

FAITH CHAT

with James & John

Is Purgatory Your Second Chance To Stay Out Of Hell?

Know This...

Death is inescapable. We cannot hide from it, for it will find us. We cannot put it off, for it has its own timetable. "To rise with Christ, we must die with Christ." CCC 1005 Our mortal bodies will decay in the ground, but our immortal souls will go to heaven or hell. At the moment of death, our fate is sealed. If we die full of grace, we go to heaven; but, if we die in mortal sin, we go to hell. Purgatory is not a second chance to get into heaven. It's the

"carwash" for our souls, a pit-stop on the road to heaven.



John: The Book of Revelation says, "Nothing unclean will enter heaven." We cannot enter heaven until our souls are full of grace.

James: When we die, our souls leave our bodies and are judged for heaven or for hell.

John: If at the time of our death our souls carry *unconfessed* and *unrepented* mortal sin, then we did not die in a state of grace and have, therefore, condemned ourselves to hell.



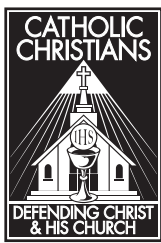
James: If at the time of our death our souls are free of unconfessed and unrepented mortal sin, we are guaranteed heaven, either immediately or in the future.

John: We go *immediately* to heaven if our souls are full of grace.

James: We go to heaven *in the future* if our souls still bear venial sin or temporal punishment due us for our sins. When? After our souls are cleansed and perfected in purgatory.

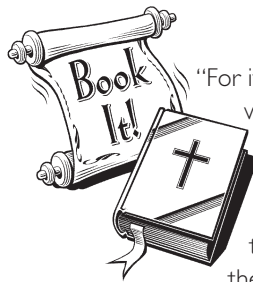
Deacon John Beckmann and Deacon James Russell are permanent deacons in the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Please visit: www.catholicchristians.com for a more detailed version of



Jesus reveals the need for purgatory. "Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court with him. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny." Mt 5:25-26 "So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect." Mt 5:48 In purgatory, God perfects us. "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." Lk 22:32 Jesus leaves open the possibility of the forgiveness of certain sins in the next life.

"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." CCC 1030 We are purified in purgatory. "The man who has cultivated that remote land and who has gotten his bread by his very great labor is able to suffer this labor to the end of this life. After this life, however, it is not necessary that he suffer. But the man who perhaps has not cultivated the land and has allowed it to be overrun with brambles has in this life the curse of his land on all his works, and after this life he will have either purgatorial fire or eternal punishment." St. Augustine



"For if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin." 2 Mac 12:44-46 This Old

Testament passage supports praying for the souls of those who die in sin; but there is no value in praying for those in heaven or hell. Their fate is sealed. "Each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire." 1 Cor 3:13-15 Paul is speaking of the cleansing fire of purgatory.

Merciful Father in heaven, You are the source of everything good. It is our free-will choices that bring forth evil. Jesus calls me to be perfect as You are perfect. I am helpless without Your grace; but with it, I can turn away from sin and fulfill Your plan for me. I pray for the poor souls in purgatory that they may soon join You in heaven. I also pray that I will spend my life growing in holiness so that upon my death You will call me home to heaven. Grant this through my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

