

CCC 1030

*"All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but **after death they undergo purification**, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven".*

2 Mc. 12-42-45: *"and they turned to prayer, beseeching that the sin that had been committed might be wholly blotted out...he also took up a collection, man by man to the amount of two thousand drachmas of silver and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. In doing this he acted very well and honorable taking account of the resurrection. For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superstitious and foolish to pray for the dead...therefore he made **atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin.**"*

Job 1:5: *"When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning he would **sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them**, thinking, "Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." This was Job's regular custom."*

Wisdom 3:1-7 *"But the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet **is their hope full of immortality; chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of Himself.** As gold in the furnace, He proved them, and as sacrificial offerings He took them to Himself. In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble;"*

Matthew 5:26 *"Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny."*

Matthew 12:31 *"Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven."*

Matt. 12:32 *Christ refers to the sinner who "will not be forgiven, either in this age **or in the age to come**"*

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 *“If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, the work of each will come to light, for the Day will disclose it. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each one’s work. If the work stands that someone built upon the foundation, that person will receive a wage. But if someone’s work is burned up, that one will suffer loss; the **person will be saved, but only as through fire.**”* As one cannot ever leave Hell, and there is no suffering in Heaven, this passage can only apply to an **intermediate place of cleansing or purgation.**

Hebrews 12:22-24 *“No, you have approached Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and countless angels in festal gathering, and the assembly of the firstborn enrolled in heaven, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of the **just made perfect**, and Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and the sprinkled blood that speaks more eloquently than that of Abel.”*

Revelation 21:27 *“but **nothing unclean will enter it**, nor anyone who does abominable things or tells lies. Only those will enter whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”* From the very earliest times the Church understood the crucial role of prayer for the dead. Some of the **earliest graffiti in the Catacombs** in the first three centuries of the Church are requests for prayer for the dead. One of them famously asks **Petros ora pro eo**, (St.) Peter pray for him...

St Monica, mother of Augustine died in the 4th century asking her son to offer Masses for her soul. She would not have done that if **she didn’t understand the value of prayers for her after her death.** **St Augustine**, in his **City of God** says: *“temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment”*.

The **Acts of Paul and Thecla** and the **Acts of the Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity**, both written during the second century, refer to the Christian practice of praying for the dead. Such prayers **would have been offered only if Christians believed in an opportunity for cleansing or purgation before entering Heaven.**