

The Meaning of Christ's Death

Truths to Overcome the Fear of Death

and Anticipate Life after Death with Wonder



*Rembrandt's painting, "The Descent from the Cross" 1650-1652¹
(Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn)*

¹ Rebrandt Descent of the Cross. 30 May, 2018. Google Images. Retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Descent_from_the_Cross-1650_1652-Rembrandt_van_Rijn_and_Constantijn_van_Renesse.jpg

Introduction

Holy drama! Jesus Christ died a most unjust and unnatural death. Mocked, tortured, insulted, he endured great suffering, angst and humiliation at the hands of those who judged him not to mention the observing public, his torturers and executioners. Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI (Ratzinger) cites his moment of death as the moment the old temple is over, when the face of God as truly being revealed that was previously concealed.² Life and the afterlife have always been among the most important concerns of human beings. Today the topic of death is avoided and is one that provokes great anxiety. But the meaning of Christ's death can lessen this anxiety and be the foundation for a beautiful understanding of Christ's Resurrection. We are invited into the Trinity to model the relationship Christ had with the Father. Luigi Giussani invites us to rediscover our true religious sense³ and Ratzinger invites us to return to the original proclamation of Christ. Indeed, in fostering a relationship with the Christ of Faith we participate in the mystery of the Trinity now and at the hour of our death. I started this paper to answer the question: **"How can Christ's death help us overcome the fear of death and our resistance to prepare for it?"** After reflection I addressed the broader question of: **"What is the Meaning of Christ's Death?"** At Catholic Cemeteries, we meet with families and present at parishes. We encourage our community to make pre-arrangement plans to be spiritually, mentally and practically ready. Once Christ's Passion, death and Resurrection are explained, participants comfort level with the topic improves significantly. The challenge is how to succinctly share insights in 3rd party communications to motivate engagement. It is my hope we take up the challenge from the Fatima Prayer to better *"Lead All Souls to Heaven."* This paper is to help that purpose and to meet the course requirements. We need to encourage absolute trust in God for one's end of life, for it is new life. We must explore how to do more for *metanoia* – converting hearts, encouraging faith in the living Lord and experiencing the gift of His presence daily to free ourselves from sin and anxiety. This paper reviews the pastoral care situation, examines sin-anxiety and reviews insights and scriptural references to support the question posed.

² Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI. *Jesus of Nazareth. Vol. II: Holy Week, from the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011. Pg. 209.

³ Luigi Giussani. *At the Origins of the Christian Claim.* Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998.

Pastoral Care Situation

Catholic Cemeteries buries 1 in 7 Catholics that die in Metro Vancouver. This has improved from 1 in 12 five years ago. An assessment of where the 6 out of 7 go indicate 2-3 are going to corporate providers (often being oversold and in many cases having a "chapel" service vs a funeral Mass in a Catholic parish), 2-3 are leaving urns at home, and 1-2 are scattering ashes⁴. The last two are not in alignment with church teaching and if plans are left to lapsed children often a funeral Mass is skipped. The number of deaths is increasing 3 percent a year because of an aging society⁵. Only 2% of Catholic adults over the age of 50 have a pre-arrangement plan (with us), whereas over 2/3rds have a will⁶. Many Catholic adults have pre-arrangements with corporate providers, the number is unknown. But the gap between those that have a will versus those that have a will and a pre-arrangement plan for sacred burial space is very telling.

Over the millennium the culture has displayed concern for the dead and life after death. Funerals for those we love and public figures are no less ritualistic. We visit cemeteries and have the feeling that death is not the end and that there something more. The culture is changing, we are seeing more of a "cremate now, celebrate later" movement, more scattering, and a foregoing of ritual. Father Benedict J. Groeschel, a well-respected lecturer, psychologist, retreat master and monk had a near death experience and went on in his ministry to publish "*After This Life*." In his 40 plus years of working as a psychologist, he cites the most common personal problem as anxiety and fear⁷. He goes on to cite that man does all that he can to avoid the plain fact that we are mortal. The denial of death being one of the primary characteristics of our contemporary culture. He goes on to explain the reason for significant growth in cremation as part of this denial where as confronted with the body of the deceased at a wake, we are forced to acknowledge the person's death.

⁴ Internal Catholic Cemeteries data plus general market share assessment based on qualitative interviews. 2017.

⁵ Government Statistics BC as sourced from www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/vital-statistics

⁶ Internal contract number divided by the number of Catholic Adults in Metro Vancouver 60+. 2/3rds sourced from 2014 Quantitative Study.

⁷ Benedict J. Groeschel. *After This Life, What Catholics Believe About What Happens Next*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing, 2009.

Sin-Anxiety

I reviewed two books for greater insight on anxiety. The first book, *After this Life* by Father Benedict J. Groeschel. He cites that much of the culture is in denial it is mortal and it goes on oblivious of the fact that we and those we care for will one-day die. Many of us are ill prepared to deal with life threatening events, sickness and the death of others. The vision of the church gives us of death is one where fear is replaced by hope. Groeschel encourages us to fear sin, not death. Death has become an element of God's great work of redemption. I love a question from his book in his encouragement for us to ask, "what happens next?" He teaches: "what we believe happens next is very much going to define what is happening to us right now." My interpretation here is to face death, accept it as part of life, then fear seems to subside (vs keeping one's head in the sand in ignorance).

The second author I reviewed is Hans Urs von Balthasar and his book *The Christian and Anxiety* as recommended by Professor Potworowski. He provides a Christian interpretation of anxiety, its root meaning and man's anxiety in the light of Christ and the Trinity. Anxiety has a Christological meaning, which concerns the authenticity of God's incarnation in Jesus. "God could not become man in any other way than by coming to know human fear and by taking it upon himself."⁸ His work lays down two principles:

- (1) On one hand, the Christian neither can nor should have firsthand knowledge of anxiety, for by his passion and death Christ assumed and conquered it.
- (2) On the other hand, the Christian receives from Christ a participation in his redemptive anxiety.

The latter principle is very insightful. Balthasar encourages us to have trust and faith in God then our anxiety is not a factor. "Human fear has been completely and definitively conquered by the Cross. Anxiety is one of the authorities, powers, and dominions over which the Lord triumphed on the Cross and which he carried off captive and placed in chains." Fear not.

⁸ Hans Urs von Balthasar. *The Christian and Anxiety*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press. 1989. Pg. 15.

“...for God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us.” I Thess 5:9-10 Anxiety about death and guilt lies at the root of modern consciousness. If someone suffers from excess anxiety Balthasar indicates this is suffering from a lack of Christian truth. Balthasar draws comparisons to early Christianity when the new Christians strode through decaying antiquity without contracting anxiety and demonstrated to the infirm the strength of a life that draws on quite different sources and resources. Today’s society makes it harder for people to keep themselves free from anxiety then it means there are fewer genuine Christians than at other times. This demands a fearless “Yes” to grace. Balthasar offers three laws for Christian Anxiety:

- (1) Christianity is intent upon and capable of delivering man from sin-anxiety, provided he opens himself to that redemption and its conditions. Christianity provides access to God in faith, love and hope.
- (2) We can always become sinners anew. We are permitted to leave sin-anxiety behind to the degree that we appropriate in truth the living faith offered to us from the Cross.
- (3) God grants participation in the anxiety of this Son on the Cross so no believer unless he has first granted to him the entire strength of the Christian mission.

Groeschel offers additional insights:

To be in a state of grace means that Christ lives within us. If we extinguish the life of Christ in us through serious sin, if we banish Him from our souls, we have separated ourselves and alienate ourselves from God. We have chosen eternal nothingness. We have chosen Hell⁹.

Per Groeschel, death is especially frightening because it is the end of all that is familiar to us. To the unbeliever it is a journey into nothingness. To the believer it represents a passage into a different and splendid domain of being.

⁹ Benedict J. Groeschel. *After This Life, What Catholics Believe About What Happens Next*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing. 2009. Pg. 48.

In 2014, Catholic Cemeteries conducted “Right Brain” research¹⁰. The work featured qualitative interviews with techniques to draw out emotions. We examined emotions for being prepared for death and barriers that kept people from making plans or addressing their mortality. The fears and anxiety factors included:

- Fear of death, deterioration and the unknown
- Fear of abandonment/ being alone
- Fear of loss of control/ freedom
- Fear of loss of respect and betrayal
- Fear of loss of identify

For the genuine Catholic that has had some formation these fears are lower or non-existent than for those without formation or a religious sense. I keep thinking that we must help people to develop a strong relationship with the Christ of Faith, because that is the anecdote to the fears. In essence, put your trust in God and don't worry! Getting our community to move ahead in this Christian maturity is our challenge at Catholic Cemeteries and for our parishes.

¹⁰ Right Brain Research Study. August 2014.

Key Insights from Events Surrounding Christ's Death

This section looks at the key events and implications of the circumstances related to Christ's death. It pulls out key insights from the course textbooks.

Foreshadowing

The exegesis of cleansing of the temple reveals from Jesus "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands." Mark 14:58. The old will be replaced by the new – something very different¹¹.

His sign is the cross. The ultimate rejection and crucifixion of Jesus means at the same time the end of this Temple – a New worship is being introduced in a temple not built with human hands. Ratzinger indicates He himself is the new Temple of humanity. Jesus in the temple offers healing goodness in contrast to money changing and corruption present. In the Old Testament, Ratzinger points out Judaism of the Sadducees was entirely bound to the Temple. God who had set down his name in the Temple and in a mysterious way dwelt within it, now lost his dwelling place on earth.

Jesus' final meal, an act of worship, reminds us of the night when the first born of Egypt were struck down and Israel was saved by the blood of the lamb (Exodus 12). His night in Gethsemane is a reminder of the old Passover and a foreshadowing of the new Passover. Like the garden where Adam and Eve sinned, it is in a garden that Jesus is betrayed, a grave sin. It was in the garden that Jesus accepts the Father's will and makes it his own. There is a foreshadowing of his death and rising:

"After I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." Mark 14:28 He is the good shepherd who is leading us through death to a path of new life.

Shortly after his entrance into Jerusalem, Jesus is approached by two disciples indicating a request from Greek visitors to see him. He responds with a prophecy of the Passion:

"The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone: but if it **dies** it bears much fruit." John 12:23-24

¹¹ Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI. Jesus of Nazareth. Vol. I: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration. New York: Doubleday, 2007.

He comes as the grain of wheat that has died and he will bear fruit among them. They will see his “glory” in the crucified Jesus, the true God, the one they were seeking.¹²

The meaning of these statements lets us know a death will occur but fruit from the death is coming. We need to trust in scripture and teaching of these truths.

Jesus’ Humanity and Jesus’ Divinity

Jesus’ night in the garden before his death is an event of great anguish. Here we see his primordial experience of fear, a very human emotion. He is troubled and afraid. We can relate. He did have awareness of the hour to come, his death, his mission. When the will of the father becomes His will we see this unique interrelationship between the divine will and the human will.

When asked at his trial “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” Jesus answers: “I am; and you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” Mark 14:62

The meaning of this concerns his humanity so we can fully relate to these fears on a human level but that we too display part divine nature.

God’s Love & Mercy through Jesus

When the Crucifixion was being acted out he makes a plea for forgiveness: “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34 Ratzinger cites that what he preached in the Sermon on the Mount, he puts into practice. He shows no hatred, no call for revenge, and begs for forgiveness to those who nail him onto the Cross. God himself removes the veil and reveals himself in the crucified Jesus as the one who loves to the point of death.

Eternal Life

Ratzinger explains for us not to assume life after death but that “eternal life” is life itself which can also be lived in the present age and is no longer challenged by physical death. This is beautiful i.e. life here

¹² Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI. *Jesus of Nazareth. Vol. II: Holy Week, from the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011. Pg. 19.

and now can no longer be destroyed by anything or anyone. He cites the account of the raising of Lazarus: "He who believes in me, though he dies, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Because I live, you also live." John 11:25-26.

The meaning of this is that there is no death for those who believe.

Theme of Descent and Ascent

Baptism from Ratzinger¹³: "The actual ritual of Baptism symbolizes on one hand, immersion into the waters is a symbol of death, which recalls the death symbolism of the annihilating, destructive power of the ocean flood. It is also about purification, liberation from filth and burdens that distort life. Beginning again. Death and resurrection are about starting life over again anew. A rebirth. Jesus' baptism anticipated his death on the Cross. "Going down into the water and emerging again are the image of the descent into hell and the Resurrection." John Chrysostom

From Romans 6:3-11 "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life...for if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We see themes of descent and ascent in Christ's baptism, Resurrection and ascension. Ratzinger points out that even his journey from Galilee to Jerusalem is a geographic ascent of 1900 feet.

Kereszty¹⁴ offers us a key insight:

The Son of God takes up complete solidarity with sinful humankind so that the latter may enter through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit into the most intimate communion with the Father. The stages of the *descending* movement are the giving up of the Son by the Father, the Incarnation and the carrying of the full burden of our sins by the Son of God up to his death on the cross. The *ascending* movement begins with the exaltation of the Son of Man on the cross, his Resurrection and ascension. It is

¹³ Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI. Jesus of Nazareth. Vol. I: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration. New York: Doubleday, 2007. Chapter I The Baptism of Jesus.

¹⁴ Roch A. Kereszty. *Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology*. Third Edition. New York: St. Paul's, 2011. Intro.

consummated by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit so that in the Spirit and in the Church all peoples may come to share in the destiny and life of the Son of Man, and thus redeemed humankind may be gathered to the eternal Kingdom of the Father.

The meaning in here is we need to trust and to share in the destiny and life of Jesus Christ.

New King

During his trial Pilate asks, “So you are a king?” to which Jesus responds: “You say that I am a king. For this I was born and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth.” Pilate at his place of judgment says, “Here is your King” John 19:14

At Christ’s crucifixion, the mocking Sanhedrin say “He is the King of Israel. The mockers thereby acknowledge that Jesus is truly the one of whom the Book of Wisdom speaks. The cross is a place of total sacrifice and truly divine love. Of the two crucified beside Jesus, one joins the mockery but the other, the “good thief” has a conversion and recognizes Jesus as truly God’s son, he asks: “Jesus remember me when you come in your kingly power.” Luke 23:42 To which Jesus responds: “Today you will with me in Paradise”. Luke 23:43

Jesus knew he would enter directly into fellowship with the Father – the promise of “paradise.” The good thief is an image of hope and of consoling that God’s mercy can reach us evening in our final moments.

His divinity is of kingship “My kingship is not of this world.” John 18:36

In here lies meaning to participate in Christ’s Trinity and into the fellowship with the Father.

“Therefore Christ, who makes an offering of himself on the Cross, is the true high priest, anticipated symbolically by the Aaronic priesthood. Hence his self-giving – his obedience, which takes us all up and brings us back to God – is the true worship, the true sacrifice.¹⁵ “The darkness and irrationality of sin

¹⁵ Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI. *Jesus of Nazareth. Vol. II: Holy Week, from the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011. Pg. 238.

and the holiness of God, too dazzling for our eyes, come together in the Cross, transcending our power of understanding. The great mystery has become radiant light.

Jesus' Death – Women at Foot of Cross and Care of his Human Body

The faithful women Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James the younger followed him and ministered to him. We experience their shock and grief over what happened. These faithful women were present with compassion and love for Jesus. Jesus says to his mother “Woman behold your son!” then he said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” An adoption arrangement according to Ratzinger as one of Jesus final acts, an act of responsibility so she is taken care of. We can take a queue from this by making arrangements with a will, plans and assigning a caregiver to children and others. The beloved disciple is in loving communion with the Lord and entrusted with the care of Mary – the Church.

“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” Luke 23:46 He has given himself. Even the Roman commander of the execution squad declares “Truly, this man was the Son of God.” Mark 15:39. Through the suffering son, they recognize the true God.

Jewish law required the body to be taken down on the same day. Jesus’ right side, his heart is pierced to ensure he is dead. It is the hour when the paschal lambs are to be slaughtered. Jesus appears here as the true Paschal Lamb, pure and whole. John the Baptist says: “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29

They had taken the Passover meal the evening before where the Institution of the Eucharist was enacted – a process of gathering and entering into communion with the living God. Jesus was arrested and brought before court Friday morning, judged and died at the ninth hour. His death coincides with the slaughter of the Passover Lambs.

“Joseph of Arimathea took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus” Mark 15:42-43
Nicodemus was also involved. Two highly regarded representatives of the educated class of Israel are involved in the care of his body. As a mark of respect, the tomb has not been used as he is laid into a new tomb.



The Entombment, before 1731
By Szymon Czechowicz, Polish painter of the Baroque

Joseph brought clean linen and wrapped the corpse. Jesus is anointed with myrrh, aloes and spices of 100 or more pounds. Therefore, this is considered a royal burial. His body preparation and burial reveal to us that he is a king. They will see that Jesus is not to be held captive by death – he soon is truly alive for the first time. He is preserved from the power of death by God. At the Gardens of Gethsemani, we jokingly say Joseph of Arimathea had a pre-arrangement plan as he had a tomb prepared for himself that he gave up for the Lord.

Death Conquered

From Ratzinger's chapter summary on Gethsemane: "From the Cross, new life comes to us. On the Cross Jesus becomes the source of life for himself and for all. On the Cross, death is conquered."¹⁶

"He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek." Heb 5:9-10

"Christ tramples death by his own death."

Father Ted Kraychuck, Ukranian Rite Monk

¹⁶ Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI. Jesus of Nazareth. Vol. II: Holy Week, from the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011.

It's Healthy to Think about Death

A genuine Christian's outlook on death is not anxiety provoking but something seen as a passage to new life. It is certainly healthy to consider the mortality of our earthly body and to better yet, make plans for its resting place while it awaits the Resurrection and reconnection of the soul to the body. God's love is omnipresent and as participants in Christ's Passion, death and Resurrection, we are in relationship with the loving Lord now and into the future. Many years ago, the seminarians at Christ the King produced 7 videos on death. An interesting series for a school project. At Catholic Cemeteries we often show one or two of these short videos for parishioner education. From one of the videos Father Brian Duggan of the Archdiocese speaks insightfully about death:

Death is the end of our earthly pilgrimage and preparation to meet God.

*We accompany the dying and the dead with prayers, now they are intercessors for us in Heaven with God. We continue to pray for them that they may be purified for full union.*¹⁷

Death is a doorway to a new life.

Fr Brian Duggan – diocesan priest, Archdiocese of Vancouver

In one video on death, Jake Khym, a registered clinical counsellor draws an insightful parallel:

Life in the Womb === TO === Life outside the Womb

comparing this with

Life on Earth ===== TO === Life in Heaven

He explains the baby's experience of life being one way then being completely different. Life at death continues but in a way, that is completely different and beyond our understanding. I think this is a very healthy way to look at death. Not scary, yes full of unknowns but his description sounds almost inviting.

¹⁷ Duggan, Father Brian. Statements cited in video on death series. Available at rccav.org/ministry

Surrender

Our challenge is to trust in God fully, to have the religious sense to enter the story to experience the Trinity. Something that caught me as wise is the call to become like little children. Kereszty cites this aspect of *metanoia* meaning a conversion of heart¹⁸. He says:

Children are aware that they cannot earn their living and that they are dependent in everything on their parents. They trust in their parents' care regardless of what happens and are convinced that their parents are able and willing to do what is best for them. Thus, an unconditionally trusting, loving, and joyful surrender to God as one's Father and a grateful acceptance of the Kingdom as pure gift characterize the disciple of Jesus.

Let us become like trusting children and with the theme of this paper hold God's hand when we decline, die, surrender. We need more *metanoia* and particularly on the death awareness and trust. We need to tackle Reductionism more aggressively. It would seem the opposite is Amplification. Maybe we add an "ism" to the end to make this "Amplificationism." The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that Christ comes to meet us and lead us into eternal life...if we trust him. The Catechism paragraph goes on to explain, "in view of Jesus' suffering and death, death itself can become easier. In an act of trust and love for the Father, we can say yes, as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane. Such an attitude is called spiritual sacrifice: the dying person unites himself with Christ's sacrifice on the Cross¹⁹."

Groschel recommends that we contemplate our own reactions to death and to that great and mysterious reality that transcends it. For the believer the promise of eternal life is the greatest of all hopes.²⁰ Life after death and the promise of eternal life should fill us with awe. Death comes to us bearing the promise of eternal life.

¹⁸ Roch A. Kereszty. *Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology*. Third Edition. New York: St. Paul's, 2011. Intro. Pg. 114.

¹⁹ Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011. Paragraph 155.

²⁰ Benedict J. Groschel. *After This Life, What Catholics Believe About What Happens Next*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing. 2009. Pg. 85.

Summary

Christ's death is full of meaning. His moment of death signified the end of the old temple and the revealing of God. We are called to foster our religious sense and to place our trust in Jesus Christ for His death and anxiety pertaining to it which was conquered by the Cross. If someone suffers anxiety, according to Balthasar, this is suffering from a lack of Christian truth. Christianity can deliver man from sin-anxiety with access to God in faith, love and hope. Man must seek the Christ of Faith living right now and not to alienate himself from God through sin. By fostering trust in God and good formation, it'll help with the Catholic Cemeteries' pastoral care challenge.

Like the experience of Jesus, we have natural fear of unknowns and certainly of suffering; but we are called into redemptive anxiety and suffering and its meaning in overcoming these fears. Christ conquered death, there is no death. Ratzinger encourages us to not assume life after death but that "eternal life" is life itself. The Son of God took up solidarity with sinful humankind into a most intimate communion with the Father that is available to us to share in the destiny of the Son of Man to be gathered to the eternal Kingdom.

A call to surrender like trusting and loving children is what we must foster in the community to encourage unconditional trusting, loving and joyful acceptance of the Kingdom. Further to this per Groeschel, we need to encourage an attitude that life after death and the promise of eternal life is a journey to fill us with awe. Let us take up the insights from this paper to do our part in the salvation of souls and the call in the Fatima Prayer to "Lead all Souls to Heaven."

Definitions

Definitions are sourced from Google Dictionary May 21, 2018 unless specified differently.

True

In accordance with fact or reality.

Accurate or exact. "it was a true depiction"

synonyms: [accurate](#), true to life, [faithful](#), telling it like it is, [fact-based](#), [realistic](#), [close](#), [lifelike](#)

Christian

relating to or professing Christianity or its teachings.

Christ

Greek *Khristos*, noun use of an adjective meaning 'anointed,' from *khriein* 'anoint,' translating

Christology.

Branch of theology dealing with the person and work of Jesus Christ. As the set of claims about Jesus as Messiah and divine Son reflected in the New Testament. Adjective: Christological.

Ontology.

Refers here to what things are, as distinct from what they do or have. Adjective: ontological.

Pedagogy

the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.

The Religious Sense²¹

Or also know as the religious dimension in life, has been defined as that level of the human person's nature through which he or she asks, "ultimate questions, searching for the ultimate meaning of life in all its hidden facets and implications" (Luigi Giusanni, *The Religious Sense*). This quest has been an integral part of human history and comprises the stories of all cultures. Explore these "ultimate questions" and the human desire for goodness, beauty, truth, justice, & happiness, using literature, film, & music.

Religiosity

Having or showing belief in and reverence for God or a deity. Of, concerned with, or teaching religion: a religious text. Extremely scrupulous or conscientious: religious devotion to duty.

Theology

The study of the nature of God and religious belief. (Theos = God in Greek)

Trinity

The [Christian doctrine](#) of the **Trinity** ([Latin](#): *Trinitas*, [Latin](#): *trinus* "threefold") ^[2] holds that [God](#) is [one](#) but three coeternal [consubstantial persons](#)^[3] or [hypostases](#)^[4]—the [Father](#), the [Son](#)([Jesus Christ](#)), and the [Holy Spirit](#)—as "one God in three Divine Persons". The three Persons are distinct, yet are one "substance, essence or nature" ([homoousios](#)).^[5] In this context, a "nature" is *what* one is, whereas a "person" is *who* one is.^{[6][7][8]} Sometimes differing views are referred to as [nontrinitarian](#).

²¹ Description as cited on <https://www.catholicpacific.ca/programs/liberal-arts-diploma/117-liberal-arts-diploma/244-rels-101-the-religious-sense> 24 April, 2018