

Some images stand out because a lot of students chose "I really like this image or name means," try to address those images.

Give the young people a list of human attributes, such as being born, aging, dying, eating and drinking, learning and working, experiencing frustration, expressing anger, questioning the meaning of life, and loving. Limit the brainstorming to 2 minutes. On the board, on newsprint, or on an overhead, generate a list of divine attributes, such as perfect goodness, having love for all, always existing, never dying, and being powerful. Again, limit the brainstorming to 2 minutes.

6. Lead a discussion of questions like these:
- What happens if we overemphasize Jesus' humanity?
  - What happens if we overemphasize Jesus' divinity?

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

# LEADER GUIDE

## Core Activity Extension

Catholic Faith  
Handbook

### Jesus' Names and Titles

1. As homework or class work, assign one of the following of Jesus' names or titles to each student or a group of students: Jesus, Christ, Son of God, and Lord.

2. Instruct the students to read two things:

- the description of their assigned name or title on pages 59–60 of the *CFH*
- the following scriptural passage that uses their assigned title:
  - Jesus (Luke 1:26–31)
  - Christ (Mark 8:27–29)
  - Son of God (Mark 1:9–11)
  - Lord (John 20:24–29)

—see  
Handout

3. Invite the students to reflect on the meaning of their name or title as revealed in the *CFH* material and the scriptural passage. Have the students report back to the class or write a one-page reflection paper on what they learn.

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

## Additional Activities

### We Call Him

—Do this as a group?  
—use white board

1. Assign this exercise as homework or class work. Each student will need a *CFH* and a Bible. Tell everyone to divide a sheet of paper into three equal columns, each headed by one of the following sentence starters:

- Others call him . . .
- He calls himself . . .
- I call him . . .

Explain the task as follows:

- Under the heading "Others call him . . .," list the titles and names for Jesus found in the section "Titles of Jesus in the Bible," on pages 59–60 of the *CFH*.
- Under the heading "He calls himself . . .," list all the "I am . . ." titles that Jesus gives himself in John's Gospel, chapters 6–15. An example is "I am the bread of life" (6:35).
- Under the heading "I call him . . .," list other names and titles for Jesus that say who Jesus is for you. Some examples are "Holy Friend" and "Brother of the Poor."

2. Have the students report their findings to the class and share their own titles for Jesus.

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

## God Is Love

Lead the students in prayer by reading the *LIVE IT!* article "One Solitary Life," on page 77 of the *CFH*. Have one student read 1 John 4:7–12, and invite the class to offer Prayers of the Faithful, using "God is light and in him there is no darkness" (1 John 1:5) as a response. Conclude by praying a simple prayer in your own words or using the following words:

- Good and gracious God, we thank you for the gifts of life and love. Help us to live in your love and to share it with others in all we do. Amen.

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

## Living Advent

Instruct the students to read the accounts of the events surrounding Jesus' birth in Matt., chaps. 1–2, and Luke, chaps. 1–2. Have them discuss the following questions in class or write a brief paper on them:

- What is the same in both Gospels? What is different?
- What elements of Jesus' birth are found only in the Gospel of Luke? What elements are found only in the Gospel of Matthew?
- What elements in each of the Gospels emphasize Jesus' humanity?
- What elements in each of the Gospels emphasize Jesus' divinity?

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

## The Incarnation in Art

Display images of Jesus' Incarnation in painting and sculpture. Encourage the students to discuss the significance of the images, using questions such as these:

- Are the divinity and humanity of Jesus both represented?
- Is greater emphasis placed on Jesus' divinity or on his humanity?

Ask each student to write a brief essay or journal entry on one of the depictions of Jesus, reflecting on who the artist says Jesus is and on the significance the image has for the student. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

# STUDENT HANDOUT

Jesus Christ: True God and True Man

Holy Spirit. Because of this, we need all four Gospels to understand the whole truth about Jesus. But don't worry about getting confused about the essentials. The religious truths found in the four Gospels never contradict one another—even if the historical details don't always match.

## Titles of Jesus in the Bible

In the beginning of the Gospel of Luke, the angel Gabriel tells Mary, "You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus" (1:31). *Jesus* means "God saves" in Hebrew. Jesus' very name reflects his identity and his mission as savior of the world. It is through Jesus, and Jesus alone, that we are saved from our sins, which is why God "gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (adapted from Philippians 2:9–10).

"Christ" is not Jesus' last name, even though it sounds like we use it that way. It is a formal title for Jesus that is used more than four hundred times in the New Testament. *Christ* is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *messiah*, which means "anointed." To be anointed in the religious sense is to have oil placed on you in preparation for a special mission. In the Old Testament, kings and sometimes prophets were anointed in God's name. After their kingdom collapsed, many Jews believed that God would send a new anointed one, the Messiah (or Christ), who would fulfill all God's promises for salvation. Peter was the first to proclaim about Jesus, "You are the Messiah" (Mark 8:29), announcing that Jesus was the savior the Jews had been hoping for. So when you say, "Jesus Christ," what you are really saying is "Jesus, the anointed one sent by God to be the savior of the world."

## Saintly Profiles

### Peter

Simon Peter came from obscurity to become one of our greatest saints and our first Pope. He came from the village of Bethsaida, in the outback region of Galilee. He and his brother Andrew were humble fishermen when Jesus called them. We know Peter was married because of the miracle in which Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law (see Matthew 8:14, 1 Corinthians 9:5).

Because Peter is an Apostle, it is surprising to discover that he often just doesn't get it. He and the other disciples misunderstand things, forcing Jesus to explain them (see Mark 4:10). He objects to Jesus going to Jerusalem to die, and Jesus sharply rebukes him saying, "Get behind me, Satan!" (Matthew 16:23). To his shame Peter denies Jesus three times after Jesus' arrest (see Luke 22:54–62).

But Peter's weaknesses are transformed through his faith in Christ. Peter was the first to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and receives "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 16:16–19). After the Resurrection Jesus commissions Peter to shepherd his flock of believers (see John 21:15–17). The Book of Acts of the Apostles shows us Peter as the Church's first dynamic leader. Saint Peter shows that if we are open to the Holy Spirit, we will do great things—despite our weaknesses and mistakes! Saint Peter and Saint Paul share the same feast day, June 29.

Another title frequently used for Jesus is Son of God. In the Old Testament, the title "son of God" is sometimes used for angels, for the people of Israel, and for Israel's kings. The title signifies their special relationship with God. But when it is applied to Jesus in the New Testament, it takes on additional meaning. We are all children of God, but Jesus has a unique relationship with God the Father. At both Jesus' baptism and his Transfiguration, the Father's voice announces, "This is my Son, the Beloved" (Matthew 3:17, 17:5). Jesus is the only true, eternal Son of the Father, and he is part of the Trinity, fully God himself.



This painting from Iran of the Nativity does not contain images of angels or the star of Bethlehem. Why do some paintings emphasize the human nature of Jesus' birth and other paintings emphasize his divine nature?

Finally, Jesus is frequently referred to as Lord in the New Testament. *Lord* was a title of respect in Jesus' time, and frequently people who were approaching Jesus called him Lord. But the word had another, unique meaning. *Lord* is the Greek word they used instead of *Yahweh*, the Hebrew name often used for God in the Old Testament. *Yahweh* was considered too sacred to be pronounced out loud, so the Jews came to use the name *Lord* to refer to God. When Thomas calls Jesus "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28), he is calling Jesus by a title the Jews used for God. Today, whenever we call Jesus Lord, we recognize his divinity and acknowledge that he alone is worthy of our worship and our complete obedience.

### The Incarnation: True God and True Man

When we consider the titles used for Jesus in the Bible, we are led to an inescapable conclusion: that the authors of the Gospels came to the conclusion that Jesus Christ was fully God. But does that mean that he wasn't fully human? Absolutely not! Jesus had a human nature just as we do. He laughed, he wept, he felt joy, he experienced temptation, and he felt pain. He had a human body and human will and intellect, thus he could grow "in wisdom and in years" (Luke 2:52). But he also had a divine intellect and will. "He is truly the Son of God who, without ceasing to be God and Lord, became a man and our brother" (CCC, number 469).