



God the Father destined us in love to be His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

Divine Perspective

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TRINITY

God the Father destined us in love to be His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh and our Brother.

CHURCH

The Church extends the Incarnation. As His Body, She makes Christ present in the world, continues His mission, and enables men to come into contact with Him through the sacraments, by which Christ acts in an incarnational manner to give grace.



PASCHAL MYSTERY

The Paschal Mystery was the reason for the Incarnation. From the moment of His conception, Jesus was destined for the Cross and Resurrection.

DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

The Incarnation reveals God to man and man to Himself. In taking our human nature, Jesus enabled us to become divine.

Theological Virtues (AIMS OF INSTRUCTION)



Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, is the foundation on which all believing is built. Since faith is the necessary component for growth in God's plan for us, we can never have too much understanding of Jesus. It is on Him that we rely. He is everything for us.



The more we know Jesus and His mysteries, the more we are led by grace to desire and expect His mercies and His helps for the glories of eternal life.



The awesome condescension of the Second Person of the Trinity, who in His immense love for us assumed human nature and accomplished His mission in the Incarnation, is overwhelming. Jesus, the "world's greatest Lover," inspires and moves in us the response of love, tentative at first, but meant to be fanned into a zealous flame.

Scripture and Essentials

1) THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY, THE WORD OF GOD, ASSUMED A HUMAN NATURE.



- ✘ **Phil. 2:5-11** - Christ, though God, was born and emptied Himself even to death on the Cross.
- ✘ **1 Tim 3:16** - Great is the mystery of our faith: Christ manifested in the flesh...

- ✘ **Jn 1:1-14** - The Word was with God in the beginning... The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

CCC 90, 461, 463

- The Eternal Son of the Father becomes man in time.
- He is like us in all things but sin.
- This mystery is the foundation of all the others we profess.
- We genuflect when we profess it in the Creed at the Feast of the Annunciation and at Christmas.

2) JESUS CHRIST IS FULLY GOD AND FULLY MAN.



- ✘ **Heb 4:15** - He is able to sympathize with our weakness, for He was tested in every way, yet without sin.
- ✘ **1 Jn 4:2** - The Spirit confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh and is the Son of God.
- ✘ **2 Jn 1:7** - One who will not acknowledge Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is the antichrist.
- ✘ **Gal 4:4-5** - God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive adoption as sons.

CCC 464-470, 475

- In the one Person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, two natures are united, divine and human. We call this the hypostatic union.
- He is fully each: He has two intellects and two wills.
- His actions flow from His being—who He is as the Son of the Father.

3) THE MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST IS SUMMED UP IN THE REASONS FOR THE INCARNATION.



- ✘ **1 Jn 4:9** - God's love was made manifest by His sending of His Son.
- ✘ **Mt 11:29** - Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me.
- ✘ **2 Pet 1:4** - He granted us His precious and very great promises... that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature.
- ✘ **1 Jn 3:5** - He appeared to take away sins.

CCC 457-460

- He came in order to reconcile us with God, to save us from our sins.

— Scripture for further study —

- ✘ *1 Jn 4:10, 14 - God loved us and sent His Son. We testify that He is the Savior of the world.*
- ✘ *1 Jn 3:5 - He appeared to take away sins.*
- ✘ *Gen 3:15 - The woman's offspring will crush the serpent's head.*

- He came so that we might know God's love.

- ✘ *1 Jn 4:9 - God's love was made manifest by His sending of His Son.*
- ✘ *Jn 3:16 - God so loved the world that He sent His only Son.*

- He came to be our model for this life, a model of holiness.

- ✘ *Mt 11:29 - Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me.*
- ✘ *Jn 14:6 - I am the way, the truth, and the life.*
- ✘ *Jn 15:12 - Love one another as I have loved you.*
- ✘ *Mk 8:34 - Take up your cross and follow Me.*

- He came to make us partakers of the divine nature.
 - ✧ *2 Pet 1:4 - He granted us His precious and very great promises... that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature.*
 - ✧ *Eph 1:4-5 - The Father chose us to be His adopted sons in Christ.*

4) EVERYTHING JESUS SAID AND DID WAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCOMPLISHING THE REASONS FOR THE INCARNATION.



✧ **Jn 6:63**- The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

✧ **Jn 1:14** - The Word became flesh.

✧ **Jn 20:31** - These things are written so that you may believe, and believing, come to have life.

CCC 513-514, 521, 525, 531-532, 536, 539, 541, 548, 556, 563

Scripture for further study

- Christ's whole life is a mystery, and every act revealed the Father and accomplished His plan.
 - ✧ *Jn 14:9 - Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.*
 - ✧ *Jn 5:19 - The Son does whatever He sees His Father doing.*
- The Gospels faithfully hand on to us the mysteries of Christ's life and invite us to contemplate them.
- The accounts of His infancy and hidden life reveal the incredible dignity of the human person and the importance of family life.
 - They include the events surrounding His birth, the visit of the magi and the flights into Egypt, the life of His family at Nazareth, and the finding of Jesus at the Temple.
 - God takes on human infancy and reveals His glory hidden in the frailty of a child.
 - The 30 years Jesus chose to spend in the home of His family at Nazareth reveals the value of labor and the sanctity of family life. Both labor and family life participate in His work of redemption.
- Jesus' public life reveals to the world that God's kingdom has come among us.
 - His Baptism begins His public ministry. By His Baptism, Jesus consents to His redemptive mission and opens the way for us to be united to Him in this Sacrament.
 - ✧ *Jn 1:14 - The Word became flesh.*
 - ✧ *Jn 20:31 - These things are written so that you may believe, and believing, come to have life.*
 - ✧ *1 Jn 1:1-5 - We proclaim this life to you, that you may have life.*
 - ✧ *Jas 2:5 - God chose the poor to be rich in faith and heirs to the Kingdom.*
 - ✧ *Rev 11:15 - The kingdom of this world has become the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- By His Temptation, Jesus conquers the devil and gives us the means of conquest.
 - By His preaching, Jesus begins gathering men to God.
 - ◆ The Kingdom of God He proclaims is the Church.
 - ◆ The parables invite us into the Kingdom and challenge us to examine if we are living as citizens of the Kingdom.
 - ◆ His miracles are signs that invite belief in His message of salvation.
 - The Transfiguration reveals His divine glory to His disciples and prepares them for His Passion.
 - His Paschal Mystery: His Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension.
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- When we read the Gospels in light of these four reasons, it becomes an encounter with the mystery of God's life-giving Word: Jesus Christ, Who gathers us to His Father by these mysteries.

5) BY BECOMING MAN, GOD MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO SHARE HIS LIFE.



✧ **Heb 1:3** - He bears the stamp of the very nature of God, upholding the universe by His word.

CCC 427, 1084, 1087, 1114-1116, 1548, 1988, 2011, 2666

— Scripture for further study —

- All that we know of God and His mysteries is revealed to us through the Incarnation.
 - ✧ *Col 1:13-17 - In Him we have redemption. He is the image of the invisible God; in Him all things hold together.*
- Through the Incarnation, our natural life has the potential to become supernatural.
 - ✧ *Acts 17:28 - In Him we live and move and have our being.*
- We understand many realities in the Christian faith only in the light of the Incarnation:
 - Christ is present in the Word (Scripture).
 - The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ.
 - The ordained priest speaks and acts *in persona Christi Capitis*.
 - Christ is food for us and with us in the Blessed Sacrament.

Related Doctrines

All doctrines flow from and refer back to the Incarnation. This is the nexus, the cornerstone of the Deposit of Faith.

Common Errors

1. *"The Incarnation happened 2000 years ago and is irrelevant to my life today."* The most common error made with this doctrine is that it is not studied often enough. All people have a right to this primary truth in its depth, in all its challenges, in all its rigor and vigor, in the personal nature of it (CCC 50, 53).
Pope John Paul II wrote in his encyclical at the beginning of the new millennium: "Christ is the foundation and center of history; He is its meaning and ultimate goal...His Incarnation...is the pulsating heart of time, the mysterious hour in which the kingdom of God came to us, indeed took root in our history, as the seed destined to become a great tree" (*Novo Millennio Ineunte* 5; see also CCC 2824).
2. *"The 'Jesus of history' is separate from the 'Jesus of faith.'"* The Gospels teach us the authentic truth about Jesus, His words and deeds, to place us in communion with Him. (CCC 112, 122, 134, 161, 165, 1618, 1694, 2763)
3. *"Jesus' human knowledge included ignorance and error."* Jesus as God, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is all-knowing and all-powerful. Because He is one person, this knowledge belonged to Him, even after the Incarnation (CCC 472-474).
4. *"Jesus' human will was weak and reluctant to submit to the divine will."* Jesus, like us in all things but sin, suffered from none of the effects of sin: a darkened intellect and a weakened will. The Father's will is His will. (CCC 539, 606, 612, 1019, 2600, 2824).

Liturgical Sources

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy,
through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ,
your Word through whom you made all things,
whom you sent as our Savior and Redeemer,
incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin.

(Roman Missal, Eucharistic Prayer II)

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Christ our Lord.

For on the feast of this awe-filled mystery,
though invisible in his own divine nature,
he has appeared visibly in ours;
and begotten before all ages,
he has begun to exist in time;
so that, raising up in himself all that was cast down,
he might restore unity to all creation
and call straying humanity back to the heavenly Kingdom.

(Roman Missal, Preface III of the Nativity of the Lord)

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.
For you so loved the world
that in your mercy you sent us the Redeemer,
to live like us in all things but sin,
so that you might love in us what you loved in your Son,
by whose obedience we have been restored to those gifts of yours
that, by sinning, we had lost in disobedience.

(Roman Missal, Preface VII of Sundays in Ordinary Time)

The Twenty-fifth Day of December,
 when ages beyond number had run their course
 from the creation of the world,
 when God in the beginning created heaven and earth,
 and formed man in his own likeness;
 when century upon century had passed
 since the Almighty set his bow in the clouds after the Great Flood,
 as a sign of covenant and peace;
 in the twenty-first century since Abraham, our father in faith,
 came out of Ur of the Chaldees;
 in the thirteenth century since the People of Israel were led by Moses
 in the Exodus from Egypt;
 around the thousandth year since David was anointed King;
 in the sixty-fifth week of the prophecy of Daniel;
 in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
 in the year seven hundred and fifty-two since the foundation of

the City of Rome;
 in the forty-second year of the reign of Caesar Octavian
 Augustus,
 the whole world being at peace,
 JESUS CHRIST, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,
 desiring to consecrate the world by his most loving presence,
 was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 and when nine months had passed since his conception,
 was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judah, and was
 made man:

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

*(Roman Missal, The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ from
 the Roman Martyrology)*

Teaching through Beauty

HYMN: "What Child is This?" by William C. Dix (1865)

What Child is this Who, laid to rest
 On Mary's lap, is sleeping?
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
 While shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the King,
 Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,
 The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate,
 Where ox and ass are feeding?
 Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
 The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
 The cross be borne for me, for you.
 Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
 The Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,
 Come peasant, king to own Him;
 The King of kings salvation brings,
 Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
 Raise, raise a song on high,
 The virgin sings her lullaby.
 Joy, joy for Christ is born,
 The Babe, the Son of Mary.

HYMN: "Gaudete" Authorship unknown (16th Century)

*Gaudete, gaudete! Christus est natus
 Ex Maria virgine, gaudete!*

*Tempus adest gratiæ
 Hoc quod optabamus,
 Carmina lætitiæ
 Devote reddamus.*

*Gaudete, gaudete! Christus est natus
 Ex Maria virgine, gaudete!*

*Deus homo factus est
 Natura mirante,
 Mundus renovatus est
 A Christo regnante.*

*Gaudete, gaudete! Christus est natus
 Ex Maria virgine, gaudete!*

*Ezechielis porta
 Clausa pertransitur,
 Unde lux est orta
 Salus invenitur.*

*Gaudete, gaudete! Christus est natus
 Ex Maria virgine, gaudete!*

*Ergo nostra concio
 Psallat iam in lustris;
 Benedicat Domino:
 Salus Regi nostro*

*.Gaudete, gaudete! Christus est natus
 Ex Maria virgine, gaudete!*

HYMN: “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” by Aurelius Prudentius, Trans. John M. Neale (1854) and Henry W. Baker (1859)

Of the Father’s love begotten,
ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore!

At His Word the worlds were framèd;
He commanded; it was done:
Heaven and earth and depths of ocean
in their threefold order one;
All that grows beneath the shining
Of the moon and burning sun,
evermore and evermore!

He is found in human fashion,
death and sorrow here to know,
That the race of Adam’s children
doomed by law to endless woe,
May not henceforth die and perish
In the dreadful gulf below,
evermore and evermore!

O that birth forever blessèd,
when the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bare the Savior of our race;
And the Babe, the world’s Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face,
evermore and evermore!

This is He Whom seers in old time
chanted of with one accord;
Whom the voices of the prophets
promised in their faithful word;

Now He shines, the long expected,
Let creation praise its Lord,
evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heaven adore Him;
angel hosts, His praises sing;
Powers, dominions, bow before Him,
and extol our God and King!
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Every voice in concert sing,
evermore and evermore!

Righteous judge of souls departed,
righteous King of them that live,
On the Father’s throne exalted
none in might with Thee may strive;
Who at last in vengeance coming
Sinners from Thy face shalt drive,
evermore and evermore!
Thee let old men, thee let young men,
thee let boys in chorus sing;
Matrons, virgins, little maidens,
with glad voices answering:
Let their guileless songs re-echo,
And the heart its music bring,
evermore and evermore!

Christ, to Thee with God the Father,
and, O Holy Ghost, to Thee,
Hymn and chant with high thanksgiving,
and unwearied praises be:
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory,
evermore and evermore!

HYMN: The Chanting of the Christmas Proclamation from the Roman Martyrology (see “Liturgical Sources,” above.)

ARTWORK: *The Annunciation* by Fra Angelico (1426)

This is a tempera painting on wood from the Early Renaissance that now hangs in the Museo Diocesano in Cortona, Italy. The painting depicts the scene of the Annunciation when the Angel Gabriel appears to Mary. In this image Gabriel's words are visible as they float towards Mary. They read, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the highest shall overshadow you" (Luke 1:35).

And Mary's response is, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Above Mary is a floating golden dove, and carved in the marble above her is the image of Isaiah, who prophesied the virgin birth. Also, we can see the image of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden in the upper left corner.

