



St. Thomas Aquinas Youth (STAY)

Jesus: True God; True Man

Outline of Events:

6:30: Dinner

7:20: Large Group intro #4 and then Presentation #5 (page 10); ask the youth to vote and will give results at end of STAY.

7:45: Small Groups

8:20: Back in Large Group for results of the vote.

Main Points

- Christology is that part of theology which deals with Our Lord Jesus Christ.
- The Incarnation is mystery and dogma of the Word made flesh.
- The Word became flesh for us for several reasons: in order to save us by reconciling us with God, so that we might know God's love, to be our model of holiness, and to make us partakers of the divine nature.
- Through the Incarnation, Jesus became truly man while remaining truly God.
- Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.
- During the first centuries, the Church had to defend and clarify this truth of faith against the heresies that falsified it.

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“We all with one voice teach the confession of one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: the same perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity ...”

- Council of Chalcedon, 451 -

Excerpt from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Paragraph 1. The Son of God Became man

I. Why Did the Word Become Flesh?

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With the Nicene Creed, we answer by confessing: "For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man."

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The Word became flesh for us *in order to save us by reconciling us with God*, who "loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins": "the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world," and "he was revealed to take away sins":⁷⁰

Sick, our nature demanded to be healed; fallen, to be raised up; dead, to rise again. We had lost the possession of the good; it was necessary for it to be given back to us. Closed in the darkness, it was necessary to bring us the light; captives, we awaited a Savior; prisoners, help; slaves, a liberator. Are these things minor or insignificant? Did they not move God to descend to human nature and visit it, since humanity was in so miserable and unhappy a state?⁷¹

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The Word became flesh *so that thus we might know God's love*: "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."⁷² "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."⁷³

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The Word became flesh *to be our model of holiness*: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."⁷⁴ On the mountain of the Transfiguration, the Father commands: "Listen to him!"⁷⁵ Jesus is the model for the Beatitudes and the norm of the new law: "Love one another as I have loved you."⁷⁶ This love implies an effective offering of oneself, after his example.⁷⁷

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The Word became flesh to make us *"partakers of the divine nature"*:⁷⁸ "For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God."⁷⁹ "For the Son of God became man so that we might become God."⁸⁰ "The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods."⁸¹

II. The Incarnation

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Taking up St. John's expression, "The Word became flesh,"⁸² the Church calls "Incarnation" the fact that the Son of God assumed a human nature in order to accomplish our salvation in it. In a hymn cited by St. Paul, the Church sings the mystery of the Incarnation:

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.⁸³

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The *Letter to the Hebrews* refers to the same mystery:

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Lo, I have come to do your will, O God.'"⁸⁴

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Belief in the true Incarnation of the Son of God is the distinctive sign of Christian faith: "By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God."⁸⁵ Such is the joyous conviction of the Church from her beginning whenever she sings "the mystery of our religion": "He was manifested in the flesh."⁸⁶

Key Points:

- The Incarnation is fact that the Son of God assumed a human nature in order to accomplish our salvation in that human nature.
- The Word became flesh for us for several reasons: in order to save us by reconciling us with God, so that we might know God's love, to be our model of holiness, and to make us partakers of the divine nature.

"For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man."

Excerpt from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*

III. True God and True Man

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The unique and altogether singular event of the Incarnation of the Son of God does not mean that Jesus Christ is part God and part man, nor does it imply that he is the result of a confused mixture of the divine and the human. He became truly man while remaining truly God. Jesus Christ is true God and true man. During the first centuries, the Church had to defend and clarify this truth of faith against the heresies that falsified it.

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The first heresies denied not so much Christ's divinity as his true humanity (Gnostic Docetism). From apostolic times the Christian faith has insisted on the true incarnation of God's Son "come in the flesh."⁸⁷ But already in the third century, the Church in a council at Antioch had to affirm against Paul of Samosata that Jesus Christ is Son of God by nature and not by adoption. The first ecumenical council of Nicaea in 325 confessed in its Creed that the Son of God is "begotten, not made, of the same substance (*homoousios*) as the Father," and condemned Arius, who had affirmed that the Son of God "came to be from things that were not" and that he was "from another substance" than that of the Father.⁸⁸

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The Nestorian heresy regarded Christ as a human person joined to the divine person of God's Son. Opposing this heresy, St. Cyril of Alexandria and the third ecumenical council at Ephesus in 431 confessed "that the Word, uniting to himself in his person the flesh animated by a rational soul, became man."⁸⁹ Christ's humanity has no other subject than the divine person of the Son of God, who assumed it and made it his own, from his conception. For this reason the Council of Ephesus proclaimed in 431 that Mary truly became the Mother of God by the human conception of the Son of God in her womb: "Mother of God, not that the nature of the Word or his divinity received the beginning of its existence from the holy Virgin, but that, since the holy body, animated by a rational soul, which the Word of God united to himself according to the hypostasis, was born from her, the Word is said to be born according to the flesh."⁹⁰

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The Monophysites affirmed that the human nature had ceased to exist as such in Christ when the divine person of God's Son assumed it. Faced with this heresy, the fourth ecumenical council, at Chalcedon in 451, confessed:

Following the holy Fathers, we unanimously teach and confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: the same perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity, the same truly God and truly man, composed of rational soul and body; consubstantial with the Father as to his divinity and consubstantial with us as to his humanity; "like us in all things but sin." He was begotten from the Father before all ages as to his divinity and in these last days, for us and for our salvation, was born as to his humanity of the virgin Mary, the Mother of God.⁹¹ We confess that one and the same Christ, Lord, and only-begotten Son, is to be acknowledged in two natures without confusion, change, division, or separation. The distinction between the natures was never abolished by their union, but rather the character proper to each of the two natures was preserved as they came together in one person (*prosopon*) and one hypostasis.⁹²

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After the Council of Chalcedon, some made of Christ's human nature a kind of personal subject. Against them, the fifth ecumenical council at Constantinople in 553 confessed that "there is but one *hypostasis* [or person], which is our Lord Jesus Christ, one of the Trinity."⁹³ Thus everything in Christ's human nature is to be attributed to his divine person as its proper subject, not only his miracles but also his sufferings and even his death: "He who was crucified in the flesh, our Lord Jesus Christ, is true God, Lord of glory, and *one of the Holy Trinity*."⁹⁴

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The Church thus confesses that Jesus is inseparably true God and true man. He is truly the Son of God who, without ceasing to be God and Lord, became a man and our brother:

"What he was, he remained and what he was not, he assumed," sings the Roman Liturgy.⁹⁵ And the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom proclaims and sings: "O only-begotten Son and Word of God, immortal being, you who deigned for our salvation to become incarnate of the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, you who without change became man and were crucified, O Christ our God, you who by your death have crushed death, you who are one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit, save us!"⁹⁶

IV. How Is the Son of God Man?

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Because "human nature was assumed, not absorbed,"⁹⁷ in the mysterious union of the Incarnation, the Church was led over the course of centuries to confess the full reality of Christ's human soul, with its operations of intellect and will, and of his human body. In parallel fashion, she had to recall on each occasion that Christ's human nature belongs, as his own, to the divine person of the Son of God, who assumed it. Everything that Christ is and does in this nature derives from "one of the Trinity." The Son of God therefore communicates to his humanity his own personal mode of existence in the Trinity. In his soul as in his body, Christ thus expresses humanly the divine ways of the Trinity:⁹⁸

The Son of God . . . worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin.⁹⁹

Key Points:

- Through the Incarnation, Jesus became truly man while remaining truly God.
- Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.
- During the first centuries, the Church had to defend and clarify this truth of faith against the heresies that falsified it.

"We confess that one and the same Christ, Lord, and only-begotten Son, is to be acknowledged in two natures without confusion, change, division, or separation."

Excerpt from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Christ's soul and his human knowledge

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Apollinarius of Laodicea asserted that in Christ the divine Word had replaced the soul or spirit. Against this error the Church confessed that the eternal Son also assumed a rational, human soul.¹⁰⁰

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This human soul that the Son of God assumed is endowed with a true human knowledge. As such, this knowledge could not in itself be unlimited: it was exercised in the historical conditions of his existence in space and time. This is why the Son of God could, when he became man, "increase in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man,"¹⁰¹ and would even have to inquire for himself about what one in the human condition can learn only from experience.¹⁰² This corresponded to the reality of his voluntary emptying of himself, taking "the form of a slave."¹⁰³

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But at the same time, this truly human knowledge of God's Son expressed the divine life of his person.¹⁰⁴ "The human nature of God's Son, *not by itself but by its union with the Word*, knew and showed forth in itself everything that pertains to God."¹⁰⁵ Such is first of all the case with the intimate and immediate knowledge that the Son of God made man has of his Father.¹⁰⁶ The Son in his human knowledge also showed the divine penetration he had into the secret thoughts of human hearts.¹⁰⁷

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By its union to the divine wisdom in the person of the Word incarnate, Christ enjoyed in his human knowledge the fullness of understanding of the eternal plans he had come to reveal.¹⁰⁸ What he admitted to not knowing in this area, he elsewhere declared himself not sent to reveal.¹⁰⁹

Christ's human will

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Similarly, at the sixth ecumenical council, Constantinople III in 681, the Church confessed that Christ possesses two wills and two natural operations, divine and human. They are not opposed to each other, but cooperate in such a way that the Word made flesh willed humanly in obedience to his Father all that he had decided divinely with the Father and the Holy Spirit for our salvation.¹¹⁰ Christ's human will "does not resist or oppose but rather submits to his divine and almighty will."¹¹¹

Christ's true body

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Since the Word became flesh in assuming a true humanity, Christ's body was finite.¹¹² Therefore the human face of Jesus can be portrayed; at the seventh ecumenical council (Nicaea II in 787) the Church recognized its representation in holy images to be legitimate.¹¹³

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At the same time the Church has always acknowledged that in the body of Jesus "we see our God made visible and so are caught up in love of the God we cannot see."¹¹⁴ The individual characteristics of Christ's body express the divine person of God's Son. He has made the features of his human body his own, to the point that they can be venerated when portrayed in a holy image, for the believer "who venerates the icon is venerating in it the person of the one depicted."¹¹⁵

The heart of the Incarnate Word

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Jesus knew and loved us each and all during his life, his agony, and his Passion and gave himself up for each one of us: "The Son of God . . . loved me and gave himself for me."¹¹⁶ He has loved us all with a human heart. For this reason, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by our sins and for our salvation,¹¹⁷ "is quite rightly considered the chief sign and symbol of that . . . love with which the divine Redeemer continually loves the eternal Father and all human beings" without exception.¹¹⁸

Key Points:

- **The Church was led over the course of centuries to confess the full reality of Christ's human soul, with its operations of intellect and will, and of his human body.**
- **The Son in his human knowledge also showed divine penetration because of union to divine wisdom.**
- **Christ possesses two wills and two natural operations, divine and human. They are not opposed to each other, but cooperate.**

Jesus Christ: God and Man

Christology is that part of theology which deals with Our Lord Jesus Christ. In its full extent it comprises the doctrines concerning both the person of Christ and His works...(<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14597a.htm>)

Jesus Christ, God and Man

by Fr. William G. Most

Summary

This article teaches that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer promised to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15, the only Son of God, and by that very fact, Lord of all Creation. He is the second Person of the Holy Trinity, sent to the world by the Father to become man and save us from our sins. So St. Peter said in Matthew 16:16: "You are the Christ, the son of the Living God". The name Jesus means Savior, as we see from Matthew 1:2. The name "Christ," "Messiah" in Hebrew, means the Anointed one (cf. Acts 10:38).

Jesus is God

"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" wrote St. John (1:14). So, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity assumed human nature. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Divine Word of whom John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word; the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

He Became Man

"In the fullness of time, God sent his Son, born of a woman" (Gal 4:4). In order to become a member of the human race in the fullest sense, the Second Person of the Trinity became man by being born of a human woman, Mary. He was conceived by her without the help of a human father, but rather, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the God-man Jesus Christ had only God as His Father, and the Virgin Mary as His Mother. (See the section on Mary, the Mother of God.)

Jesus as Teacher

We can easily see He was not the same as other great religious teachers. He not only worked miracles that could be authenticated, but worked them in contexts such that there was a tie established between the miracle and the claim, as we see in the healing of the paralytic in Mark 2. He foretold His own resurrection; He lived a life of such holiness that He could challenge people: "Which of you can convict me of sin?" (John 8:46). Hardly anyone else would dare to give such a challenge! His teaching rested not on human reasoning but on the divine authority which He claimed, e.g., when He said several times over: "You have heard it was said to them of old... but I say to you" (Matthew 5:27-44). He inspired His followers to follow Him even to dreadful deaths. If someone objects: other religions have had martyrs too - correct. But not one of them can provide the solid support of data that we can, as shown in our sketch of apologetics in part one.

Jesus as Redeemer

However, the chief reason that God became man was to redeem us from sin, that is, to pay the debt of our sins, as Leo the Great said (Letter to Flavian, June 13, 449). We read in the Epistle to the Ephesians (2:4-5): "God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive again together with Christ." (See the section on Jesus' suffering and death.)

Jesus as Founder

He founded a Church whose doctrine can and does develop in the same line, that is, without reversing any previous teaching, over all centuries. He made clear that this was the divinely given means of getting peace in this life and eternal salvation in the world to come. (See the section on the Church.)

One Person, Two Natures

The Council of Chalcedon in 451 brought to the climax the long debates about the make-up of Jesus: He is one Person, a Divine Person, having two natures, divine and human, in such a way that these two natures remain distinct after the union in the one Person. We call this union "hypostatic union" from the Greek "hypostasis" which means person - two natures joined in one Person.

His human nature is the same as ours, for he had a human body and a human soul. He was like us in all things except that He was without sin, even though He was tempted as we are (Hebrews 4:15). However, this does not mean that He had within Him disorderly passions. The Second Council of Constantinople in 553 defined this truth against "impious Theodore of Mopsuestia".

His divine nature is the same as that of the Father. The Council of Nicea in 325 defined that He is "one in substance [homoousios] with the Father".

The Wonder of the Incarnation

Finally, Plato, the great Greek philosopher, in his Symposium 203, wrote: "No god associates with men". Aristotle in his Nichomachean Ethics 8. 7 wrote that friendship of a god with a man is impossible; the distance is too great. What would they have thought had they learned that God actually became man, and even, that He willed for our sake to submit to a horrible and shameful death? In the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 21:23 says: "Cursed be everyone who hangs on the wood". No wonder St. Paul told the Corinthians (1. 1:23) that the doctrine of the cross is folly to the Greeks, and a scandal to the Jews!

Taken from The Basic Catholic Catechism
PART THREE: The Apostles' Creed II - V
Second Article: "Jesus Christ His Only Son, Our Lord"

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Excerpt from Various Church Documents

And we believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born from the Father before all the ages, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things were made. For us men, and for our salvation, He came down from heaven, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, He took on flesh from the Virgin Mary, and became man.

(Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed A.D. 325, 381).

So, following the saintly fathers, we all with one voice teach the confession of one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: the same perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity, the same truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and a body; consubstantial with the Father as regards his divinity, and the same consubstantial with us as regards his humanity; like us in all respects except for sin; begotten before the ages from the Father as regards his divinity, and in the last days begotten for us and for our salvation from Mary, the virgin God-bearer as regards his humanity; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, acknowledged in two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation; at no point was the difference between the natures taken away through the union, but rather the property of both natures is preserved and comes together into a single person and a single subsistent being; he is not parted or divided into two persons, but is one and the same only-begotten Son, God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ, just as the prophets taught from the beginning about him, and as the Lord Jesus Christ himself instructed us, and as the creed of the fathers handed it down to us

(Council of Chalcedon, 451).

Sacred Scripture References

Jn 1:1—the Word was God

Jn 1:14-15—glory of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth

Jn 3:16—God gave only Son

Jn 8:19—if you knew me, you would know my Father

Jn 8:58-59—I assure you, before Abraham, I AM

Jn 10:30-33—the Father and I are one (See Ex 3:14, 20:7, Lev 19:12, 24:14-16)

Jn 10:38—the father is in me and I am the Father

Jn 12:45—whoever has seen me has seen the one who sent me

Jn 14:6; Mt 11:29—no one comes to Father but Jesus

Jn 14:8-12—whoever has seen has seen the Father

Jn 20:28—Jesus accepts Thomas' "my Lord and my God"

Col 2:9— in him dwells the fullness of deity bodily

Acts 20:28—church of God he acquired with his blood

Eph 1:7—in him we have redemption by his blood

1 Jn 1:7—blood of his Son Jesus cleanses from all sin

1 Jn 4:9—God sent only Son into world

Tit 2:13—glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ

2 Pet 1:4—partakers of divine nature

Phil 2:5-8— equality with God, found in human likeness

1 Jn 4:2—Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God

1 Tim 3:6—manifested in the flesh

1 Jn 4:2-3; 2 Jn 7—come in the flesh

Heb 4:15—high priest similarly tested

Lk 2:52—increased in wisdom and in stature

Mk 14:36; Mt 11:27; Jn 1:18; 8:55, etc— intimate and immediate knowledge of Father

Mk 2:8; Jn 2:25; 6:61, etc— knows secret thoughts of human hearts

Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; 14:18-20, 26-30—fullness of understanding of divine plans

Some Thoughts...

1. You stick up for what you believe in. If you have a good friend that is being criticized or lied about, you would stick up for that friend, witness to the truth and combat the lies. Christ has said to us that he no longer calls us slaves but friends. Christ is our friend, our brother, our savior, our Lord, true God and true Man. Who Christ is has been revealed to us, written down and passed on. The Church is the bride of Christ and this bride has had to defend her groom's identity throughout history. Below is a look at how people have attacked Christ, and how the Church has stood up for Christ, defending his nature (both his human and divine nature).
 - **Gnosticism**, taught that Jesus' human nature was adopted by the divine God, so in short Jesus was not GOD but only human. The Church defended this at the council of Nicea in 325AD.
 - **Arianism**, taught that Jesus was a created being, this means that He is not the same divine nature as GOD, he would be less than God. The Church also defended this at the council of Nicea in 325AD, and this is why we have the Nicene Creed.
 - **Nestorianism**, taught that Jesus was not one person with two natures but rather a human person joined or glued to the divine person of God. This would make Jesus Christ, two people, one person divine, one person. The Church defended this heresy at the council of Ephesus in 431AD.
 - **Monophysitism**, was the opposite of Nestorianism and taught that Jesus was only one person with only one nature. They taught that Christ human nature was absorbed by the divine nature. In other words once the human and divine natures met, the human was erased / absorbed by the divine leaving only the divine, one person, one nature. The Church defended this heresy at the council of Chalcedon in 451AD.
 - **Iconoclasm**, taught that icons of Jesus, Mary or the Saints should not be venerated or used at all. The Church stood up against this heresy at the council of Nicea II in 787AD. The logic of the Church is that if God can become Man, if the word can become flesh, then matter is not bad, it is redeemed. Christ's human nature is perfect and can be venerated and therefore an image of Christ can also be venerated. Images of Mary who was created by God sinless can also be venerated.

SOME QUESTIONS:

- Do you think the Church should defend Christ? Why can't Christ defend himself?
 - The person of Jesus was under attack a lot from the time of his death until the 800's. Is the person of Jesus still attacked today?
 - Jesus is one person, with two natures, human and divine. He is both human and divine at the same time. Why do you think people would rather focus on Jesus as JUST human?
2. The word incarnation literally means, "to make flesh". As John 1:14 says, "The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us." Carne means meat / flesh. It use to be that when two people made a deal they "gave their word" and that word was enough. Usually when two people gave their "word" they would "shake on it". The physical sign of "their word" was a physical "flesh on flesh" handshake. The "word" should be enough but it needs a physical sign "we shook on it" or it may even need another physical sign "a contract, which is signed". God gave us His "Word" through the law, through the prophets. His word is the promise of salvation. He knew that we needed more than just his "word" in law and prophets, we are physical people that need physical signs so He allowed the "Word" to become "Flesh" and he even allowed his "Word" to be written down in scripture. Not only can we read about the Word made Flesh in scripture but we can receive the Word made Flesh in the Eucharist.

SOME QUESTIONS:

- What does the word incarnation mean? What does "carne" mean in Spanish?
- When someone says I give you my word, what does that mean? When God gives us His "word" what does that mean?
- What are the ways God gives us His word / fulfills His promise?
- What are some physical signs people use to make a promise / give their word?
- What is God's physical way to keep his promise / give his word?
- If God is going to seal the deal (seal his word) in flesh, what does that tell us about flesh? (that it is good, fallen but can be healed, redeemed and perfected. Of course both Mary and Jesus' flesh was completely perfect and sinless).

Some Thoughts...

3. What do other religions think about Incarnation (God becoming Man)?

RELIGIONS other than Christianity that believe in incarnation

- **Pagans**—many pagan religions such as the Egyptians actually believed that the gods could become man and some believed that their rulers, the pharaoh were divine. The Roman's even after Jesus, believed that some of the emperors were divine.
- **Hinduism**—Krishna the Hindu god becomes incarnate whenever needed. It is taught that Krishna will become incarnate 10 times. It is written that Krishna says, "Whenever righteousness declines and unrighteousness increases I make myself a body; in ever age I come back to deliver the holy, to destroy the sin of the sinner, to establish righteousness.
- **Buddhism**—important masters and teachers are believed to be the next rebirth (incarnation) of Buddha.

RELIGIONS that do not believe in incarnation

- **Jewish**—rejects the incarnation.
- **The ancient Greeks**— Plato said, "No god associates with man." Aristotle said, "friendship between a god and man is impossible."
- **Islam**—Rejects the idea that God can become man. Jesus is believed to be a prophet or at the most a messenger (angel). Allah the almighty can't become man.

Saint Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:22-23, "For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jesus and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

SOME QUESTIONS

- How can you prove that the pagan view of incarnation is faulty? (their human leaders who where said to be gods, many times acted nothing like the divine)
 - How can you prove that the Hindu and Buddhist view of incarnation is faulty? (Why does god have to incarnate so many times? If god is god it should only take once. In Christianity, Christ was born ONCE and LIVES and we humans die in Christ (Baptism) and thus live in Christ (Resurrection).
 - What can we say to those who don't believe the incarnation is possible? (If the gods, God or Allah are almighty, if they are God they can do anything. If the gods, God, Allah can do anything why can't He take on flesh? If you say God is unable to take on flesh then you have limited God and He is not God because He is not almighty.
 - A Jew and Muslim would think that God becoming man would be an insult to the Almighty God. Is the "word" becoming "flesh" an insult?
4. The Incarnation is one of the greatest mysteries of our Faith. There is no way to completely understand it. Fr. Agostino, a Franciscan Friar of the Renewal said that Jesus is a who with a what what. If you were to walk up to a person and ask who they were they would say their name. If you were to ask what they were that would reply a human. If you asked Jesus who He was he would say Jesus, a person. If you were to ask what are you, he would say I am divine (nature) and human (nature). He is one person with two natures. Jesus himself attests to his human nature and divine nature in the Gospel. C.S. Lewis in looking at the life of Christ and struggling with his own belief came to the conclusion that Jesus either is a liar, a lunatic or LORD. Jesus was a human lying about being divine, he was a mad man who thought he was divine or he truly is what he said he is both human and divine.

Some Thoughts...

5. In the story of Humpty Dumpty we see an egg that has had a great fall. Humanity is fragile like an egg and had a great fall (the original sin). All of the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty together again. In dealing with the Incarnation and the humanity and divinity of Christ we must look at the relationship between humanity and divinity. In the nursery rhyme God is the king. His men (the patriarchs, prophets and kings) of the Old Testament could not put humanity together again. Only the "Word" made "Flesh" the person of Jesus Christ with both divine and human natures could put back together fallen nature. But how does this happen. First we need to take a look at some views of humanity and what happens when divinity and humanity meet. There are seven views presented. There are five categories of beliefs: Pagan / Polytheistic (view 1 & 2); Monotheistic (view 3); Catholic (view 4); Protestant (view 5) and Modernist (view 6 & 7)

- Humanity is fallen and destroyed by divinity leaving only the divine. In this case it would be like an apple (humanity) being crushed / destroyed by a hammer (divinity). If humanity is crushed then praise be the divine who chose a human to crush, if a human is not crushed then praise be the divine for sparing that human. Either way God is praised.

- Humanity is fallen and absorbed by divinity, like a bowl of water that is absorbed into a sponge. The sponge is the most important thing and absorbs into itself all of the evil humanity. The idea is that once absorbed you don't see or focus on the water but only the sponge. Humanity stays fallen but absorbed into God and saved.

- Humanity is fallen and repels divinity, it is as if humanity has insect repellent on itself and God cannot get too close. Humanity is so fallen so different that the divine that the divine can only work from afar. Humanity stays fallen and since God cannot come to man He must stay distant and Merciful. Humanity is saved only by the mercy of God. Another example would be a person who wants to give money to the poor but will write a check and mail it BUT never personally deliver the money.

- Humanity is fallen. Think of humanity as a pencil, it is capable of amazing things but needs a hand to pick it up so it will reach its potential. The hand (divinity) picks up (redeems, heals, restores) the pencil and uses it. When we look at a pencil in a hand, we see both the pencil (humanity) and the hand (divinity) working together. Without the hand the pencil would be useless, but with the hand the pencil reaches its full potential. Humanity is not destroyed or covered by Divinity, in fact it reaches its full potential. Humanity needs only to stay placed in divinity.

- Humanity is fallen and is covered by divinity, like a ball that is covered by a cloth, you know that something is underneath the cloth but do not see it. It is bad and all that you need to see or focus on is the cloth. This was Luther's view, he even said that man is like "dung" or "poop" that is covered by snow. The snow is beautiful and white and covers up the ugliness of the "dung". Humanity stays fallen but is covered so it is saved.

- Humanity is NOT fallen but was created by the divine and created good, and only needs to do what it was intended to do to stay good. The Divine has set everything into place like a clock and not the clock just needs to operate.

- Humanity is what it is and there actually is not divinity at all, so just take humanity for what it is and work only with humanity.

A simple demonstration could be given in which 7 tables are set up and labeled 1 to 7. On the first is an apple that is crushed by a hammer and an apple that is not. On the second there is a bowl of water in which a sponge is dipped in and absorbs the water. On the third there is an apple that is sprayed with bug spray and a plastic bug does not want to go near apple. On the fourth there is a pencil on the table which is picked up by a hand and begins to write. On the fifth there is an apple that is covered over by a cloth, a plastic piece of dung could also be sprayed with fake snow. On the sixth a clock is made and then set on the table and then God walks away. On the seventh there is just a model (maybe a Barbie doll) and that is it. No God.

You will be asked to choose of the 7, which number represents the Christ and His Churches view of Divinity and Humanity.

THE MASS - “by the mystery of this water and wine...”

Probably the most perfect analogy of Christ’s humanity and divinity is found in the Mass.

During the offering of the Bread and Wine the priest prays:

Extraordinary Form of the Latin Rite

“O God, Who in creating human nature didst marvelously ennoble it, and hast still more marvelously renewed it: grant that by the mystery of this water and wine, we may be made partakers of His Divinity Who vouchsafed to become partaker of our humanity, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

Ordinary Form of the Latin Rite

“By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.”

The wine represents the divine Nature, water represents our human nature, so that the mixing of the water and wine signifies the Incarnation of Christ; yet it also points to His Passion, in which water and blood poured from His pierced Heart. In this way the rite of commingling the water and the wine calls to mind the beginning and the consummation of the work of our Redemption. It signifies also our mystical union with Christ by the life of grace—a divine life which is increased in us principally by our reception of the Blessed Sacrament.

Explanation from the 1962 Missal

Small Group Format

Purpose:

It is an essential Christian belief that Jesus Christ is both fully man and fully God - two natures in one person. By lowering to the human condition, Jews reasoned that God would then cease to be God. Thus, the idea that God become man was seen as blasphemy in their eyes. As Christians, we know that God humbled Himself to share in our humanity precisely because He is God—almighty and infinitely loving. By in sharing in our humanity, God taught us what divinity truly is, encouraging us to be children of God and therefore, to share in His divinity. The purpose of this lesson is to challenge the youth to discover their view of Jesus Christ at this point in their life and to come to know Christ intimately as both God and man.

Sample Structure:

I. Activity:

Divide youth into two groups. Give each group of the following tasks:

- A) Using Sacred Scripture, argue that Jesus Christ was fully man (ie. How do the Gospels portray Jesus? The letters? What sort of things do we find in Sacred Scripture that tells us about Jesus as a man?).
- B) Using Sacred Scripture, argue that Jesus Christ was fully God (ie. How do the Gospels portray Jesus? The letters? What sort of things do we find in Sacred Scripture that tells us about Jesus as God?).

After deliberation, ask each group to present its findings to the class as a whole.

II. Catechesis Part One:

Present the Church’s teaching concerning the humanity and Divinity of Jesus Christ, emphasizing the following:

- A) Definition of Christology
- B) The Dogma of the Incarnation
- C) The Humanity of Christ: true and fully man, with a rational soul (intellect and will) and human body— like us in all things but sin
- D) The Divinity of Christ: true and fully God, of the same substance as the Father, existing eternally, with a Divine will

III. Critical Thinking:

Pose the following questions, depending on available time and group dynamic:

- A) Given that Christ has a human will and a Divine will, can these ever contradict? Why or why not?
- B) How could Jesus do things like suffer and die if he is truly God?
- C) Why is Jesus a unique “window” into who God is? Who man is?
- D) What does he teach us about God? About man and who man can be?
- E) What is the Incarnation tell us about God?

Small Group Format, continued ...

IV. Personal Application: Scripture Study—Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

Like the Samaritan woman, we all go through a process of how we perceive Jesus, the Son of Man and Son of God.

Lesson Emphasis: Where are the youth in this process?

- A) Have the class read John 4:4-29.
- B) What is the Samaritan's first response to Jesus' command of "Give me a drink"? What do you think this response means? Why didn't she just say yes or no?

Answer: The Samaritans and Jews hated each other and wanted nothing to do with one another. Jesus, a Jew, was not only suppose to not talk to her because she was a Samaritan, but also because she was a Samaritan woman. One attitude that we may have toward Christ is the first attitude that the woman had: "Jesus is different than me. I can't relate to Him. We shouldn't talk or even get close to each other due to this difference."

- C) In what ways does the woman address or respond to the Jesus next?

Answer: She says "Sir," a sign of respect. She is starting to respect Him and not see Him as different. She may say it due to the fact that He promises her "living water" and she is curious on what that is.

- D) In what ways do we respect Christ and start to draw close to Him because of something He offers us?
- E) In what way does the women address or respond to Jesus next and why?

Answer: Next she says "Sir" again, another sign of respect. She wants the living water that will never end so that she won't have to keep coming back to the well. This well was outside the city, so it was a long way and to carry the heavy load back was a pain. There was probably a well inside the city or closer, but she was probably not welcome there with the other women due to her reputation. So instead, she travels alone outside the city to get water by herself.

- F) Like the woman, in what ways have or do we draw close to Christ because He can solve some of our problems or make life easier for us?
- G) What is the fourth way the woman addresses Jesus and why is there the drastic change?

Answer: The woman said, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet." The woman has now gone from saying "You are a stranger get away from me," to showing respect by calling Jesus "Sir," and now is calling Him "a prophet." He is called a prophet because she recognizes that He knows even the deepest, most intimate parts of her life. He can read right through her.

- H) Do you see Christ as someone to whom you can reveal the most intimate parts of your life? Do you have the type of relationship with Christ that allows yourself to open up and communicate with Him in this way? Is your relationship more than just respect?
- I) At the end (verse 29) how does the women address Christ? What significance does this have?

Answer: At the end, she says to the whole village, "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Messiah?" This is absolutely an amazing turn around. She now has courage to go back into the town where she is probably disliked and she tells them all about the Messiah. The Messiah is the chosen one, the one who will save all of Israel, the anointed one of God. She goes from seeing Jesus as a man to viewing Him as the chosen one of God—from stranger, to Sir, to prophet, to Messiah.

- J) How do you see Christ? What is He to you? A stranger? A man to respect? A prophet? God and Savior?

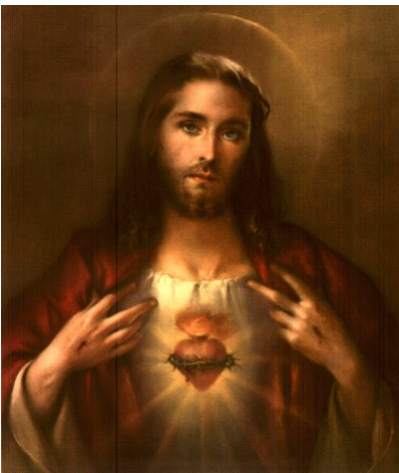
Prayer: Reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

In the year 1675, when St. Margaret Alacoque was one day in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, our Lord appeared to her, and pointing to His heart which He showed to her, surrounded with flames, surmounted by the cross, encircled with a crown of thorns, and pierced with a gaping wound, He said to her,

“Behold this heart, which has loved mankind so much, and which receives only ingratitude and coldness in return for its love. My desire is that you should make reparation to my heart for this ingratitude, and induce other also to make reparation.”

Christ’s heart is real and alive and beats for us in heaven! We also through our actions can “break” the heart of Christ and cause pain and hurt to His heart just as we can to our friends and family here on earth. We can make amends and reparation for the harm we have done to heart of Christ and the hurt others have also done by making the following promises:

Sacred Heart of Jesus, animated with a desire to repair the outrages unceasingly offered to Thee, we prostrate before Thy throne of mercy, and in the name of all mankind, pledge our love and fidelity to Thee!



**The more Thy mysteries are blasphemed,
the more firmly we shall believe them, O Sacred Heart of Jesus!
The more impiety endeavors to extinguish our hopes of immortality,
the more we shall trust in Thy Heart, sole hope of mankind!
The more hearts resist Thy Divine attractions,
the more we shall love Thee, O infinitely amiable heart of Jesus!
The more unbelief attacks Thy Divinity,
the more humbly and profoundly we shall adore It, O Divine Heart of Jesus!
The more Thy holy laws are transgressed and ignored,
the more we shall delight to observe them, O most holy Heart of Jesus!
The more Thy Sacraments are despised and abandoned,
the more frequently we shall receive them with love and reverence,
O most liberal Heart of Jesus!
The more the imitation of Thy virtues is neglected and forgotten,
the more we shall endeavor to practice them, O Heart, model of every virtue!
The more the devil labors to destroy souls,**

the more we shall be inflamed with desire to save them, O Heart of Jesus, zealous Lover of souls!

The more sin and impurity destroy the image of God in man,

the more we shall try by purity of life to be a living temple of the Holy Spirit, O Heart of Jesus!

The more Thy Holy Church is despised,

the more we shall endeavor to be her faithful children, O Sweet Heart of Jesus!

The more Thy Vicar on earth is persecuted,

the more we will honor him as the infallible head of Thy Holy Church,

show our fidelity and pray for him, O kingly Heart of Jesus!

O Sacred Heart, through Thy powerful grace, may we become Thy apostles in the midst of a corrupted world, and be Thy crown in the kingdom of heaven. Amen.