

Jesus Christ: True God and True Man

Based on Chapter 7, “The Good News: God Has Sent His Son,”
(United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, pages 77-87)

I. Lesson of Faith (taken from pages 77-78)

Prayer leader reads the following summary of “A Good Man in Old New York”



Pierre Toussaint, born a slave in Haiti in 1776, is the only lay person to be buried in the crypt of archbishops in St. Patrick Cathedral in New York City. *Who is Pierre Toussaint?* Born in Haiti as a house slave to the wealthy and kind Berard family, Pierre was baptized, raised Catholic and received other extended privileges. As the winds of revolution against French rule filled the Haitian atmosphere, the Berard family relocated their entire household to New York City. They permitted Pierre not only to be apprenticed to the well known hairdresser of the rich and elite, Mr. Merchant, but also allowed him to keep his wages. Pierre became known for his elaborate and stylish hair creations and soon wealthy women spent vast sums to gain his services. Pierre eventually became a free man, married and amassed a great fortune.

His notoriety, however, went beyond hairstyling as he also became known for his great charitable endeavors as he labored to dispel religious and racial prejudice in the city. As one of his wealthy customers, Emma Carey, noted:

“His life was perfect, and he explained the teachings of the Church with simplicity so intelligent and courageous that everyone honored him as a Catholic. He would explain the devotion to the Mother of God with the utmost clearness or show the union of the natural and supernatural gifts in the priest.”

Upon the occasion of his death in 1853, the *New York Post* recorded: “Toussaint is spoken of by all as a man of the warmest and most active benevolence.” Today, Blessed Pierre Toussaint, a heroic disciple of Jesus Christ, nears beatification as a saint of the Catholic Church. If canonized, this generous and kind model of Catholicism would become the first black saint of the United States.

II. From the Catechism (taken from page 83)

The Prayer Leader invites private meditation on the following thoughts & questions:

The name, Jesus, is Hebrew for “God Saves” (cf. CCC 430). How is God’s saving action evident in your life at this very moment?

The word, Christ, is the Greek translation (Christos) of the Hebrew *Messiah* which means “anointed” (cf. CCC 436). As one who is anointed through the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, how do you model your life as an imitation of Jesus Christ?

III. Meditation – John 3:16

The Reader proclaims the Gospel below and allows for a silent moment of meditation.

For God so loved he world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.

After a brief period of silence, the Reader then prays the Response.

IV. Response (based on Doctrinal Statements on page 82; cf. CCC 465-468)

Our response is: Jesus Christ is true God and true man.

“Jesus Christ is the Son of God by nature and not by adoption. He is begotten, not made, of the same substance as the Father.” *(response)* (Council of Nicea, AD 325)

Since the one who was born of Mary is divine, Mary is rightly called the Mother of God. *(response)* (Council of Ephesus, AD 431)

Jesus Christ, Son of God, is true God and true man. His divine and human natures remain together without confusion, change, division or separation. *(response)* (Council of Chalcedon, AD 431)

There is only one person -- a divine person -- in Jesus Christ. The human acts of Jesus are also attributed to his divine person. *(response)* (Second Council of Constantinople, AD 553)

V. For Discussion (based on page 85)

The Prayer Leader introduces the discussion questions to groups of two or three. Groups discuss for three to five minutes.

What is your experience of cultural diversity? Why is God’s plan for unity of all peoples through the love of Christ not an option for His disciples?

VI. Prayer

The Prayer Leader introduces:

Gathered today as the Body of Christ, let us profess together the beliefs of our Catholic faith by praying the Apostles Creed:



I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

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