

The Christological Hymn

Paul wrote the Letter to the Colossians when he was in prison; it was addressed to a faith community he did not start and had never met before in person. The Church at Colossae was started by Epaphras, who was a fellow prisoner in Rome at one point in time, and described as one of the co-workers of Paul (Col. 4:12-13). Epaphras had just visited Paul in prison, telling him on the one hand how well the Church in Colossae was doing, but on the other hand, how cultural pressures were tempting the Christians in Colossae to turn away from Christ. Paul wrote this letter to address the issues that Epaphras had raised and to challenge the Colossians to deepen their devotion to Christ. How did Paul go about doing this?

Paul knew that simply exhorting the Colossians to deepen their devotion to Christ will not cut it; he needed to enrapture the Colossians with the beauty and profound love of Jesus Christ. Paul wrote the Christological Hymn precisely for this purpose. As the text of the Letter to the Colossians survived through the centuries, it provided Christians with a profound understanding of who Jesus is and of His magnanimous love.

There are two main parts in the Christological Hymn: the first part depicts Jesus in His role as Creator, while the second part depicts Jesus in His role as Redeemer. As Creator, Paul portrays Jesus as the eternal Son of the Father – the true image of the invisible God, who is rightfully the “first-born” of all creation and therefore, the rightful Heir of creation (Col. 1:15-16). Referring to Jesus as the “first-born” of all creation



was not because He existed before all of creation as the Eternal Word; but rather because as the rightful Heir of creation, He had the right to rule all of creation, both the heavens and the earth (cf. Hebrews 1:5-8). As the Eternal Word of the Father, Jesus had an essential role in the creation of the universe, but Paul goes further and points out that the creation of the universe was not only centered on Christ, but that Christ was also its end purpose: “All things have been created through Him and for Him” (Col. 1:16). Jesus is not only the beginning, but also the “terminus” or goal of the universe; and that is the meaning of “I am the Alpha and the Omega” in Revelations 1:8.

In addition, Paul points out that since the creation of the universe, it is Jesus who sustains its existence: “In Him all things hold together.” (Colossians 1:17) The universe was created as an inheritance from the Father to His Son, ultimately to magnify and to honor the Son; and that is the reason why the universe continues to exist. Hebrews 1:3 tells us how the universe is sustained: that God “sustains all things by His mighty word.”

The power that sustains the universe is (1) Divine power coming from Jesus’ divine nature. Jesus sustained the universe even after His death on the Cross through His divine nature as the Son of God, as His divine attributes did not cease to exist even after He died in His human nature. (2) Active and continuous: it is not a one-time act of creation, but an ongoing, active process of upholding and sustaining everything that exists. (3) Beyond human understanding: Even as science struggles to explain what holds the universe together, Christians have attributed this to Jesus’ divine power. (4) A source of

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assurance and comfort for Christians. The divine power that holds the universe together encourages Christians to trust in Jesus' power to sustain them in all areas of life.

As Christ is the author of the entirety of creation, He is also the author of the “New Creation.” As Redeemer, Christ is not only the “first-born” of all creation, He is also the “first-born” from the dead (Col. 1:18). Jesus is referred to as the “first-born” from the dead because by His Passion, Death and Resurrection, He accomplished the New Exodus, in which He led people out from slavery to sin and death, to New Life. The Son’s Blood shed on the Cross reconciled all things, making peace for those on earth and those in heaven (Col 1:20). The Christological Hymn is truly a perfect reflection to celebrate today’s Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention children and parents: No class on Sunday due to Thanksgiving break.

Mass on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, will be at 10:30 am. Let us come together and give thanks to God for the blessings we have received this year!

No daily Mass on Nov. 25 and 26. Daily Mass schedule resumes on Nov. 28.

We wish to thank the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia (CFNGA) for two grants: A Catholic Community Grant of \$2,000 for Phase 1 of our Prayer Garden, and a Parish Enrichment Grant of \$1,000 for the purchase of a new office filing cabinet. Thank you CFNGA!

The 10th year anniversary of the dedication of our church will be on November 19, 2027. We would like all church members to have their picture taken for the 10th year anniversary commemorative parish book. Please sign up with Tommy Puk.

We have reached our goal of \$10,000 for our iGiveCatholic initiative this year, Thank you for all your support!

Prayer List: Dawn Leach, Xie Yannong, Bian Meiyi, Chen Kun, Chen Shupeng, Ni Yufang, Lydia Chen, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.
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Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)	Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM	Mondays 6:00 PM (English)
	By Appointment	
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)		Eucharistic Adoration
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	Anointing of the Sick	Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		
First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese)		