

CMC BSP Session 2
Group Time Discussion
October 22, 2004

Group Time Sharing Questions

QUESTION ONE: Read the Catechism of the Catholic Church's teaching on the Second Coming of Christ (Paragraphs 670, 672, 675, 677). What are some of the differences between the basic Catholic view of the Second Coming of Christ and those often heard in the media?

QUESTION TWO: Jesus is described with various imagery in Rev 1:13-16. Share your thoughts triggered by this imagery. (Hint: Compare Rev 1:14-17 with Dan 7:9, 10:5-6; Rev 1:16 with Eph 6:17 and Heb 4:12)

PERSONAL REFLECTION: Read B2/2-4. Which letter of the seven letters speaks most directly to you today? Why?

Q1	Read the Catechism of the Catholic Church's teaching on the Second Coming of Christ (Paragraphs 670, 672, 675, 677). What are some of the differences between the basic Catholic view of the Second Coming of Christ and those often heard in the media?	
CCC 670	Since the Ascension God's plan has entered into its fulfilment. We are already at "the last hour".[553] "Already the final age of the world is with us, and the renewal of the world is irrevocably under way; it is even now anticipated in a certain real way, for the Church on earth is endowed already with a sanctity that is real but imperfect."[554] Christ's kingdom already manifests its presence through the miraculous signs that attend its proclamation by the Church.[555] ... until all things are subjected to him	從耶穌升天後，天主的計畫進入了完成階段。我們已經是在「最後的時期了」(若一2:18)。「所以，世界的末期已經來到，世界的革新已無可挽回地被確定，而且在某種意義下，確已提前實現；因為教會已在今世擁有聖德，雖不完善，卻是真正的聖德」。基督的神國透過那些伴隨教會宣講的奇跡和徵兆，已顯示出它的臨在。
CCC 672	Before his Ascension Christ affirmed that the hour had not yet come for the glorious establishment of the messianic kingdom awaited by Israel[561] which, according to the prophets, was to bring all men the definitive order of justice, love and peace.[562] According to the Lord, the present time is the time of the Spirit and of witness, but also a time still marked by "distress" and the trial of evil which does not spare the Church[563] and ushers in the struggles of the last days. It is a time of waiting and watching.[564]	基督在升天前，強調以色列所期待的，建立默西亞光榮神國的時間，尚未來到。這神國照先知們所說的，應帶給眾人正義、仁愛與和平的最後秩序。依上主所言，目前是聖神和見證的時刻，但也是一個標誌著「急難」(格前7:26)和邪惡考驗的時刻，連教會也不能倖免，此時刻也開始了最後時期的戰鬥這是一個期待和警醒的時期。
CCC 675	Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers.[573] The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth[574] will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh.[575]	在基督來臨前，教會將要經歷一個動搖許多信徒信仰的最後考驗。那陪伴她在世旅程的迫害，將揭露在冒牌宗教的方式下的「邪惡的奧秘」，它給人提供一種表面解決問題的方法，但要付出背棄真理的代價。最大的冒牌宗教就是假基督，即是一種冒充的默西亞主義：人追求自己的榮耀而取代天主及在肉身內降世的默西亞。
CCC 677	The Church will enter the glory of the kingdom only through this final Passover, when she will follow her Lord in his death and Resurrection.[578] The kingdom will be fulfilled, then, not by a historic triumph of the Church through a progressive ascendancy, but only by God's victory over the final unleashing of evil, which will cause his Bride to come down from heaven.[579] God's triumph over the revolt of evil will take the form of the Last Judgement after the final cosmic upheaval of this passing world.[580]	教會除非透過這最後的逾越，追隨主的死亡和復活，將不會進入天國的光榮中。所以，天國不是因著教會逐步上進、在歷史上凱旋而獲得的，而是因著天主制伏惡者的最後放縱而確立的，這事將使祂的新娘從天降下，這一天，主對惡者叛逆的勝利，將在這暫存世界最後宇宙性的動盪之後，採取最後審判的方式。

Q2	Jesus is described with various imagery in Rev 1:13-16. Share your thoughts triggered by this imagery. (Hint: Compare Rev 1:14-17 with Dan 7:9, 10:5-6; Rev 1:16 with Eph 6:17 and Heb 4:12)	
Rev 1:13-17	<p>¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, wearing an ankle-length robe, with a gold sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hair of his head was as white as white wool or as snow, and his eyes were like a fiery flame. ¹⁵ His feet were like polished brass refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing water. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars. A sharp two-edged sword came out of his mouth, and his face shone like the sun at its brightest.</p> <p>¹⁷ When I caught sight of him, I fell down at his feet as though dead. He touched me with his right hand and said, "Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last,</p>	<p>¹³在燈臺當中有似人子的一位，身穿長衣，胸間佩有金帶。¹⁴他的頭和頭髮皓白，有如潔白的羊毛，又如同雪；他的眼睛有如火燄；¹⁵他的腳相似在烈窯中燒煉的光銅；他的聲音有如大水的響聲；¹⁶他的右手持有七顆星；從他的口中發出一把雙刃的利劍；他的面容有如發光正烈的太陽。</p> <p>¹⁷我一看見他，就跌倒在他腳前，有如死人，他遂把右手按在我身上說：「不要害怕！我是元始，我是終末，</p>
Dan 7:9	<p>⁹ As I watched, Thrones were set up and the Ancient One took his throne. His clothing was snow bright, and the hair on his head as white as wool; His throne was flames of fire, with wheels of burning fire.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> [7:9] A vision of the heavenly throne of God (the Ancient One), who sits in judgment (symbolized by fire) over the nations. Some of the details of the vision, depicting the divine majesty and omnipotence, are to be found in Ezekial 1.</p>	<p>⁹我觀望，直到安置了寶座，上面坐著一位萬古常存者，他的衣服潔白如雪，他的頭髮潔白如羊毛，他的寶座好似火燄，寶座的輪子如同烈火。</p>
Dan 10:5-6	<p>⁵ As I looked up, I saw a man dressed in linen with a belt of fine gold around his waist. ⁶ His body was like chrysolite, his face shown like lightning, his eyes were like fiery torches, his arms and feet looked like burnished bronze, and his voice sounded like the roar of a multitude.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> [10:5-6] The heavenly person of the vision is probably the angel Gabriel, as in Daniel 9:21. Chrysolite: or topaz, a yellowish precious stone.</p>	<p>⁵我舉目觀望：看見有一個人身穿麻衣，腰束敷非爾金帶，⁶他的身體好像碧玉，他的面容好似閃電，他的眼睛有如火炬，他的手臂和腿有如磨光了的銅，他說話的聲音彷彿群眾的喧嚷。</p>
Eph 6:17	<p>¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.</p>	<p>¹⁷並戴上救恩當盔，拿著聖神作利劍，即天主的話，</p>
Heb 4:12	<p>¹² Indeed, the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.</p>	<p>¹²天主的話確實是生活的，是有效力的，比各種雙刃的劍還銳利，直穿入靈魂和神魂，關節與骨髓的分離點，且可辨別心中的感覺和思念。</p>

<http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/INDEX.HTM>

<http://www.catholic.org.tw/bible/index.htm>

<http://www.cathlinks.org/ccc-toc.htm>

<http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/ccc.html>

ANSWERS:

QUESTION ONE

The futurist view is a very common view promulgated by the media and many Evangelical Protestants and fundamentalists. It is believed that only believers studying Revelation at the end of history will truly understand the elements of the vision John records. Current events or world figures are seen as signs of Jesus' second coming. Hal Lindsey, for example, has popularized theories which see USSR as "Gog and Magog", European common market as the 10-headed beast, Soviet helicopters as the "locust". (See BSP1 notes page B1/2). This view has been specifically condemned by the Church as a heresy.

The Church's teaching is essentially the "idealist" view, which sees Revelation in terms of the moral struggle between good and evil, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. It reminds us that Jesus Christ is the Lord of history; the on-going struggles that men witness, be it the struggle of humanity in world history, or the persecutions and tribulations the Church endures, or our own spiritual struggle, are ultimately part of this battle over which our Lord is in command. And He will be victorious over the final unleashing of evil.

QUESTION TWO

1:13 "Son of Man" – cf Dn 7:13, to depict Jesus' human nature; "Ankle-length robe" – Jesus is priest (cf Ex 28:4); "Gold sash" – Jesus is king (cf Dn 10:5, 1 Mc 10:89)

1:14 "hair...as white as white wool or as snow" - borrowed from Dn 7:9, comparing Jesus to the glory and majesty of "the Ancient One" in Daniel's vision.

1:14b "His eyes were like a fiery flame" – Christ is portrayed as all-knowing (cf Rev 2:23, Jer 17:10).

1:15 "His feet were like polished brass" – Christ is depicted as unchangeable (cf Dn 10:6)

1:15b "His voice was like the sound of rushing water" – Christ speaks with divine authority (cf Ez 1:24)

1:16 "held seven stars" – Symbolizing Jesus' universal dominion.

1:16b "A sharp two-edged sword came out of his mouth" – This refers to the word of God (cf Eph 6:17, Heb 4:12)