

The Resurrection of the Dead (32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)

2 Maccabees 7:1-2, 9-14—Martyrdom of Seven Jewish Brothers and their Mother

1. Context: the Maccabean Revolt
 - a. Antiochus IV Epiphanes: enforced Hellenization
 - b. Forcing Jews to eat pork (cf. Leviticus 11-12)
 - c. Pious Jews refuse to break the law
2. Moral: bodily nature of Jewish belief in the resurrection
 - a. Not just immortality of the soul
 - b. Resurrection of the body

Psalm 17: “Lord when your glory appears, my joy will be full”

1. Prayers for vindication of a “just cause” (v. 1)
2. Prayers for divine protection: in “the shadow of thy wings” (v. 8-9)
3. Hope for vision of “the face” of God upon “awaking” (v. 15)

Luke 20:27-39—The Sadducees and the Resurrection

1. Sadducees: attempt to
 - a. Jewish party linked with Temple and priesthood (Acts 4:1; 5:7)
 - b. Denied resurrection of the body (cf. Acts 23:6-8)
 - c. Only accepted the Pentateuch; rejected the Prophets
 - d. Deut 25:5-10: levirate marriage of deceased brother’s widow
2. Jesus’ Response:
 - a. Two Ages: “This age” and “the age” to come
 - b. No marriage in the new creation (age of the resurrection)
 - c. Exod 3:6: the “God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” and the Burning Bush

The Living Tradition

St. John Chrysostom: “Say to [your wife]: ‘Our time here is brief and fleeting, but if we are pleasing to God, we can exchange this life of the Kingdom to come. Then we will be perfectly one both with Christ and with each other, and our pleasure will know no bounds’” (*Homily on Ephesians* 20)

St. Cyprian of Carthage: “Virgins, preserve in what you have begun to be. Persevere in what you will be. A great reward, a glorious prize... are reserved for you... The voice of the Lord says, “Those who will be found worthy of that world and of the resurrection of the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage [Luke 20:35].” *What we shall be, you have already begun to be. You already have in this world the glory of the resurrection.* (Cyprian of Carthage, *The Dress of Virgins*, 22)

Questions for Discussion, Reflection, and Application (32nd Sunday, Year C)

1. Were you aware of the forced attempts to Hellenize the Jewish people during the Maccabean period? What similarities are there between ancient Jewish martyrdoms and persecution and our contemporary situation?

2. In the Creed, we profess that we believe “in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” But when you think about eternal life, how do you imagine it? As disembodied immortality of the soul? Or as the resurrection of the body in “the world to come”? What do you think the world to come will be like?

3. Prayerfully recite Psalm 17 with and reflect on how it might be applied to the Christian hope for the resurrection.
