



61st Year

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THE GARMENT OF ADOPTION

After their fall the First-created humans felt that they were naked. And God, in order to cover their nakedness gave them “robes of skin and he garbed them” (Gen. 3:3, 21). Before the fall, while they were naked, they were not ashamed. Because the grace, the garment of God, was covering them. With the disobedience they lost the garment of grace and they were garbed with the shame of sin.

From this shame God wanted to deliver them, moved by compassion and mercy. This deliverance however, happened gradually. First He gave them the law of the Old Testament with Moses and subsequently, when the appropriate time came, He gave them the law of the New Testament, the gospel of grace with Christ.

The mosaic law prepares us to put on Christ

The Apostle Paul writes that, before faith in Christ was revealed, God gave the commandments of the old law (of Moses) in order to safeguard and prevent people from committing more and greater sins. So for this reason “we were guarded by the law” (Gal. 3: 23) until Christ would come to the world and reveal to us the saving faith in His name.

This means that the law was training us, “it became our pedagogue” (vs. 24), for us to obtain the conscience of our sins and to avoid the ignorance, the indifference and the hardening. So that when Christ would come, we would be ready to accept him and put on the justification through faith in Christ, “so that we could be justified by faith» (vs. 24). The law of the Old Testament was a garment of repentance, a baptism of repentance for us to also remember also the words of the Precious Forerunner: «While I baptized you in water» (Mk. 1:8), in other words, a baptism of repentance (vs. 4).

The law revealed sin so that it would urge us to the realization of our sinfulness before God, so that as David writes: that “to You alone I have sinned and I have done evil before you”. And for us to admit that God is just in His words, as again the prophet confesses, “so that you might be justified in your words”.

The law of the Gospel urges the garment of Christ, the gift of the Comforter

From the moment we confess our sins then we are appropriately prepared to put on Christ, to accept the gift of faith which Christ gave us with His sacrifice on the Cross. The faith which justifies us before the Lord. And this gift is adoption in Christ. "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26), in other words, with the power of faith we become sons of God by grace. And we receive the adoption with the mystery of Baptism as the Apostle Paul tells us, "whoever was baptized in Christ, has put on Christ" (verse 27).

The mystery of Holy Baptism, which presupposes faith in the godmanly person of Christ and in the name of the holy and consubstantial and indivisible Trinity, garbs us with the spiritual garment of adoption. In other words, whatever Christ is by nature, we also become by grace. We are also adopted with holy Baptism and we are related with Him. We become related by grace with His divine qualities. We become by grace eternal, by grace blessed, we participate in the fullness of faith, we enjoy the sanctification of the Holy Spirit. We are anointed with His power and energy. We wear Christ, we think and act like Him. We resemble and want to be identified with Him, for us mortals to also become communicants of divine nature. With Holy Baptism and Chrism we put on the grace of the Comforter. Because as the sacred Photius says: "they who put on Christ, put on the Holy Spirit".

This garment is the bright garment of faith, is the garment of joy and of spiritual glory. Because it takes off from us the garment of shame from sin and garbs us with the resurrected light of the Lord. And it unites us with Christ like fire with iron. The soul is fired up by the warmth of the Resurrected Christ and is unbreakably united with Him. And we cry out together with the Apostle Paul: "What shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Adoption in Christ unites people

The common faith, the common baptism, the common bright garment of adoption which we receive from Christ and it unites us between us in one body, in one spiritual family of grace so that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, nor slave nor free man, nor male and female" (Gal. 3:28). Our communion with Christ abolishes national and racial distinctions. It abolishes class but also natural distinctions between people. Whereas, in other words, they belong to different nations or they hail from different tribes, they enjoy individual freedoms or they are still living under limitations and trials, or they have class differences or furthermore they are differing due to gender, from the moment they have been initiated in the mystery of faith in Christ they are considered as one communion of Saints. The train of thought of faith and sanctification unites them, the common garment of Christ. And their common area is the area of the Church, where there is the altar, where the bloodless worship is performed, there where everyone is garbed and communes Christ. The Christ whose grace was spread "to all nations" and everyone who desires has the opportunity to put on Christ, to enjoy the adoption in Christ, after they are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

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