

# *Jesus Christ, Incarnation, & Public Ministry*



Catholicism 101 (RCIA)

2011-12

# *Jesus Christ*

## Second Part of the Creed

“I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son  
our Lord who was conceived by the  
power of the Holy Spirit, and was born  
of the Virgin Mary”



*Ichthus*



- The fish was an ancient Christian symbol in which each letter stands for a name or title of Jesus

ΙΧΘΥΣ

=

FISH



Ι - Ἰησοῦς

=

Jesus

Χ - Χριστός

=

Christ

Θ - Θεοῦ

=

God's

Υ - Υἱός

=

Son

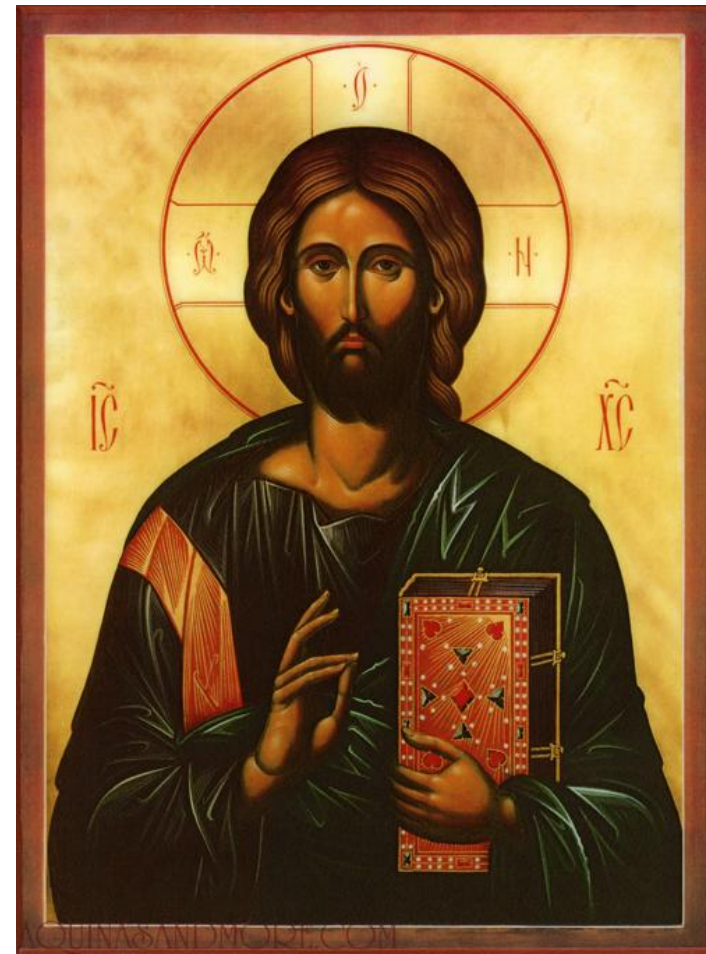
Σ - Σωτήρ

=

Savior

# Names of Jesus

- **Jesus**
  - Means “God saves”
  - This name express his *identity* and *mission*
- **Christ**
  - Christ in Greek, and Messiah in Hebrew mean “anointed one”
  - From Christ comes our name Christian
- **Son of God**
  - Jesus is the only begotten Son of God
  - Jesus is the Father’s natural Son and we his adopted sons
- **Lord**
  - Designates Jesus divine Sovereignty
  - Profession of faith: “Jesus is Lord”



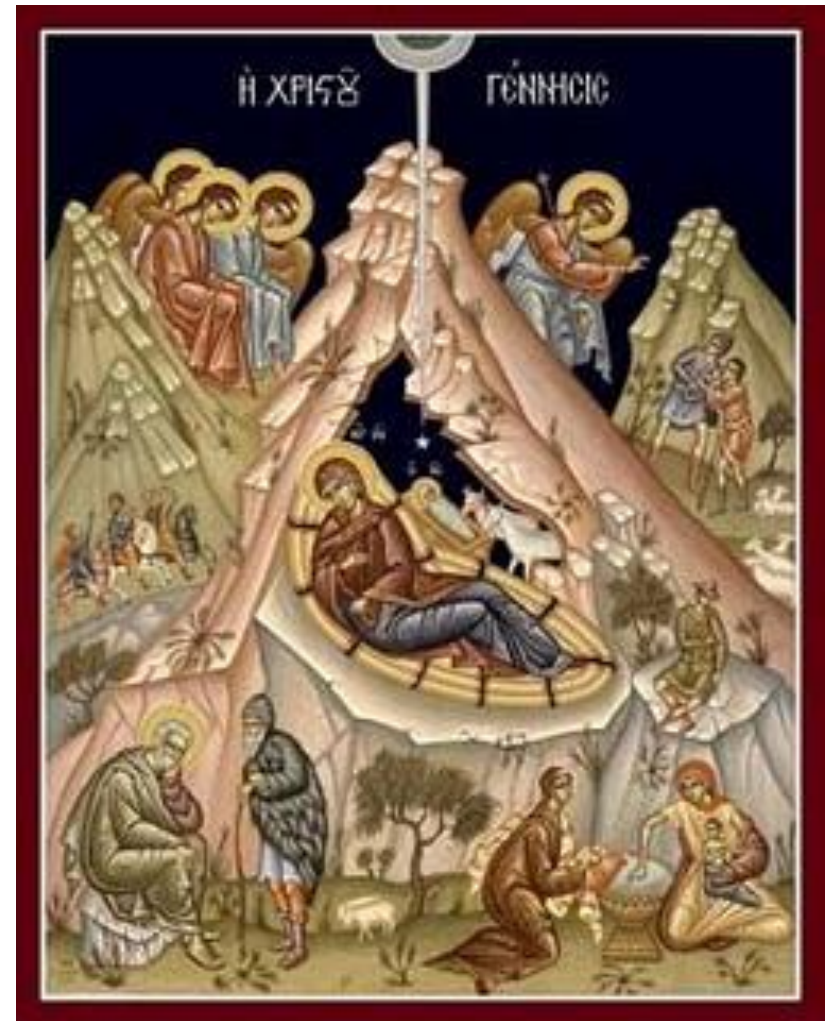
# *Incarnation*

- Comes from the Latin words *in carne* which means “in the flesh”
  - The Incarnation is the mystery of God becoming man
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity takes on a human nature
  - It is a union between the divine and human natures in the one divine Person of the Word
- The incarnation is unique among all world religions



# *John's Prologue*

- “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (Jn 1:1)
- “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn 1:14)
  - Word – God
  - Flesh – Man
- God became man



# *Two Natures—One Person*

- Nature answers the question “what”
  - Divine
  - Human
- Person answers the question “who”
  - The Eternal Son of God



# *Ecumenical Councils*

- **Fully God**
  - Council of Nicaea (325): “consubstantial with the Father”
  - God alone can save us
- **Fully Man**
  - Council of Constantinople (381): “became flesh...and was made man”
  - That which is not assumed is not healed
- **One Person**
  - Council of Ephesus (431): “the divinity and the humanity by their mysterious and ineffable coming together into unity have constituted for us the one Lord, Christ and Son”
  - Mary is the “Mother of God”
- **Two Natures**
  - Council of Chalcedon (481): “two natures without confusion or change, without division or separation”
  - Begotten eternally from the Father and in time through Mary

# *Annunciation (Lk 1:26-38)*

- The angel Gabriel appeared to a virgin named Mary...Hail full of Grace
- you will conceive...the Son of the Most High
- How shall this be, since I have no husband?
- The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you
- let it be to me according to your word



# *The Virgin Mary*



- Born of a Virgin
  - Means that Mary conceived the eternal Son in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit without the cooperation of a man
- Why a Virgin?
  - The virginal conception highlighted the privileged moment in the history of salvation, e.g. Abraham and Sarah
  - It also makes Jesus' divinity clear: he has only one father—God
- Perpetual Virginity of Mary
  - Mary maintained her virginity before, during, and after the conception and birth of Jesus
  - “For being born of a mother who, although she conceived without being touched by man and always remained thus untouched, in virginity conceiving, in virginity bringing forth, in virginity dying, had nevertheless been espoused to a handicraftsman...” (St. Augustine, *On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed*, 22.40)

# Mary - Full of Grace

- “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!” (Lk 1:28)
  - In the Greek *Kecharitomene* precisely means “made full of grace”
  - It is a past participle meaning that Mary was already made full of grace in the past
  - Passage from John Paul II *Theotokos*, 88.
- This is the scriptural foundation for the Immaculate Conception



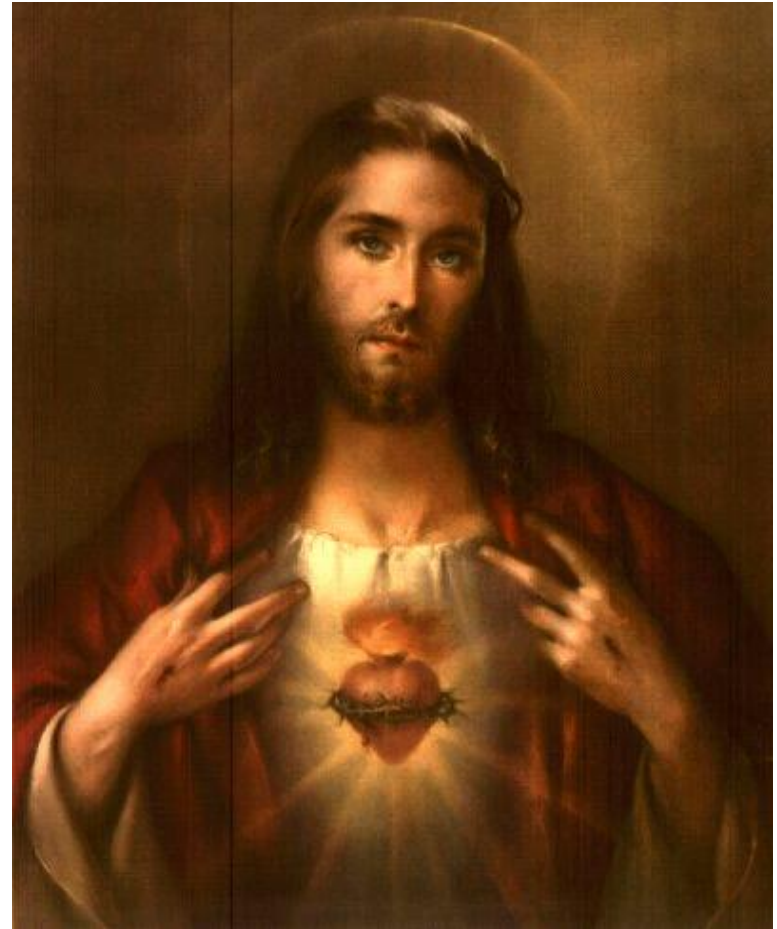
# *Immaculate Conception*



- “... Mary, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, was preserved free from every stain of original sin...” (Pius IX)
  - Mary was conceived without Original Sin
  - This was a gift of God in view of the merits of Christ
- Jesus received his human nature from Mary
  - It stands to reason that Jesus in whom there is no trace of sin derived his nature from someone who was not corrupted by sin

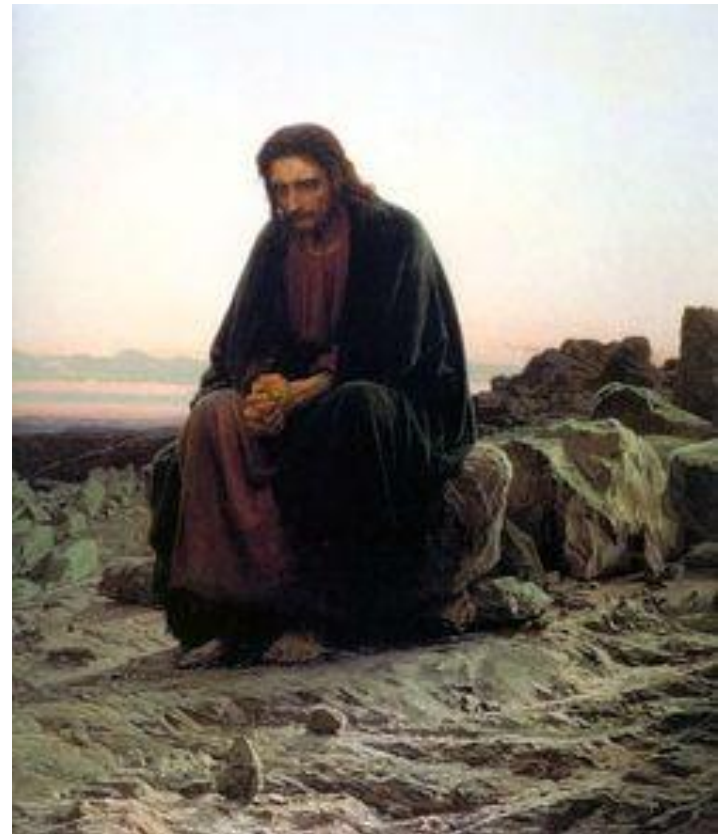
# *Christ's Humanity*

- Jesus who is God also has a true and complete human nature
  - Human body
  - Human soul
  - Human mind
  - Human will
- Jesus is 'like us in all things but sin' (cf. Heb 4:15)

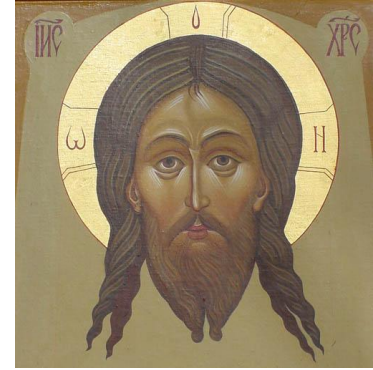


# *Christ's body and soul*

- Hunger and thirst
  - “And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry” (Mt 4:2)
- Weakness and fatigue
  - “and so Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey, sat down beside the well.” (Jn 4:6)
- Human emotions
  - Jesus wept at the death of Lazarus (cf. Jn 11:35)



# Christ's Knowledge



- Divine Knowledge
  - *Omniscient* – Jesus Christ knows all things at the level of his divinity
- Human Knowledge
  - *Acquired knowledge* – Jesus grew in wisdom and knowledge, e.g. carpentry, language, the scriptures
  - *Infused knowledge* – he could read peoples hearts, e.g. the thoughts of the Pharisees; he knew peoples sins, e.g. the woman at the well
  - *Beatific knowledge* – Jesus had a unique knowledge of the Father, e.g. He said, “no one knows the Father except the Son”

# *Christ's Human Will*

- Jesus Christ who is one person with two natures thus also has two wills
  - Divine will
  - Human will
  - His human will was always in harmony with and subjected to his divine will
- Agony in the Garden
  - "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Mt 26:39)



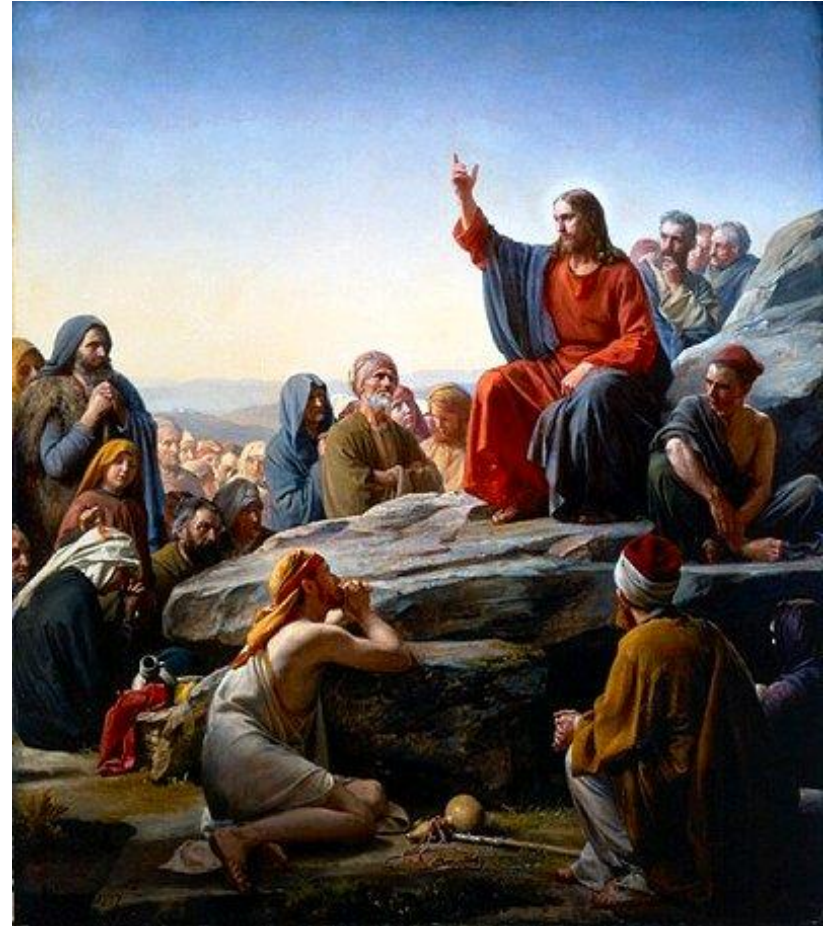
# *Public Ministry*

- The core of Jesus public ministry is the proclamation of the Kingdom
- **Kingdom of God** – the reign of God
  - Living and active Lordship of God in human life
- Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God
  - Simple and Plain teaching
  - Parables
  - Example
  - Signs and Miracles



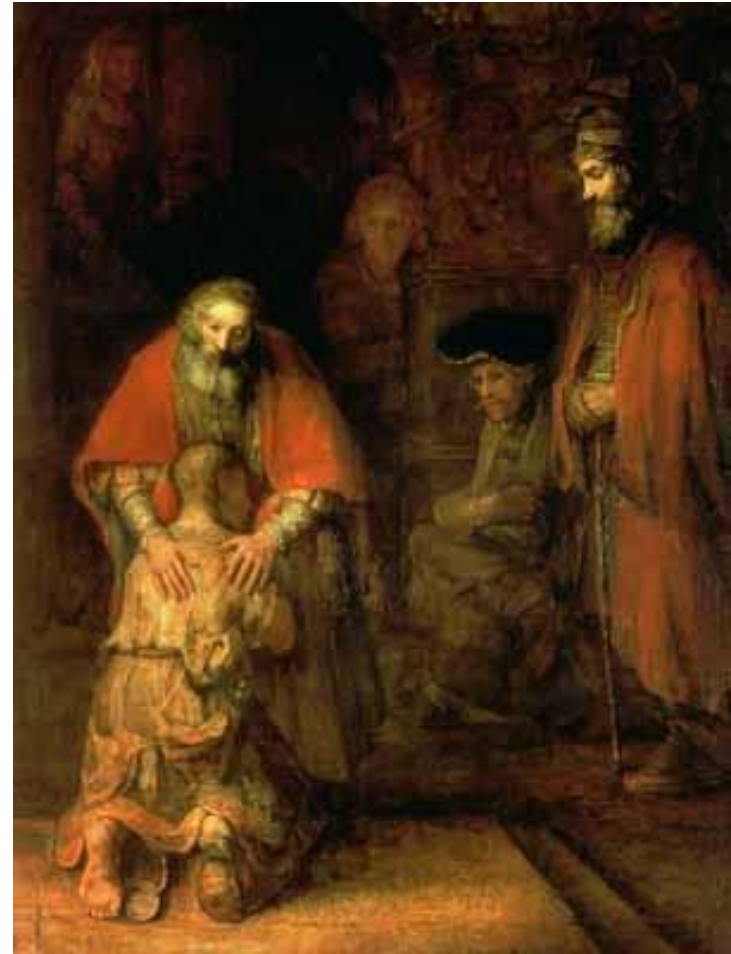
# *Simple and Plain Teaching*

- A summary of Jesus teaching can be found in *The Sermon on the Mount* in Matthew's Gospel
  - Beatitudes
  - Anger
  - Divorce
  - Love of enemies
  - Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving



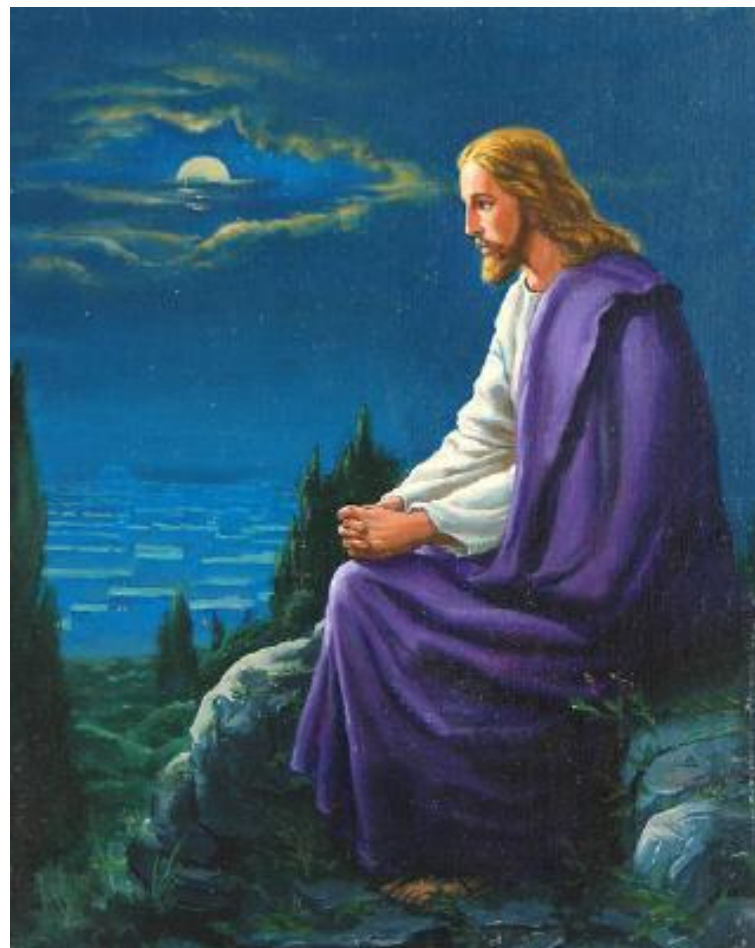
# Parables

- Parables are simple comparisons which teach us about the kingdom of God and.
  - *The Sower* (Mk 4:1-20)
  - *Prodigal Son* (Lk 15:11-32)
- Parables invite us to God's kingdom
  - *Parable of the talents* (Mt 25:14-30)
- They are meant to both reveal and conceal the mysteries of God and his kingdom
  - The humble come to understand the truth they reveal
  - The proud or hard of heart think they are meaningless



# *Example*

- Jesus teaches us not only by what he says but also by what he does
  - *Temptation* - His temptations in the desert show us how to escape temptation
  - *Prayer* – He would often pray in solitude and before important decisions or tasks
  - *Submission to God's will* – agony in the garden



# *Signs and Miracles*

- Healings
  - Healing of the Paralytic (Mk 9:2-8)
- Casting out demons
  - Cast out a demon that was mute (Lk 11:14)
- Control over nature the winds and sea
  - Jesus walks on water and calms the storm (Mt 14:23-33)
- These affirm the authority of his teaching and highlight his divinity
  - Forgiveness of sins
  - The Kingdom of God is present
  - The Son of God

