



**“THE
WORD
WAS
MADE
FLESH”**

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Why the Knights of Columbus Advertise Catholic Faith

The reason is simple. We Catholics want our non-Catholic friends and neighbors to know us as we really are and not as we are some times mistakenly represented.

We are confident that when our religious Faith is better understood by those who do not share it, mutual understanding will promote the good-will which is so necessary in a predominantly Christian country whose government is designed to serve all the people—no matter how much their religious convictions may differ.

American Catholics are convinced that as the teachings of Christ widely and firmly take hold of the hearts and conduct of our people, we shall remain free in the sense that Christ promised (John VIII, 31-38), and in the manner planned by the Founding Fathers of this republic.

Despite the plainly stated will of the Good Shepherd that there be "one fold and one shepherd," the differences in the understanding of Christ's teaching are plainly evident. It has rightfully been called "the scandal of a divided Christianity."

If there is anything which will gather together the scattered flock of Christ, it is the nationwide understanding of the Savior, what He did and how He intended mankind to benefit by the Redemption.

To this end, we wish our fellow-Americans to become acquainted with the teachings of Christ as the Catholic Church has faithfully presented them, since the day the apostles invaded the nations of the world in willing and courageous obedience to Christ's command: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..." (Matt. XXVIII, 19).

**SUPREME COUNCIL
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JESUS CHRIST IS TRUE MAN



Truth is one, while error is many-sided. Men may look at a red rose and call it green, because they happen to be color blind. Or they may call it a tulip whereas it is a rose. But this does not change the truth: the red rose is a red rose. So there is but one true way to look at Jesus Christ and that is to look at Him as He is. He is what He is. When He lived those who heard Him and saw Him or who merely heard of Him thought various things about Him. Some thought that He was Elias. Others thought that He was Jeremias. Herod Antipas thought that He was John the Baptist come back to life. Some thought He was good. Some thought that He was a deceiver.

The truth was and is that He is true God and true man. The truth is that He is God in human flesh. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." These words of St. Peter express this truth. When those who lived during Christ's time first came in contact with Him, they saw a man, a member of their race, the Jewish race. As they became acquainted with His words and actions, some came to think that

He was an extraordinary man; others began to think that He was a prophet. Through divine revelation (Matthew 16:17), Peter and the Apostles came to believe that He was the Son of God, John, the beloved disciple, was to express it this way: "And the Word was made flesh."

Today there are millions who believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man. They worship Him as God. They also pray to Him as God. They do not forget that He is man, but it is more in accord with their manner of thinking to dwell on His divinity. Yet if they are to have the true idea of Jesus Christ, they should be as aware of His humanity as of His divinity. Their faith stresses both natures, for they are the natures of the Word of God.

It is more than a mere knowledge of Christ as man that is to be desired. It is through His humanity that Jesus Christ became our Brother. It is through His humanity that He entered this world and lived and died. This humanity is the instrument of our redemption. It is this through which the graces of the Sacraments come to us. It is this

(with the divinity) that we receive in the Holy Eucharist. This humanity is exalted at the right hand of God. Through the man Jesus Christ we are united to God and to one another. For there is but one mediator between God and man, and that is the man Jesus Christ (I Timothy 2:5).

No Christian is able to live his faith unless he understands Jesus Christ in His human nature. Sacred Scripture is concerned with Jesus Christ from its beginning to its end. It is concerned with Him as the seed of the woman, as the descendant of Abraham and of David, as the Son of Mary and the Son of Man. It is concerned with His purpose in coming. That purpose was to shed His blood for us. In a word the Bible tells us about the appearance of God in the flesh.

Our purpose in life is to be united to God. To study the human nature of the Son of God is to pave

the way to this union. To grow in the knowledge of the man Jesus Christ is to want to grow in the love of God. To be united to God we must be united to Jesus Christ. St. John wrote in his first epistle (1:3): "What we have seen and have heard we announce to you, in order that you also may have fellowship with us, and that our fellowship may be with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."

It is to be hoped that these few pages on the humanity of Jesus Christ will deepen the faith of those who read them. It is hoped that these pages will bring Him closer to all Christians, and that they will bring minds and hearts and souls to the Truth Who came to us in the flesh, to the Way Who showed us how to live, and to the Life Who lived as a member of the human race and continues to live in His glorified humanity in Heaven.

Christ, therefore, is one, perfect God and perfect Man; and Him we worship along with the Father and the Spirit, with one obeisance, adoring even His immaculate flesh, and not holding that the flesh is not worthy of worship; for in fact it is worshipped in the one person of the Word, which indeed became person for it. But in this we do not do homage to that which is created. For we worship Him not as mere flesh, but as flesh united with Divinity, and because His two natures are brought under the one Person and one subsistence of God the Word.

St. John of Damascus

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

Blood will tell! This is usually taken to mean that the noble and good qualities of one's ancestors will sooner or later manifest themselves. Jesus Christ as man had ancestors as do all of us. The names of many of them we know. In fact there are two genealogies preserved for us in the New Testament. One of these is to be found in the gospel of St. Matthew. The other is in the gospel of St. Luke. Some of these names are not known to us from any other source. But then many of the names are familiar, for they include the names of men (and of a few women) found in the Old Testament.

There is no better way to begin than at the beginning. St. Luke does just that. He traces the genealogy of our Lord to the first parent of all of us, to Adam. Jesus Christ then has descended from the father of the human race to which we belong. He is our brother according to the flesh, for we have a common ancestry. True, this ancestry is way, way back in time and in history. But it is common. Should we wonder why Luke saw fit to trace the genealogy of our Lord



back to Adam, we will find the reason in his viewpoint of Jesus Christ. Luke is writing about Him as the Savior of ALL MEN. What better way to bring this Savior close to us than to show us that He belongs to our race, that He is one of us, because He comes from Adam as we do.

The mother of all living human beings is Eve. Jesus Christ descends from the common mother of all of us, as He descends from the common father of all of us. In fact He is the "seed of the woman" mentioned in Genesis 3:15. This passage is the first good news. It is the first promise on God's part that He will restore man to His favor. This restoration is in the form of a crushing and complete defeat of the tempter of man. The seed of the woman is the one who will defeat the serpent. We who are able to see the fulfillment of the divine plan know that Jesus Christ is this seed, this descendant, Who has defeated the devil. He has restored man to divine favor.

This descent from Adam and Eve is traced by St. Luke. The source for the names in the genealogy of

Jesus Christ is the Old Testament, and other sources of which we have no record. Let us make a closer study of those names found in the Old Testament. This will enable us to understand all the better the link between our Savior and ourselves. It will also help us to appreciate the blood that flows in the veins of our elder brother, Who also is God's Son.

In chapter 5 of Genesis the names to be found in St. Luke (3:36-38) are listed. The list follows Adam through one of his sons, Seth, to the great figure, Noe. In Christ's ancestry then are included such men as Seth, "who began to call upon the name of the Lord"; Henoah, who "walked with God, and was seen no more, because God took him"; Mathusale, whose name is synonymous with a long life; and Noe, of whom his father said, "This same shall comfort us from the works and labors of our hands on the earth, which the Lord has cursed." What is noted in this list is that it includes but one descendant of the various men mentioned. Adam begot many sons and daughters but only Seth is named in this list.

All human beings then do not have the privilege of having their blood mixed with the blood of Jesus Christ, except in so far as they descend from Adam together with Him. The direct ancestry of our Lord is traced through one descendant of Adam, and that is Seth. The other descendants of Adam, as Cain, and other unnamed descendants,

have in common with Jesus Christ their human nature coming from the first parent. But they do not enjoy the honor of being in the direct line of the Savior of all men. That is reserved to a special descendant, Seth, and one of his special descendants, and so on.

We note too that there is no question of nationality in this list of ancestors of Christ. They are united as human beings. The division that is made is based on other grounds than nationality. It should be recalled that this list in Genesis, chapter 5, is inserted by the author of this book for the sake of the Israelites. It is to show them that their father, Abraham, can trace his ancestry back to God, through Adam, Seth, Noe, Sem. There is another reason for the separation of this genealogy from the other descendants of Adam. This genealogy is that of the "sons of God." It is the list of those men who worshipped the true God, and through whom the knowledge of God was made known and passed on. The other descendants of Adam, as the story of Cain shows, fell away from the worship of the true God.

Jesus Christ Is A Semite

This line of "the sons of God" is the ancestry of Jesus Christ. In His human nature He descended from these men. It is indeed fitting that the Son of God should assume His "flesh" from that of "the sons of God."

Not all the ancestors of our Lord lived up to this title of "the sons

of God." One of the most faithful was Noe, who is frequently called the second father of men. Of his three sons Sem is included in the direct ancestry of Christ. Now we begin to see races, nations, nationalities in the history of the human race. So we call our Lord a Semite, that is, a descendant of Sem.

St. Luke traces the genealogy of our Lord from Sem to Abraham (3:34-36). It is with Abraham that St. Matthew begins his genealogy of Christ (1:1-2). Since St. Matthew is interested in our Lord as the Messiah, the long-expected seed of the woman who would come from the chosen family of Abraham, this evangelist limits the ancestry of Christ to this family. Abraham is the direct ancestor of our Lord; his blood flows in the veins of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

The Son of Abraham

St. Matthew begins his gospel in this way: "The book of the origin of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." But it is obvious that neither Jesus Christ nor David is the son of Abraham in the strict sense. The term means descendant. To the Jews any one who claimed to be the Messiah must descend from Abraham; for this reason Matthew is careful to show that Jesus Christ, Who claimed to be the Messiah, descended from the great patriarch.

Abraham's story is told in Genesis, chapters 12 to 25. There he is pictured as an obedient and faithful servant of God. When obedi-

ence demanded that he move from his own country to Canaan (Palestine), he went at once. Wherever God's will led, that is where Abraham went. When God promised him that he would have a son from Sara, he believed without hesitation. He was even ready to give up that son if God willed, but God spared the son, although He did not spare His own Son, the descendant of Abraham.

Abraham and Sara are the direct ancestors of our Lord; their blood flows through the body of the Messiah and their characteristics, far back as they are, made up the characteristics of their descendants which flowed into the humanity of Jesus Christ. The striking obedience of Abraham to God, and of Sara (cf. Genesis 12:1 ff; 22:1 ff; I Pet. 3:6), finds its perfection in the obedience of Christ to His parents, but above all to His heavenly Father.

The Son of David

Both St. Matthew and St. Luke give the genealogy of our Lord from Abraham to David (Matthew 1:2-5; Luke 3:31-34). Some of these names are well known to us: Isaac, Jacob, Judas, Booz, Jesse. Others are not too well known. An interesting feature of this part of the genealogy in St. Matthew is that he mentions women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and "the former wife of Urias." Tamar was the daughter-in-law of Judas, yet she conceived through him. She had twins of whom one is listed as an ancestor of our Lord: Phares.

Rahab is the wife of Salmon; it is generally thought that this is the Rahab of the time of Josue and is usually called "the harlot." (Josue 2:1 ff; 6:1 ff.) Ruth is a Moabite but became the great-grandmother of David. The wife of Urias is Bethsabee, whose story is well known (2 Kings 11:1 ff). It is unusual that in a Jewish genealogy women should be mentioned; it is even more unusual since they are not necessary for the genealogy itself. To the Jews at the time of our Lord these four women would be considered sinners, either because of the acts of sin mentioned in the Old Testament, or because they were not of the Jewish race. "We are Jews by birth, and not sinners from among the Gentiles" writes St. Paul to the Galatians (2:15). Since Jesus Christ came for all sinners, it is not surprising that the blood of sinners should flow in His veins. Nor is it surprising that the blood of other nationalities should be found there; is he not the Savior of ALL MEN?

Jesus Christ descended then from Abraham through Juda (Judah, Judas) to David. St. Matthew is not merely tracing the human genealogy of the Messias. The Messias was to be a king; He was to establish a kingdom. He was to be the royal son of David. Hence Jesus Christ had to have royal blood in Him. God has said to Abraham (Genesis 17:6): "And I will make thee increase exceedingly, and I will make nations of thee, and KINGS shall come out of thee." When David was appointed king then this

began to be fulfilled, for he traced his ancestry to Abraham through Juda.

For the Messias there was nothing more important than that He should be the royal descendant of David, and that He should have the right to the throne of David (Luke 1:32). Both St. Matthew and St. Luke are careful to indicate that Jesus Christ came from David. Matthew gives the names of the kings of the line of David from David himself to Jechonias, the last one to rule in a temporal way (Matthew 1:6-11).

The Royal Promise To David

"And when thy days shall be fulfilled... I will raise up thy seed after thee... and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house in my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son..." (2 Samuel 7:12-14.) Jesus Christ then had to be of the line of David if He wished to be accepted by His own people. To be the Messias meant too that He must be the heir apparent to the throne of David. Moreover He had to establish a kingdom that would last forever.

As time went on in the history of the Chosen People this promise to David became more and more important. It was mentioned in the Psalms; it became the basis of the development of the divine plan for the coming of our Lord. The books of Paralipomenon were written to show that it was the dynasty of David that was chosen by God.

When our Lord actually came it was common knowledge that the Messias was to be the descendant of David.

Jesus Christ then had the royal blood of David flowing in Him. David himself had the blood of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Juda flowing in his veins. It was through him that the promise to Abraham that "kings would come out of him" was fulfilled. It was through David that the promise of the scepter to Juda came to be realized. Yet David could go back in his genealogy to Sem, to Noe, to Seth, to Adam, to God. So could Christ, as St. Luke indicated in chapter 3, verses 31-38.

From David To Christ

Through the royal promise to David we now see that the seed of the woman is to be a royal seed. Christ's human nature was not merely the ordinary human nature of a descendant of Adam. It was a human nature clothed with royalty, a human nature "born to the purple!" The picture becomes complete when we hear the angel speak to Mary: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he shall be king over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31-32).

Anyone comparing the genealogies of St. Matthew and St. Luke

from David to Christ will note the differences. Only three names are found in both: Salathiel, Zorobabel, and Joseph. Whatever may be the explanation, and there are several, one fact is clear. This fact is that our Lord descended from David. Matthew is probably giving the kingly line. As for Luke he may be giving the legal or the natural line, or perhaps both. What is more important however is to show that Mary came from the line of David. Joseph was the foster-father of our Lord. His blood did not enter the life-stream of Christ. Joseph gave legal status to our Lord's descent from David. He also proves that our Lord descended from David the king.

Mary alone gave of her flesh to our Lord's human nature. As Joseph was of the Davidic line it is highly probable that he would choose a wife of the same line. This was in accord with the interpretation of the Jewish law. It is St. Paul however who states explicitly that Jesus Christ "was born . . . according to the flesh of the offspring of David" (Romans 1:3). According to the flesh, that is, naturally, as well as legally and regally Jesus Christ descended from David.

During His public life He was recognized as the Son of David. Thus the blind men near Jericho cried out: "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us" (Matthew 20:30). At the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem the crowds "kept crying out, saying: Hosanna to the Son of David" (Matthew 21:9).

Yet Christ did not come as a royal descendant of David. He had no temporal throne to ascend, although He had the right to such a throne. If He had no royal throne in this world it was because of the political and moral failures of His royal ancestors. The idolatry of Solomon divided the kingdom of David (3 Kings 11:1 ff). Later Davidic kings failed to be the representatives of God that they should have been. They failed to walk in the footsteps of their ancestor, David. As a result the throne was taken from them. When Christ came there was no Davidic throne. He then Who was royal was born in a stable, was the village carpenter.

Adam To Christ

God had promised to David that his throne would last forever (2 Samuel 7:1 ff). At the Annunciation Mary had been told that her son would be given the throne of David His father (Luke 1:32). Christ Himself spoke of the kingdom that He would establish. He told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world, that He was a king. He died with a placard over His head proclaiming Him to be the king of the Jews.

In view of the length of time that scholars maintain man has been on this globe, we are not to think that

we have the complete genealogy of our Lord. But we have a genealogy that shows Christ belongs to the human race descended from Adam. This is necessary for He came to redeem the human race through His humanity. It was God's choice that Sem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Juda and David should be His direct ancestors. God's special providence watched over the genealogy of Jesus Christ, for He was not "just anybody," He was the special descendant of Adam.

Yet God did not prevent sin and imperfections from entering this genealogy. Adam was the first sinner. Abraham had his weaknesses. So did Isaac and Jacob. Juda was not above reproach. David committed adultery and tried to cover it with murder. The dynasty of David is made up of idolatrous kings as well as some who were good, yet not without sin. This sinfulness did not enter the human nature of Christ. It reached out and touched Him, not in a personal way, but as He was to be the Savior of sinful men. It is a great distinction for those who were in the direct ancestry of Jesus Christ. They gave to Him the very human nature that would be their salvation. It is a greater distinction however that He descended from them: the sinless and perfect Man from sinful and imperfect men.

Christ as God is the fatherland where we are going, Christ as Man is the way by which we go.

St. Augustine

IS NOT THIS THE SON OF MARY?

"Let us make man to our own image and likeness." In this way the special creation of mankind as well as the special place of mankind in creation is taught us by Sacred Scripture. God deliberated before He created man, something He did not do in the case of other creatures. Man was made to His image and likeness. Only of man is this said, for only man has within him a soul that reflects the simplicity, the spirituality, and the faculties of intellect and will to be found in God Himself.

"In the fullness of time... God sent his Son, born of a woman..." For centuries God has prepared for the coming of His Son in human nature. There had been many hundreds of years of planning and of deliberation, if we may apply the idea of time to God. It did take hundreds and thousands of years before all was prepared in time for the Word to become flesh. Adam was made to the image and likeness of God. The Son made man is "the brightness of his glory and the image of his substance... the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature... for it has pleased



God the Father that in him all his fullness should dwell..." (Heb. 1:3; Colossians 1:15, 19).

In the creation of the first man, Adam, God did not use human instruments. Adam had no father or mother according to the flesh. In the plan for the coming of His Son was to be found a mother. At the very beginning of the divine plan for the coming of Jesus Christ, we find the seed of the woman who is to conquer the devil (Genesis 3:15). The greatest of the prophets, Isaias, wrote of a virgin or young maiden who would bear a son (Isaias 7:14) and his contemporary, Micheas, mentioned the woman who would bring forth the leader of the Israelites (Micheas 5:2-3).

The divine plan for Jesus Christ in His human nature unfolds in the New Testament. It is here that we perceive the full significance of the woman, the virgin, the mother of Genesis, Isaias (Isaiah), and Micheas (Micah). "Now... the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a *virgin* betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the vir-

gin's name was Mary... And the angel said to her... 'Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus'... But Mary said to the angel, 'How shall this happen, since I do not know man?' And the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One to be born shall be called the Son of God' " (Luke 1:26-38).

Mary, The Mother Yet A Virgin

Let us now turn to Matthew (1: 18-25) where we find Joseph perplexed because of the obvious condition of Mary. Matthew is careful to tell us that "Mary his mother (mother of Jesus Christ) had been betrothed to Joseph, and before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit." Joseph's perplexity was removed by a special revelation from God. "Do not be afraid, Joseph, son of David, to take to thee Mary thy wife, for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this came to pass that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son; and they shall call his name Emmanuel...'" (Isaias 7:14; Matthew 1:20-23).

Mary is the mother of Jesus Christ. His conception took place

through the Holy Spirit. She was a virgin at the time of the conception. She was also a virgin to the birth of Jesus, for "he (Joseph) did not know her till she brought forth her firstborn son" (Matthew 1:25). It should be added that it is the teaching of the Catholic Church that Mary remained a virgin in the birth of our Lord, and that she remained a virgin after His birth. The perpetual virginity of Mary is a doctrine taught down through the centuries of the Church, and taught and believed today by all Catholics.

At the moment however our concern is with Mary and her Son Who is her Son in a unique way. She alone of human creatures was the parent of Jesus Christ. There was no human father. It is this that both St. Luke and St. Matthew are telling us in their gospels. It is this too that God had in mind when He stressed the woman in Genesis 3:15, Isaias' young maiden, and the mother in Micheas 5:2-3.

St. Luke brings out the same point at the beginning of the genealogy of our Lord (3:23): "And Jesus himself, when he began his work, was about thirty years of age, being—AS WAS SUPPOSED—the son of Joseph." Luke is supplementing what he has already written concerning the conception of our Lord in chapter one, verses 26-38. It is noteworthy too that in the two incidents involving the Holy Family, this same author gives prominence to Mary (2:22-52). It is to Mary that Simeon speaks. It is Mary who speaks to the Son when He is found in the temple.

The beloved disciple is not less careful to indicate the special motherhood of Christ. Steeped in Jewish traditions as John was, nevertheless it is Mary who is mentioned. For Jewish tradition and Jewish custom paid little attention to women. John however makes no mention of Joseph. At the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee (2:1 ff) it is Mary who acts and intercedes. At the foot of the cross it is Mary who is present and it is Mary to whom our Lord speaks.

When the disciples of Christ were awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit, Mary is with them (Acts 1:14). There is no further mention of the presence of Mary after this. St. Paul however has a passage that confirms the special motherhood of Mary. In writing to the Galatians (4:4) he says: "But when the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, BORN OF A WOMAN, born under the law..."

Jesus, The Son Of The Virgin

Mary alone gave our Lord His human body. Through the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:18) she conceived in her womb. She was a virgin at that moment. She remained a virgin throughout the time that she carried her son in her womb. Such is the teaching of Sacred Scripture (cf. Matthew 1:25). Such also is the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Outside of Adam and Eve all of us have a father and a mother. Jesus Christ had but one human parent, and that was Mary, His virgin mother. The sacred humanity, the

human flesh, the body, the bones, the blood, all these came from Mary without the aid of a human father. Mary could claim her Son in a way that no other woman could claim her son. Christ could look upon His mother in a way that no other son could look on a mother. When Mary said "My Son" there was a uniqueness about this never equalled in history. For she did not share Him with any other human being. She shared Him with God the Father. God the Father could say, as He did: My Son. Mary could say: My Son. God could say: My Only-begotten Son. Mary could say: My Only-begotten Son. She alone begot Him as a human being.

Jesus The Only Child of Mary

From the very beginning the Catholic Church has taught that Mary retained her virginity. In the Apostles' Creed it is stated that Jesus Christ "was born of the Virgin Mary." Our Lord was Mary's only child. This teaching of the Church is not contradicted by Sacred Scripture. There are certain passages in the New Testament that cause difficulties to those who do not accept the Church as the guide for the interpretation of the Bible.

One of these passages is to be found in Luke (2:7), where our Lord is called "the first-born son." Does this imply other children? It may and it may not. Even today this expression is used of the first child, and no one knows if there will be a second or a third. What

then did Luke mean by "first-born." In the context he means that our Lord was her first child, for he continues to describe the ceremonies that must take place in the temple upon the birth of the first-born (Luke 2:22 ff). St. Luke then is not implying that there were more children; he is pointing out that our Lord was Mary's first child without any reference to more.

A greater stumbling block however is to be found in the mention of "brothers and sisters" of our Lord (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). Once again we must study the texts to find out what Matthew and Mark meant. In all languages brother and sister may mean blood brothers and sisters; the terms may also mean individuals united in some way or other. Nurses are called "sisters" in some countries. In religious life members of the community are called "brother." In lodges we find the same thing. In Sacred Scripture it is the same. Abraham for example spoke of Lot as his brother (Genesis 13:8), whereas Lot was his nephew. In Genesis 29:15, Laban says to Jacob, "Because thou art my brother ..." Actually, in the context it is clear that Laban was the uncle of Jacob. In 1 Par. (1 Chronicles) 23:22, we read that Eleazar died leaving no sons, "but only daughters, and the sons of Cis their *brothers* took them," the *brothers* who married them were really their cousins.

A close scrutiny of those who are called "brothers" of our Lord will help to unravel the problem. Four men are called His brothers: James and Joseph and Simon and Jude. Both Matthew and Mark refer later

on to James and Joseph as the sons of *a* Mary (Matthew 27:56; Mark 15:40). This Mary is very obviously not the mother of our Lord. From John 19:25, she would seem to be related to the mother of Jesus. In this case then James and Joseph would be cousins of our Lord. Moreover, we would be obliged to look upon Simon and Jude as relatives, and not blood brothers of our Lord. Simon and Jude are always named together, next to James in the list of the Apostles and next to James and Joseph in the list of the "brethren of the Lord." Jude gives himself the title "brother of James" in the first verse of his own epistle. It is then very probable that Simon and Jude are blood brothers of James and Joseph, and therefore bear the same relationship of cousin to our Lord. The same would be true of the "sisters" mentioned in this same text. Moreover, nowhere in the Bible is Mary, the mother of Christ, called the mother of any of them.

Christ's giving John to Mary as her son (John 19:26) with the right and duty of caring for her, would be strange if Mary had other children naturally possessing that right and duty.

Matthew 1:25 is frequently quoted as a proof that our Blessed Mother did not remain a virgin: "And he did not know her till she brought forth her first-born son." The word "till" is the crux of the interpretation. Careful study will show that what St. Matthew is saying is this: Mary and Joseph did not live as man and wife to the time of

the birth of our Lord. There is no indication of what happened after the birth. The word "till" as used in the Scripture (cf. also Genesis 8:7; Matthew 12:20; 1 Timothy 4:13) may merely signify a point of time until which something has been done without implying anything different after that time. In other words the text does not indicate a change after Christ's birth. Neither before nor after Christ's birth did Mary violate her virginity.

Thy Son Is The Son of God

"Behold, thou shalt conceive... and shalt bring forth a son... He shall be great and shall be called **THE SON OF THE MOST HIGH**... the Holy One to be born shall be called **THE SON OF GOD**" (Luke 1:31,35). Mary is to beget a son Who is also the Son of God. There is then in Jesus Christ a two-fold sonship. He is God's Son. He is Mary's son.

One of the great mysteries of Jesus Christ is to be found in this fact: both the Father and Mary call Him Son. There is but one Son, the Son of God and the son of Mary. The reason for this is found in the Incarnation. The Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word, assumed human nature. Two natures, divine and human, are there, but only one person. Perhaps a schema comparing Jesus Christ with God on the one hand and with angels and men on the other will enlighten us.

God
Three Persons
One Divine Nature
Jesus Christ
One Divine Person
Two Natures: Divine and Human
Angels and Men
One Person
One Nature

Even though there are three persons in God, there is only one God because there is but one divine nature. In angels and men there is but one individual, one "I" because there is only one person and one nature. But in Jesus Christ there are two natures. True, but there is only one "I" since there is only one divine person. There is no human person in Jesus Christ. There is no human "I" in Him, only a divine "I." This is the reason that we say our Blessed Mother is the Mother of God, for she is the mother of Jesus Christ.

The human nature of our Lord is unique. It is unique because while it is a human nature, there is no human person. In the place of the human person is the divine person, the Word. There never was a human person, for at the moment of the union of the divine nature with the human, the Word became flesh. If there were two persons, then we would not have the Word as the "I" of the human nature of our Lord. There would be the divine "I" and the human "I." Then there would be two persons with two natures, two individuals. It could not be said then that God became man, or that Mary was the Mother of God. Neither could it be said that God the Son redeemed man.

Throughout the accounts of our Lord's life one thing is clear: **JESUS CHRIST WAS ONE INDIVIDUAL.** He Himself used the pronoun "I" to refer to divine actions as well as human actions. He said that "I and the Father are one" but He also said "the Father is greater than I" (John 10:30; 14:28). It was the same Jesus Christ Who brought forth Lazarus from the tomb and Who wept over Jerusalem. It was the same individual Who came forth from Mary's womb and Who came forth from the tomb. The leaders of His people understood this for they accused Him of blasphemy, He a man claiming to be God (cf. John 5:18; 19:7; Matthew 26:62-64).

The Son Assumed A Human Nature

Herein is the great mystery of the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ. It is the humanity of God the Son. It is united to the divine nature through the person of the Word. It is a human nature that looks to a divine person for its "I." How much better is it to have a divine "I" than a human "I"! There was no need for a human person because the divine person could do all and do it better than a human person. This is the uniqueness of Jesus Christ: **HE IS MAN AND GOD.**

Sinless Man

Sin has always been familiar to us. So much is it a part of our human nature that it is easy to think that it came with our natures.

In a sense this is true, for we were born with original sin. But in the beginning when human nature came from God, it was good (cf. Genesis 1:26-27,31). There was no sin, for God and sin are opposed—as are light and darkness. Cardinal Newman once remarked that sin is so much opposed to God that if anything could make God less God, it would be sin.

Jesus Christ is human, but He is sinless. He had to be sinless because He is also God. Openly He had challenged the people of His time: "Which of you can convict me of sin?" (John 8:46). Actual sin, as we call it, was foreign to Him, as His life shows. A careful reading of His gospels brings before us a life of perfect union with God, of perfect control of all the movements of human nature. No moral imperfection is even hinted at. When He was brought to trial the crimes attributed to Him were political, except for one. This one was blasphemy. But there is no blasphemy for God to claim to be God, and Jesus Christ was God.

If nothing stained or soiled with sin is able to enter heaven, then no sin could touch Him Who is divine. In the epistle to the Hebrews Jesus Christ is presented as a high priest "who can have compassion on our infirmities...one tried as we are in all things, except sin" (4:15). In another passage (7:26-27) the sinlessness of Christ is stated explicitly: "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, set apart from sinners and become higher than the heavens. He does not need to offer

sacrifices daily (as the other priests did), first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for this latter he did once for all in offering up himself."

A Sinless Son From An Immaculate Mother

Adam came forth from God's creative act in a sinless state. The second Adam, Christ, came forth from a virgin as a sinless son. We have already noted that He could not sin since He is God. Yet He is human. He had a mother who belongs to the human race. Is not original sin transmitted from one human being to another through the act of generation? Yes, it is. There was no act of generation however in the conception of Jesus Christ. "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee ..." Mary begot Christ without the aid of man, not however without the aid of God. If then we needed to show that our Lord did not inherit original sin, we could show it this way.

The sinlessness of the human nature of our Lord becomes all the more apparent when we consider a great privilege of His mother. This privilege is called her Immaculate Conception. St. Paul wrote in his letter to the Ephesians that "Christ also loved the Church, and delivered himself up for her, that he might sanctify her . . . in order that he might present to himself the Church in all her glory, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she might be holy and without blemish" (5:25-26). He did the

same thing for His mother. He delivered Himself up for her (as He did for all men), yet in a special way. If the Church, the mystical body of Christ, is without stain, should not His virginal mother be without stain?

Original sin did not stain the soul of Mary. As a member of the human race she would be thought to have it, as all of us do. Yet Christ saw to it that original sin did not touch her because she was to be His mother. He delivered Himself for her as He did for us, but there is a difference. We are redeemed from sin. Mary was redeemed not from sin, but by prevention of sin reaching her soul. The mother of all living humans, Eve, came into the world without sin. The Mother of all Life (I am the life, says her Son) should not be less pure than Eve.

Since Mary did not have original sin, she could not transmit it to her Son. The human nature of Christ stands out all the better in its sinless condition when we view the Mother. She who was not touched by original sin begot a Son Who could not inherit original sin. Yet even if He could have inherited this sin, He would not since His mother did not have it.

Like Mother Like Son

On one occasion when a woman in the listening crowd praised His mother, our Lord answered: "Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother" (Matthew 12:46-50). No one fulfilled this better than His Mother. In this way there is a like-

ness between Mother and Son that is most striking. Both had but one aim in life: to do God's will. Christ said that He came to do the will of His Father. His mother said that it should be done to her according to God's will. Mary resembled her Son in holiness, in virtue, especially in the virtue of obedience.

It is only natural that children resemble their parents. Physically this is often obvious. Often traits of parents are evident in their children. At times the resemblance is more from the father than the mother. Other times it is in the opposite way. Our Lord had a human mother, but no human father. Hence whatever resemblance is to be found can only be between Son and Mother. Sacred Scripture has left us no indication of the physical characteristics of Christ or of His mother. We can only conclude to a resemblance from the principle (not always applicable) stated above. It may be conceded then that our Lord looked like His mother.

Mary was a Jewess, a Semite. There are general physical traits ascribed to this race. If Mary followed these general traits, we might be able to describe her physical characteristics. She would be dark rather than fair, with dark hair rather than light. She would be of medium height. Her face would be

oval rather than round, olive complexion rather than ruddy or light. Her eyes would be dark, if not black.

If this is a portrait of Mary, then with some diffidence we may say that our Lord was dark, with black or dark brown eyes, oval face with an olive complexion. It is probable that He wore a beard. As for His physical build, anything that might be said would be conjecture. Should the Shroud of Turin be accepted as genuine, then our Lord could be said to be about six feet in height, weighing around 170 or 180 pounds.

What should not be forgotten is that He was of the Jewish race. His blood was of the best for it came directly from Abraham through King David. He could not be more Jewish in the mind of His own people. In fact He was THE JEW! He was to found and to establish the spiritual Israel; to do this He had to be of the Jewish race, for it had been promised that a member of this nation would establish this spiritual Israel. The fact that our Lord belonged to this race did not prevent Him from founding the spiritual kingdom of David. It was required that He should be of this race in order to establish it. This spiritual Israel is of course the Catholic Church, of which Jesus Christ, the son of David, is the founder.

Only-begotten Son and Word of God, Who art immortal and didst vouchsafe for our salvation to take flesh of the holy Mother of God and ever Virgin Mary, and without change didst become Man, and wast crucified, Christ God, and by death didst overcome death, being one of the holy Trinity and glorified with the Father and the Holy Ghost: save us!
Prayer from Byzantine Horologion

SO SHALL THE SON OF MAN BE!

Our Lord often used the phrase "son of man" instead of the first person pronoun. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking," "the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath," "the Son of Man came to save that which was lost." Its exact meaning is discussed among scholars. To us today the phrase calls to mind Christ's human nature. He belongs to our race, He is one of us. He is a man.

There are certain qualities that we expect of a man, qualities of mind and heart in particular. When these qualities are present in a very high degree, then we have an exceptional man. When they are found in the degree discoverable in Christ, we have a man among men. At the age of twelve He amazed the teachers in the midst of whom He sat in the temple. "And all who were listening to him were amazed at his understanding and his answers" (Luke 2:47). The crowds who heard Him "were astonished at his teaching..." (Matthew 7:28). Even the attendants of the chief priests and Pharisees admitted, "Never has man spoken as this man" (John 7:46).

There are several ways of measur-



ing a man's mind. One of them is to note the clarity of expression. This must be weighed by the expressions of the time as well as by the adaptations to the audience. This is said lest some should think this measure cannot be applied to Christ's mind. Today some of His expressions may not be too clear.

This is due to the difference in time and in audience. We are almost two thousand years away in time. We are an audience of different mentality and outlook than that to which our Lord spoke. By way of parenthesis it is for this reason that Christ established the living voice of His Church: to explain what He taught today and to the people of today.

Yet it is true that by far the majority of our Lord's sayings are as clear today as they were centuries ago. Who is able to misunderstand "therefore all that you wish men to do to you, even so do you also to them"? Or "Ask and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you"? Or "Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be given you be-

sides"? Or "Our Father, who art in heaven . . . give us this day our daily bread . . . forgive us our debts . . .?"

Not only was our Lord clear. He adapted Himself to His audience. Most of the time He had before Him simple, ordinary, uneducated people. His expressions could be understood by them. They knew the terms that He used, such as "kingdom of heaven," "the birds of the air," "lilies of the field" and "false prophets." Parables were familiar to the people as a method of teaching. Our Lord's parables were from scenes of their daily lives, such as the sower in the field, the banquet table, the Pharisees praying so that every one could see them, the wedding feasts, the younger son wanting his freedom and the older son pouting. But when Christ stood before the leaders of the people He spoke in their language. So when Nicodemus came to Him at night, our Lord began in terms that this member of the Great Council should have understood. And when Christ spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, He adapted Himself to her condition. He asked for a drink and gradually opened her heart and mind.

Christ Has Revealed God

There has never been a teacher like Christ. There has never been any one whose teachings have captured the minds of men as His teaching. Not only during His own time, but throughout the centuries, men have studied and read and meditated upon and written about what He said. Then no one had a

mind as the mind of Christ. It was incisive, clear, simple yet profound. It penetrated to the heart of men's minds, it cut through to the very marrow of truth. As no man could convict Him of sin, so no one could convict Him of error. His mind was the mind of Truth, for it was the mind of Him Who was the Word.

Another way to measure a man's mind is to note how it is related to God. For man has been created for God. There can be no true knowledge unless it is from God and unless it tends to God. Over and over again Christ proclaimed that what He had received from His Father. "All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and him to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" (Matthew 11:27). Christ came to reveal God. "God . . . last of all in these days has spoken to us by his Son . . ." (Hebrews 1:2). "I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou hast given me out of the world" (John 17:6).

Never did any man's mind cling to God as did the mind of Christ. Never did any one's thoughts tend towards God as did the thoughts of Christ. Never was divine knowledge found in man's mind as in the mind of Christ. Never then was there a man like unto the man, Jesus Christ. It is no wonder that the crowds followed Him, even into the desert. It is no wonder that they listened to Him, with no regard to time or discomfort or hunger or thirst. It is no wonder that He attracted followers and that they gave up all to

be near Him, to hear His voice, to hear the Truth.

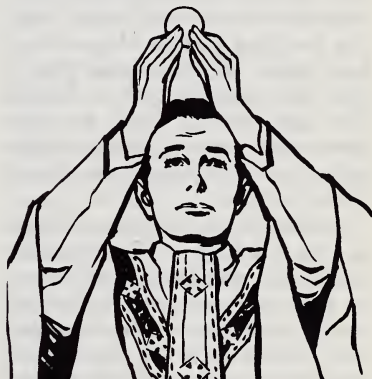
It would be incredible to think that the revealed truth of God given by Jesus Christ should perish. It did not. He told His Apostles that "the Holy Spirit... will teach you all things and bring to your mind whatever I have said to you" (John 14:15-17; 14:26; 16:12-14). Shortly before He ascended into heaven He commissioned His Apostles: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). This same commission exists today. It is found in the Pope and the bishops of the Catholic Church for the Pope is the successor of Peter and the bishops are the successors of the Apostles. They have inherited through the power granted them the commission of Jesus Christ. Today they are the "mind" of Christ for all men.

Not My Will But Thine Be Done

The two faculties of the soul that distinguish man from animals and that set him off too from other men are the intellect and the will. Christ's intellect puts Him apart from all men, for it was the intellect of the God-man. The will of Christ is also the will of the God-man. While its nature is the same as that of all men, this fact of being the will of the Word made flesh sets Him apart from all others. When we see Him exercising this will, we perceive at once a difference.

Since Adam sinned men have rebelled against God. In fact they

come into the world as rebels. For original sin sets them apart from God. Jesus Christ did not rebel against God. He did not have original sin. His challenge "which of you can convict me of sin?" was unanswered. On the positive side His own life may be summed up in this phrase: **I CAME TO DO THE WILL OF HIM THAT SENT ME!** This He did perfectly from the beginning of His life to its end. In the epistle of the Hebrews is summed up this perfect obedience to God: "It is in this 'will' that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:10).



Christ Himself proclaimed that "I do as the Father has commanded me" (John 14:31). Again He spoke, this time to His Father: "I have glorified thee on earth; I have accomplished the work that thou hast given me to do" (John 17:4). In the agony that preceded His passion He submitted to His Father's will: "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet not my will but thine be done" (Luke 22:42).

God's will is made known through proper authority. St. Paul expressed this principle very clearly in writing to the Romans (13:1): "Let everyone be subject to the higher authorities, for there exists no authority except from God, and those who exist have been appointed by God." The measure of a man then comes from his recognition of this principle, but more so from his obedience to it.

There is only one measure for Christ. It is the measure of perfection. As He perfectly fulfilled His Father's will, so too did He perfectly fulfill the will of those placed over Him. For Him this was but a manifestation of His Father's will. Our Lord had parents. He was their Son; hence obedience was due to Mary, His mother, and to Joseph, His legal father. "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them" (Luke 2:51).

For the Jews, the Chosen People of God, the Law of Moses was the manifestation of God's will. One of the first laws was that a male child should be circumcised on the eighth day (Genesis 17:1-14). Jesus Christ through His parents carried out this law: "And when eight days were fulfilled for his circumcision, his name was called Jesus..." (Luke 2: 21). At the end of forty days a male child was to be presented to God in the temple (Exodus 13:2). Christ was presented on the fortieth day by His parents (Luke 2:22-40). On feast days pious Jews came to Jerusalem, if it was at all possible (Leviticus 23:1-44). Throughout the gospels we find our Lord in Jerusalem

on various feast days (Luke 2:41 ff; John 2:13 ff; 5:1 ff; 7:1 ff; etc.).

The great commandments of the Law were the same as in Christianity. These commandments were those of love (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:34-40). Love means a perfect fulfillment of the will of the one loved. "If you love me, keep my commandments" Christ had told His Apostles (John 14:15). Since Christ perfectly fulfilled God's will, He loved God perfectly. This was the reason that the Father called Him "my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."



Greater Love Than This

There can be no love of God without the love of the neighbor. For it is God's will that we love the neighbor. To love God is to do what He wills us to do. Jesus Christ loved us with a great love. "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). The name of Jesus was given to Him "for he shall save his people from their sins"

(Matthew 1:21). "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep" (John 10:11).

The entire life of Christ was a life of love, for it was a life of service. He lived as He did to give us an example that would serve for our daily life. His public life was a life devoted to serving first His Apostles, then the people. He spent hours and hours teaching the Apostles. Many of the discourses in the gospels were addressed to them. Other times He took them apart from the crowds and instructed them.

He moved from town to town preaching in the synagogues, or wherever a crowd gathered. He used His divine power to feed them when they followed Him into the desert. He cured their sick, He drove out devils, He even brought back to life the dead. He summed up this life of service in these words (Matthew 20:28): "...the Son of Man has not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

In word Christ taught this same

life of love. In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-36), He taught that love is the manifestation of neighborliness. Christ Himself is THE GOOD SAMARITAN Who came to pour into the sinful wounds of our souls the wine and oil of divine grace. Love forgets self and thinks only of the one in need. Christ forgot Himself and gave Himself to be our food and our drink because of our great need (John 6: 54-59).

Down through the centuries the mind and heart of Christ have fascinated men. The words that came from Him have been repeated over and over. The teachings that He gave in His own time have become the thoughts and the guide of millions. The love that He manifested has been the inspiration of centuries. It has been more than that. This love has been the source of the love of God by millions of the followers of the Son of Man. It has been the source too of the love of the neighbor. For greater love than that of the Son of Man, the world has never seen or experienced or known.

For two reasons He is called a Priest: first, because He offered up His body as an oblation and victim to God the Father for us; second, because through us He condescends day after day to be offered up. He is the Way along which we journey to our salvation; the Truth, because He rejects what is false; the Life, because He destroys death. He is the Vine, because He spread out the branches of His arms that the world might pluck in clusters the grapes of consolation from the cross.

St. Niceta of Remesiana

BEHOLD THE MAN!

Death is not attractive. The thought of death is not one calculated to fill the human heart with joy. Death came to man as a result of sin (Romans 5:12); it is a punishment. This makes it less attractive. There are many ways of dying. At times it is said that some one has had an "easy" death. This is in contrast to the violent and hard deaths that others have.



Jesus Christ came to die for the sins of men. It was for this purpose that God fitted Him with a human nature. "Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not, but a body thou hast fitted to me... Behold, I come to do thy will, O God... It is in this 'will' that we have been sanctified through the offering of the BODY OF JESUS CHRIST once for all" (Hebrews 10:5-10). To understand this need for a body or a human nature, we must appreciate who it was that sinned, and who was offended, and how the offended one wanted reparation.

Man had sinned, therefore man should repair the sin. Hence the human nature of our Lord. It was God Who was offended. An offense is measured by the dignity of the

one offended. God is infinite, therefore the sin had an infinite side to it. Only one then who was infinite could offer God proper reparation. Jesus Christ is God and man. As God He could offer infinite reparation. It was up to God to decide in what way and to what extent reparation was to be made. He

determined that the reparation should fit the sin, in fact that it should abound more than the offense (Romans 5:12-21). "But where the offense has abounded, grace has abounded yet more."

Christ's death was not a sudden matter. He began to speak of it many months before it actually came. The first time recorded in the gospels is to be found in St. Matthew, chapter 16:21 ff. After the famous confession made by Peter, "from that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and Scribes and chief priests, and be put to death, and on the third day rise again." Not too long after this prediction He told the three apostles who had been privileged to be present at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:9):

"tell the vision to no one, till the Son of Man has risen from the dead."

Later He added some details (Matthew 20:18-19): "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the Scribes; and they will condemn him to death, and will deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified; and on the third day he will rise again." To the apostles this was unintelligible. "And they understood none of these things and this saying was hidden from them..." (Luke 18:34). Suffering implied the notion of sin to the people of the time of our Lord (John 9:2). To suffer in the ignominious way described by our Lord would indicate some crime, some great sin. Had the apostles not come to believe that He was the Son of the living God?

What the apostles grasped later on, our Lord was telling them in His predictions of His sufferings. He had been given a human nature for the very purpose of suffering. "He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins... all we like sheep have gone astray... and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was offered because it was his own will..." (Isaias 53:5-7). It is not easy for us to realize the divine plan. To realize it we must understand God's holiness, sin, God's love, God's mercy, God's justice, suffering, death.

God's ways and thoughts are not our ways and thoughts. Jesus Christ was God as well as man. There was a divine person in this human nature. That person guided the human

nature and directed it to the purpose for which it had been given. This purpose was to die for the sins of man. This was ever before Jesus Christ. "This saying is true and worthy of entire acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15). Ultimately it was the divine will of the Father that guided Jesus Christ.

This divine will of the Father was that Jesus Christ should suffer the ignominy of a shameful death. Jesus Christ accepted that will in its entirety. Before Him was a picture of this shameful death and all its circumstances, as the predictions indicate. Anticipation is hard on human nature. It troubles us, to know ahead of time what we must suffer; and that death is inevitable, causes any man to shudder and to draw back. Yet Jesus Christ moved forward to this shameful death. "Now it came to pass, when the days had come for him to be taken up, that he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem..." (Luke 9:51).

Remove This Chalice!!!

We must not imagine that Jesus Christ was a superman to whom the ordinary emotions and feelings of human nature were foreign. He did have control over them, a control we do not have. He had them however. The story of the agony in the Garden tells us what the anticipation of His sufferings and death could have made Him undergo, if He had allowed it. In the agony He did allow it. "He began to be saddened and exceedingly troubled. Then he said to them (His three favorites), 'My soul is sad, even unto

death...' and he prayed, saying, 'Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; yet not as I will, but as thou willest'" (Matthew 26:37-39). St. Luke (22:39-46) tells us that "his sweat became as drops of blood running down upon the ground."

Yes, the human nature of our Lord was capable of the deepest suffering. He could feel sorrow, sadness, fear, anxiety. He drew back from the thought of suffering and of death, "if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me." He could feel these emotions more than we do because they were so deliberate in Him. He could feel them more than we do because of the innocence of His human nature. We all know the terrible pain and hurt in the heart of an innocent child, when its trust is suddenly betrayed. Sin had never dulled the heart and the senses and the emotions of the God-man.

There is however a deeper reason for this terrible suffering on the part of Christ. That reason is sin. Christ and sin were enemies. Yet He could suffer the effects of sin. It was the sins of all men that caused His suffering. These sins now came upon Him in all their foulness and offensiveness. "This is your hour and the power of darkness," our Lord had said when He handed Himself over to those who sought Him.

He Who could not sin had become sin for us (2 Corinthians 5: 21). He took upon Himself the reparation of our sins. He Who was Innocence itself appeared before His Father in the guise of our sins.

It is no wonder that He said, "Now my soul is troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. No, this is why I came to this hour" (John 12:27).

Ibis ad Crucem

The physical sufferings of the man, Jesus Christ, were horrible. That is the only way to describe them. All writers of the time of our Lord spoke of crucifixion as the worst possible punishment. In the Roman Empire it was reserved for slaves and the worst of criminals. Roman citizens were exempt from it as if it were too ignominious for such highly honored men. It was not too ignominious for Jesus Christ! The Roman governor, Pontias Pilate, sentenced Him to die by crucifixion: Ibis ad crucem! To the cross!

There were many sufferings connected with crucifixion. Some of them were physical, such as the carrying of the cross, the terrible ordeal of being hoisted upon the cross, and often, as in the case of Christ, the scourging which preceded it. There were different ways of holding the victim on the cross. Our Lord was held there by nails. There was the horrible pain from the piercing of nerve centers by the nails. There was the asphyxiating suffering from the abnormal position of the body on the cross. Loss of blood caused weakness, as well as thirst. Usually the victim was stripped of his clothes. For Christ there was then the added pain of nakedness.

Added to these sufferings in the case of Christ was the sorrow He experienced at the sins of those who

taunted Him and who were responsible for His sufferings. Judas caused Him untold sorrow. His apostles had abandoned Him. His Mother stood at the foot of the cross. Christ's heart bled at the thought of the suffering He was occasioning His beloved Mother. "A sword shall pierce thy soul" (Luke 2:35).



The stature of a man has not a better gauge than to study him as he suffers and as he dies. With our Lord we must remember that He deliberately accepted the cross and its form of death. He wanted to suffer this way. Why? Because His Father had decreed it. This is the highest motive a man could have to accept anything. Abraham received the height of praise from God Himself because he willingly took Isaac to offer him in sacrifice (Genesis 22:1 ff). God the Father's praise of His Son is to be seen in the exaltation of the Son because of His obedience. "And appearing in the form of a man, he (Jesus Christ) humbled himself, becoming obedi-

ent to death, even to death on a cross. THEREFORE God also has exalted him and bestowed upon him a name that is above every name ..." (Philippians 2:7-9).

In the midst of His sufferings Christ thought little of Himself. He tried to reach the soul of Judas at the very moment of betrayal (Matthew 26:47-50). He cured the man struck by Peter (Luke 22:49-51). He tried to convert the Roman governor (John 18:33-38). He spoke consoling words to the women. He prayed to His Father asking for forgiveness for those involved in His crucifixion. He promised heaven to one of those crucified with Him. He spoke tenderly to His Mother. At the very last moment He commended Himself to His Father.

We are in the presence of no ordinary man. But we are in the presence of THE MAN! The grandeur of the soul of Jesus Christ is nowhere so manifest as in His passion and at the moment of His death. His magnanimity, His thoughtfulness of others, His concern for those who loved Him, His silent acceptance of His sufferings: these stamp Him as one above the ordinary. But they also stamp Him as a man. He was a man as the rest of us, for He could suffer pain, He could endure suffering, He could die, as all of us can. The way He did these things places Him above all men.

He Gave Up His Spirit

Death is the separation of body and soul. In Sacred Scripture no sooner had Christ died than His body is spoken of. It is now the

body that is taken down from the cross. It is the body that is placed in the tomb (John 19:31-42). Jesus Christ was dead. The Son of Man had died on the cross. His body was there to be seen by all. As for His soul, it is St. Peter who tells us that "put to death indeed in the flesh, he was brought to life in the spirit, in which also he went and preached to those spirits that were in prison" (1 Peter 3:18-19).

Christ's soul then was active even though His body was inactive in death. St. Peter says that He preached, that is, He announced the good news of salvation. He preached "to those spirits that were in prison." Peter is referring to the souls of the just who died before Christ became man. Heaven had been closed by the sin of Adam. The just among the dead could not enter Heaven until Christ satisfied for man's sin and repaired its injuries. They awaited their redemption in a place or state of rest, called by Catholic theologians the "Limbo of the Fathers." This expression is not itself found in the Sacred Scriptures but was chosen by theologians to designate that place referred to in the Bible as "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22), "Paradise" (Luke 23:43), and "prison" (1 Peter 3:18-20). Christ descended into this underworld to announce to the souls waiting there the joyful news that He had reopened Heaven to mankind.

It was the common belief among all ancient peoples and the Israelites that the soul or spirit, after its departure from the body, continued to live. Earliest Jewish theology spoke of Sheol, sometimes translated as pit. The Old Testament presents us in general with a dismal view of living conditions in Sheol. With the development of Israel's belief in a complete distinction of fates between the good and wicked, and in future retribution a few centuries before the Christian era, Sheol lost some of its dreary implications. The Jews, at the time of Christ, knew that there was a place of punishment after death for the wicked, as well as a place of reward for the just (Luke 16:19 ff). They had no very clear revelation concerning these places, however. Christian teaching has made clear many things that the Jews could only guess at.

While the soul of our Lord was active, the body was inactive, for it was a dead body. It was placed in the tomb to await the return of the soul. Even though the soul was not present, this was still the body of the Son of God. The divine nature had not departed from the body or the soul. Death came from the separation of the body and the soul; there was no need for the divinity to depart. Divine life was there in the tomb, but not human life. Human life was to return in three days, as He had so often predicted.

GLORIFY ME WITH THYSELF



Death and life are contrasting facts. When death comes, life disappears. Where there is life, there is no death. Yet when our Lord spoke of His death, He also spoke of a return to life. "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and on the third day he will rise again" (Matthew 17:21-22). That He died even His enemies admitted. They told Pontius Pilate, "we have remembered how that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again'" (Matthew 27:63). The contrast between Christ's death and His resurrection is all the greater when we view the type of death He suffered. It was not an ordinary death. It was the death of a crucified man.

Rise He did! At the moment of His death His body was broken and bruised and bloodless. His soul had departed and had gone to preach "to those spirits that were in prison." Death had conquered the God-man. No longer was there human life, for the separation of body and soul produces death. This human nature that Jesus Christ had assumed in the womb of His Mother had come to

the end of all human natures. For death is the lot of all human beings. Yet He had said: "On the third day I will rise again." And rise He did!

Early on the third day after the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, His soul was reunited to His body. Once more there was human life. The same God-man Who had died now arose from the tomb. "I will rise again." "I am he." "And none of those reclining dared ask him, 'Who art thou?' knowing that it was the Lord." Never was there doubt in the minds of the apostles and disciples that it was the same Jesus they had known before His death. Doubt arose concerning the fact of His resurrection. Doubts never did arise on the identity of the one Who stood before them or Whom they saw.

It was then the same Jesus Christ Who had arisen. There were differences however. He could be seen and not recognized. Mary saw Him at the tomb and did not recognize Him until He said, "Mary" (John 20:11-18). The two disciples going to Emmaus talked to Him for some time, yet they failed to know Him.

At the breaking of the bread they recognized Him (Luke 24:13-31). He could suddenly appear before His apostles and as suddenly disappear. He could come to them "though the doors where the disciples gathered had been closed" (John 20:19). Yet He could talk as before; He could eat (Luke 24:41-42). His wounds were in His hands and feet as well as His side (John 20:24-29). Thomas could touch Him. In many ways Jesus Christ showed that He was the same Jesus, but the manner of His life was different. "To them (the apostles) also he showed himself *alive* after his passion by many proofs..." (Acts 1:3).

Glorified Body

His body had certain gifts that it did not exercise before His death. It could pass through solid doors; this is called the gift of subtlety. As the soul is spiritual and so not impeded by solid material, so our Lord's body was now endowed with this same quality. We noted that our Lord suddenly appeared and then disappeared. This is called the gift of agility, whereby the body passes from place to place with the speed of thought. No longer could our Lord suffer. This is the gift of impassability. In a word, our Lord has a glorified humanity, for all these gifts belong to glory.

Before His death our Lord subjected Himself to the ordinary life of any man. Our bodies restrict our souls. Through our bodies we suffer, we have pain, we can be but in one place and to move requires time. We are impeded by solid mat-

ter; we need rest and sleep. We are liable to death. After our Lord's resurrection His soul was no longer restricted by His body. So it will be with us after our own resurrection. St. Paul implies this when he writes: "But as it is, Christ has risen from the dead, the **FIRST-FRUITS OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP**. For since by a man came death, by a man also comes resurrection of the dead" (I Corinthians 15:20-21).

The first-fruits is the way St. Paul describes the resurrected Christ. But the first-fruits are the same as the "second-fruits and the third-fruits," except that they are first. So as Christ arose, so shall we. As He arose in a glorified body, so shall we. St. Paul develops this thought of Christ being the first to come forth from the grave in his epistle to the Colossians (1:18): "Again, he is the head of his body, the Church; he, who is the beginning, the **FIRST-BORN FROM THE DEAD**, that in all things he may have the first place."

Grace and Life Through Jesus Christ

The human nature of Adam was first in time. From his human nature stem all other human natures and all human beings. Adam was the head of the human race. His actions as head affected the entire human race. "Therefore as through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world and through sin death... for if by reason of one man's offense death reigned..." (Romans 5:12-17). The human nature of Christ is the first to rise from the tomb.

"For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made to live" (1 Corinthians 15:22). Christ is then the head of the human race as is Adam, but in a different way.

When Jesus Christ came forth from the tomb, He came forth to a new life (Romans 6:1 ff). This new life is not for Him alone. It is for all who are united to Him through the waters of baptism. "Do you not know that all we who have been baptized into Christ Jesus, have been baptized into his death? For we were buried with him by means of baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ has arisen from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life... But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live together with Christ; for we know that Christ, having risen from the dead, dies now no more... Thus do you consider yourselves also as dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6: 3-11).

The instrument of our redemption was the humanity of our Lord. The instrument of our resurrection to the life of grace through baptism is the resurrected humanity of our Lord. So St. Paul writes: "...and the gift in the grace of the one *man* Jesus Christ abounded unto the many" (Romans 5:15). God constituted Adam the head of all men; in fact Adam was all mankind when he sinned. That is the reason St. Paul could say that "through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death has passed unto all men because all have sinned" (Romans

5:12).

God constituted Jesus Christ the second Adam, the new head of the human race. St. Irenaeus is very clear on this point (Adv. Haer. iii, 18,7): "The Son of God became incarnate and became man; in doing so He summed up in Himself the long line of men who make up the world of men, and He gave us salvation in order that we might regain in Him what we lost in Adam..." Listen again to St. Paul; this time he is writing to the Colossians (2:12-14): "For you were buried together with him in Baptism, and in him also rose again through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead... and you... he brought to life along with him, forgiving you all your sins."

In summary this is the teaching of St. Paul. Through one man, Adam, all men sinned. Through one man, Jesus Christ, all men have received grace. The reason for all men sinning in Adam is to be found in Adam's position as head of the human race. The reason for all men receiving grace in Jesus Christ is to be found in His position as the second head of the human race. All men come from Adam. All men come from Jesus Christ through baptism. Baptism unites all to Jesus Christ and makes those baptized one with Him. The instrument of this union is the humanity of Jesus Christ. From this humanity flows the graces won through the redemptive passion and death and resurrection. It is not a dead Christ to which Christians are united; it is the living Christ Whose glorified human na-

ture is the exemplar of their human nature.

At times we speak of a man who seems to be from two countries. Our Lord puzzled at times His listeners by telling them that He came down from heaven: "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How, then, does he say, 'I have come down from heaven?'" (John 6:42). On this same occasion He said to some of His faltering disciples: "Does this (what He had said concerning His body and blood) scandalize you? What then if you should see the Son of Man ascending where he was before?" (John 6:62-63).

Carried Up Into Heaven

Forty days after His resurrection Jesus Christ did ascend into heaven. The apostles watched Him ascend. While they stood there two angels appeared to them and spoke to them: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up to heaven? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, shall come in the same way, as you have seen him going up to heaven" (Acts 1:11). The human nature that had been born of Mary and that had died on the cross, only to conquer death, was now in heaven. It was the first to enter heaven. Through the man, Jesus Christ, heaven was pierced and men once again could pierce heaven. The Catholic Church has always taught that the sin of Adam closed heaven to men. It also teaches that Jesus Christ opened heaven, that He was the first to ascend there.

Every time a Catholic recites the Apostles' Creed, he says that he believes in Jesus Christ Who has ascended into heaven. He then adds that He is seated at the right hand of God the Father. In believing this the Catholic is but following the teaching of the apostles. And the apostles were teaching what they had heard from Christ and what they had been taught by the Holy Spirit.

Exalted At The Right Hand of God

When our Lord stood before the Great Council of His own people (Matthew 26:57-64), He ended His testimony in these words: "Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming upon the clouds of heaven." In the discourse at the Last Supper He repeated several times that He was going to the Father (John 14:28; 16:16). He prayed to His Father in these words: "I have glorified thee on earth... and now do thou, Father, glorify me with thyself, with the glory that I had with thee before the world existed" (John 17:4-5).

In the very first speech of the newly born Church St. Peter announced that Jesus Christ was exalted by the right hand of God." St. Stephen "looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). Another witness to this teaching of the early Church is St. Paul: "Therefore God has exalted him... the Lord Jesus Christ is in

the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

Our lowly human nature then is exalted to the highest place in heaven. To sit at the right hand is to sit in the place of honor, is to be second only to the one at whose right hand the one honored is seated. Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of God. The glorified humanity is receiving its meed of honor and of praise. More: it is receiving the confession of every tongue (Philippians 2:11) that Jesus Christ "is in the glory of God the Father."

Judge of The Living And The Dead

"From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead." These words are to be found in the Apostles' Creed, that creed which summarizes the teaching of the apostles. It also summarizes the teaching of the Catholic Church. This doctrine that Jesus Christ as man is the judge of all men comes from the lips of Christ Himself.

"For neither does the Father judge any man, but all judgment he has given to the Son...and he has granted him power to render judgment because he is SON OF MAN

...as I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just..." (John 5:22, 27, 30). St. Peter told Cornelius (Acts 10:42): "...And he charged us to preach to the people and to testify that he it is who has been appointed by God to be JUDGE OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD." He is Jesus Christ. Note that the very formula of the Apostles' Creed is to be found on the lips of St. Peter within a few years of our Lord's ascension.

While on earth Jesus Christ would not claim the right to judge (John 12:47), for He came "to save the world." Now in heaven He is working to save the world through the Holy Spirit and through the Church. The day will come however when Jesus Christ, the second head of the human race, will exercise His God-given right to judge. Now He is glorified as Savior and as Redeemer. Then He will be glorified as JUDGE. "And I saw heaven standing open; and behold, a white horse, and he who sat upon it is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges...and his name is called The Word of God" (Apocalypse 19:11-13).

This I know full well now, and did not know then, that the Catholic Church allows no image of any sort, material or immaterial, no dogmatic symbol, no rite, no sacrament, no saint, not even the blessed Virgin herself, to come between the soul and its Creator. It is face to face, *solus cum solo*, in all matters between man and his God. He alone creates; He alone has redeemed; before His awful eye we go in death; in the vision of Him is our eternal beatitude.

Cardinal Newman

ONE MEDIATOR: THE MAN, JESUS CHRIST



On this earth Jesus Christ used His human nature as the instrument of redemption. In heaven He now uses that same human nature as the instrument of salvation. Note the words "redemption" and "salvation." Redemption comes to us through the death of our Lord on the cross. Salvation comes to us through the application of the merits He gained for us on the cross. This application takes place through His mediation, through His intercession.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews writes of this intercessor and intercession: "...but he (Jesus Christ), because he continues forever, has an everlasting priesthood. Therefore he is able at all times to save those who come to God through him, since he lives always to make intercession for them" (7:24-25). Again he writes: "Having therefore a great high priest who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who cannot have compassion on our infirmities, but one tried as we are in all things except sin" (4:14-15).

It is as man that Jesus Christ redeemed us, that is, through His human nature as an instrument. Now He as man intercedes for us before God His Father. For there He shows to His Father His glorified human nature, bearing the wounds of our redemption. It is as man that he is a priest, as one "taken from among men... appointed for men in the things pertaining to God." "For Jesus has... entered into heaven itself, to appear now before the face of God on our behalf."

What a consolation it is to us to know that one of our own, a brother in the flesh, and such a brother, is seated at the right hand of God! What a consolation to realize that He is interceding on our behalf! What a consolation to know that His great love for us, a love manifested by dying for us, continues to burn in His Sacred Heart! What a consolation to have the victim of our salvation at the throne of God, pleading for us "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ..." (Hebrews 10:10).

In writing to St. Timothy, St. Paul calls Jesus Christ "one Medi-

ator between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:5). As there is but one Jesus Christ, as there is but one victim for our salvation, so there is but one mediator. The Catholic Church teaches this doctrine and her members accept it. The sense of this mediatorship is this: Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone has redeemed man from sin; His merits and His merits alone free men from the sin of Adam and from all their actual sins.

Only One Mediator

As will be noted in the above, the teaching of the Church corresponds with that of St. Paul. St. Paul speaks of the one Mediator "who gave himself a ransom for all." The Church speaks in the same language: Christ is the one Mediator for He alone frees men of sin through the merits of His expiatory death on the cross. As Adam's sin and his alone affected the entire human race, so Christ's obedience and His alone affected all men.

Mary, Cooperator With Christ

Yet as all of us know, Eve cooperated with Adam in the fall of man. "And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat . . . and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband who did eat" (Genesis 3:6). So we speak of the fall of our first parents, of the cooperation of Eve in the sin of Adam, although we also know that Adam and he alone was the head of the human race. He then is responsible for our lot!

In the Church the same thing is true in regard to Jesus Christ and His Mother. Jesus Christ alone redeemed us. Yet the Church can never forget His Mother. She gave Him the instrument of our redemption, namely, His human nature. She freely consented to His conception in her womb. She is the Mother of the Redeemer and Savior of all men. More than that, she united her sufferings with His own, for no Mother could stand at the foot of the cross of her Son and not suffer. She offered her Son to the heavenly Father. At the moment she freely and willingly consented to the Incarnation, she consented to be the Mother of all that her son would be.



The Catholic Church then speaks of Mary as the cooperator of her Son in the redemption of mankind. But the Church does not teach that Mary cooperates as an equal. She herself was redeemed by her Son. Eve had her origin from the side of Adam, yet this did not prevent her from cooperating in the fall of mankind. Mary has her origin as a redeemed member of the human race from the second Adam. Yet this did not prevent her from cooperating in the redemption of the human race.

Other Mediators and Intercessors

While Jesus Christ is the only mediator, the only one who saved us from sin, yet Sacred Scripture abounds with examples of others who mediated and who interceded for men. Thus Moses told the Israelites (Deuteronomy 5:5): "I was the mediator and stood between the Lord and you..." He interceded for the rebellious people on several occasions (Numbers 14:13 ff; Ex. 17:8 ff). A very interesting example of intercession is to be found in the story of Abraham begging God to save Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:15 ff). David prayed for the life of the child born to him through his adulterous union (2 Kings 12:13 ff).



In the New Testament we find Mary, the Mother of our Lord, coming to Him to intercede for the young couple of Cana (John 2:1 ff). When Peter was in prison, "prayer was made to God for him by the Church without ceasing" (Acts 12:5). St. Paul tells Timothy (1 Timothy 2:1 ff): "I urge there-

fore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men; for kings, and for all in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all piety and worthy behavior. This is good and agreeable in the sight of God our Savior, Who wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator, between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus." Observe that in the very same context St. Paul speaks of Jesus Christ as the *one* mediator, yet he teaches that prayers and intercessions should be made by all for all.

Invisible Mediator of A Visible Church

"For Jesus has...entered...into heaven itself, to appear now before the face of God on our behalf." Thus wrote the author of the epistle to the Hebrews (9:24). Our Lord Himself had said to the apostles (Matthew 28:20): "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...and behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world." When He appeared to Saul on the way to Damascus (Acts 9:1 ff), He asked: "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me?" He was identifying Himself with those whom Saul was dragging out of their homes and persecuting, namely, the Christians. It was this same Saul, now called Paul, who developed this notion of the union of Christ with Christians. "For just as in one body we have many members, yet all the members have not the same function, so we, the many,

are one body in Christ, but severally members one of another" (Romans 12:4-5). In the first epistle to the Corinthians (12:12 ff) Paul develops the same thought: "Now you are the body of Christ, member for member."

The Christians form the Church. The Church is the body of Christ, of which He is the head. "...and him he gave as head over all the Church, which indeed is his body ..." (Ephesians 1:22-23). "...Christ is head of the Church, being himself savior of the body ..." (Ephesians 5:23). "...on the contrary he (the husband) nourishes and cherishes it (his flesh), as Christ also does the Church (because we are members of his body...)" (Ephesians 5:29-30).

Christ then is united to His Church and to the members of His Church. This Church is a visible organization, for it is made up of men, who are joined together under a visible head. At the time of the apostles Christians banded together under the apostles, who in turn were united under Peter. Christ had promised Peter the headship of His Church (Matthew 16:17-19). Then He had conferred this headship upon him, when He said to him: "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs" (John 21:15 ff). In the Acts of the Apostles it is clear that Peter was the leader (1:15 ff; 2:14 ff; 10:1 ff; 15:6 ff). The apostles had authority, as the writings of Paul and John exemplify. They in turn gave this authority to others (Acts 20: 28 ff).

Christ Himself is in heaven. He is invisible to our eyes. Yet He is

with His visible Church. As we saw above He told the apostles He would be with them to the very end of the world. He spoke for all times. He said: "I am," using the present. He is called the head of the Church. Now a head is united to its body. The body of Christ is the Church, and the Church is on earth. Yet Christ is its head. He is then an invisible head of a visible Church. He is the invisible Mediator between God and the members of His body, the Church on earth.



"I Have Sent Them Into The World"

The glorified humanity of Jesus Christ is the instrument of His redemption. It is also the instrument of His mediation. For it is the man, Jesus Christ, Who is the mediator. That glorified humanity is seated at the right hand of God the Father. Those who are to receive the merits of His mediation are on earth. As He completed His work on earth, He ascended into heaven. But He sent the Holy Spirit, "another Advocate", to continue the work of the salvation of souls.

While on earth Jesus Christ worked through His human nature. The Holy Spirit works through human beings, through men. Jesus Christ Himself selected twelve men with whom and through whom He worked. To these men He gave His own power: "All power is given to me." He sent them as His heavenly Father sent Him: "Even as thou hast sent me into the world, so also I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18).

The work of our *redemption* was accomplished through the man, Jesus Christ. The work of our *salvation* is now being accomplished through the man, Jesus Christ, in union with chosen instruments: the Pope, the bishops, and the priests of the Catholic Church. In this way Jesus Christ multiplies Himself on earth. There is but one Christ, one Mediator, one priesthood. There are however on earth many who have

Christ's power, many who apply the merits of His mediation, many who are priests and so intercede with Him for the salvation of souls.

Thus the Word made flesh continues His redemptive work. He is not idle, any more than He was idle on earth. Thus the Word made flesh brings souls to God, unites them to God, gives them life, teaches them the truth of divine revelation. "I am the vine, you the branches." The prayer that He spoke to His apostles at the Last Supper is being fulfilled: "Yet not for these only do I pray, but for those also who through their word are to believe in me, that all may be one, even as thou, Father, in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us... Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me; in order that they may behold my glory..." (John 17:20, 24).



Never to have known Jesus Christ in any way is the greatest of misfortunes, but it involves no perversity or ingratitude. But, after having known Him, to reject or forget Him, is such a horrible and mad crime as to be scarcely credible. For He is the origin and source of all good, and just as mankind could not be freed from slavery but by the sacrifice of Christ, so neither can it be preserved but by His power.

Pope Leo XIII

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