

From the September 4, 2009 Issue

Cyril of Jerusalem on Humanity's Redemption

We're sometimes asked "Are you sure the adoption of humanity is the gospel? I've never heard it before." That's why we like to bring in the thoughts of various theologians from throughout history to add to our understanding of the gospel.

This text is from the catechism of the 4th century bishop and theologian Cyril of Jerusalem. He wrote his catechetical lectures to explain the faith to those who were preparing to be baptized and to help other pastors and deacons to know how to educate and train those who were preparing for baptism. In this section he is talking about the cross and its effectiveness for all of humanity:

. . . the glory of the Cross led those who were blind through ignorance into light, loosed all who were held fast by sin, and ransomed the whole world of mankind. **And wonder not that the whole world was ransomed;** for it was no mere man, but the only-begotten Son of God, who died on its behalf. Moreover one man's sin, even Adam's, had power to bring death to the world; but if by the trespass of the one death reigned over the world, how shall not life much rather reign by the righteousness of the One? (Romans 5:17-18) And if because of the tree of food they were then cast out of paradise, shall not believers now more easily enter into paradise because of the Tree of Jesus? If the first man formed out of the earth brought in universal death, shall not He who formed him out of the earth bring in eternal life, being Himself the Life? ~ *The Catechetical Lectures*, lecture 13, para. 1-2. (Emphasis is ours.)