Definition

Eschatology: a branch of theology concerned with the final events in the history of the world or of humankind – from Greek eschaton meaning end

Topics for the session

- The “Four Last Things” + 1
  - Death
  - Judgment
  - Heaven
  - (Purgatory)
  - Hell
- The Second Coming of Jesus Christ
Death

- The result of sin
  - "The wages of sin is death" – Romans 6:23, see also CCC 1008
  - Original destiny was for immortality – not part of God's will for humanity
  - Death is not "natural" except insofar as we experience a fallen nature
  - Temporary separation of the soul from body
  - Finalization and crystallization of choice

Judgment
Judgment

- Intrinsic and not extrinsic
- Particular Judgment
- Final Judgment

Heaven

- See God “face-to-face”
- Communion of life and love with the Trinity, with the Virgin Mary, the angels and all the blessed
- Reduced to using images
  - life
  - light
  - peace
  - wedding feast
  - wine of the kingdom
  - the Father’s house
  - the heavenly Jerusalem
  - paradise
“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, no. 1030).

Note: Those in purgatory guaranteed of salvation
Not one of the “four last things” (i.e. death, judgment, heaven, hell) since it is essentially temporary and will, in the fullness of time pass away.
**Hell**

- Definitive and final self-exclusion from the presence of God
- No one predestined for hell
- “The gates of hell are locked from the inside.”

**The Second Coming**

- Resurrection of the Body
- Realization of the Kingdom in its fullness
  - Kingdom of God is immanent and already inaugurated by Jesus Christ (CCC 2816)
  - The Church is the seed and beginning of the Kingdom (CCC 541,763)
  - Kingdom of God is an eschatological reality not yet fully realized for which we hope (c.f. The Lord’s Prayer)
- New Heavens and a New Earth