

From the Question Box

Question: Do Catholics believe in the "Rapture?"

Answer: The concept of "the rapture of believers for a thousand years" was created by a Protestant clergyman around 1830. It was never taught by the Church or the Protestant reformers. It is held primarily by Evangelical Protestants, and is often taught by TV preachers, especially Hal Linsey. The concept originates from interpretations of 1 Thessalonians: 4:17, "We will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." Also, Revelations 20 speaks of the thousand-year reign of Christ, and Satan unleashed on the earth.

There are three evangelical theories regarding the Rapture: Pre-Tribulation, Mid-Tribulation, and Post-Tribulation. These theories support the belief that Christ will come two or three more times. The Catholic church holds that Christ will come again at the end of the world. There will be a time of tribulation for the world before His Second Coming. Those living at the Second Coming will be caught up in the air with the resurrected dead. The return of Christ will not take place until the full number of Gentiles have had the chance to accept or reject the Gospel. Then, the Jews will accept Christ, and all will be completed. Our Lord Jesus Christ will come in majesty as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. All the dead will rise, and He will judge the world separating the sheep from the goats. There will be a new heaven and earth where the saved will share eternally in the glorious kingdom of God. The wicked will spend eternity away from God in hell.

Catholics are more concerned about living a holy life so that we will be numbered among the saved at death, and at the Second Coming. We do not get overly worried about the details. If we are living a life in Christ and growing in His grace, the end times will take care of themselves. Faithful believers do not fear the coming of Christ, but joyfully look forward to being with Our Savior in glory beyond our greatest imaginations. To Him be worship, glory, and adoration for ages without end. Amen.