

Chapter 13 – Our Eternal Destiny

Death seems appropriate after a full life. The reality of death and its finality gives an urgency to our lives.

Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings. Purgatory is the final purification of the elect. The chief punishment of hell is eternal separation from God.

In the final resurrection our bodies will be transformed.

Once the Kingdom of God arrives in its fullness at the end of time, there will be a renewal of the universe in Christ.

Not only do we care for the dying, but we also maintain reverence for their bodies once they are deceased.

It is preferable that the body be buried in a Catholic cemetery. The Church prefers the burial of the body but permits cremation. The Church urges that if at all possible, the body be present for the funeral Mass, with cremation taking place afterward. Whenever a Catholic is cremated, the remains are to be buried, not scattered.

Reflection:

- How do the Church's teachings about eternal life help shape your thinking about death?
- Have you ever accompanied someone on their journey to death? What was it like?