

Baptism as Co-Crucifixion (Solemnity, November 2nd)

Romans 6:3-9—Baptized into His Death

1. Baptism: baptism into Jesus death (6:3)
2. Burial: we were “buried” with Jesus in baptism (6:4; suggests immersion)
3. New Life: effect of baptism; “walking” (morality) in “newness of life” (6:4)
4. Baptismal Mystagogy:

<i>Visible Sign</i>		<i>Invisible Mystery</i>
Baptismal Immersion	→	Dying with Jesus
Emergence from Water	→	Rising with Christ

5. Co-Crucifixion: baptism as “co-crucifixion” with Jesus (6:6)
6. Slavery→ Freedom: “no longer be enslaved to sin”
7. Death = “he who has died is freed [Gk *dikaioō*, “justified”] from sin (6:7; cf. NAB)
8. Kingdom: freed from the power and “dominion” of death (6:8)

Living Tradition

Catechism: *Because of Christ, Christian death has a positive meaning: “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” “The saying is sure: if we have died with him, we will also live with him.” What is essentially new about Christian death is this: through Baptism, the Christian has already “died with Christ” sacramentally, in order to live a new life; and if we die in Christ’s grace, physical death completes this “dying with Christ” and so completes our incorporation into him in his redeeming act... In death, God calls man to himself. Therefore the Christian can experience a desire for death like St. Paul’s: “My desire is to depart and be with Christ.” He can transform his own death into an act of obedience and love towards the Father, after the example of Christ:*

St. Ignatius of Antioch: My earthly desire has been crucified; ... there is living water in me, water that murmurs and says within me: Come to the Father.

St. Teresa of Avila: I want to see God and, in order to see him, I must die.

St. Thérèse of Lisieux: I am not dying; I am entering life. (CCC 1011-12)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (All Souls, November 2nd)

1. Why does the Catechism teach that “physical death” is the “completion of Baptism”?
Is that how you think of your own baptism?
