "Jesus rose again from the dead." And the Creed draws from the Scriptures.

The Scriptures affirm that Jesus rose from the dead by his own divine power and authority as the Second Person of the Trinity (Mt 28:6, 1 Cor 15:20, Rev 1:5-6, Jn 2:19; 10:18).

The ability of Jesus to rise from the dead by his own power and authority is a unique privilege that belongs solely to the almighty power of God alone. As Jesus himself declared; "*I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again*" (Jn 10:17-18). He also declared: "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*" (Jn 2:9)- referring to the temple of His own body.

**In summary:** When the Scriptures say Jesus was "raised" by the Father, this refers to him as a human being. When they say he rose by his own power, this affirms his divine nature as the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. The resurrection is the work of the entire Godhead - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - acting together as one.

If someone asked who resurrected Jesus from the dead, the answer is that God - in the form of the three Persons of the Trinity - was responsible. All three members of the Trinity were involved in Jesus' resurrection, just as they were all involved in creation (1 Cor 8:6; Gen 1:1-2) and in the work of salvation (Jn 3:6, 16).

(Reference: Catechism of the Catholic Church, CCC 648-650).

**PROPOSED PRAYER: Regina Cæli (English)**

V/. Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.

R/. For He whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.

V/. Has risen, as he said, alleluia.

R/. Pray for us to God, alleluia.

V/. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.

R/. For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

**Prayer**

O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord. AMEN.