

Diocese of Boise

Office of Religious Education and
Catechetical Leadership



Catechist Certification

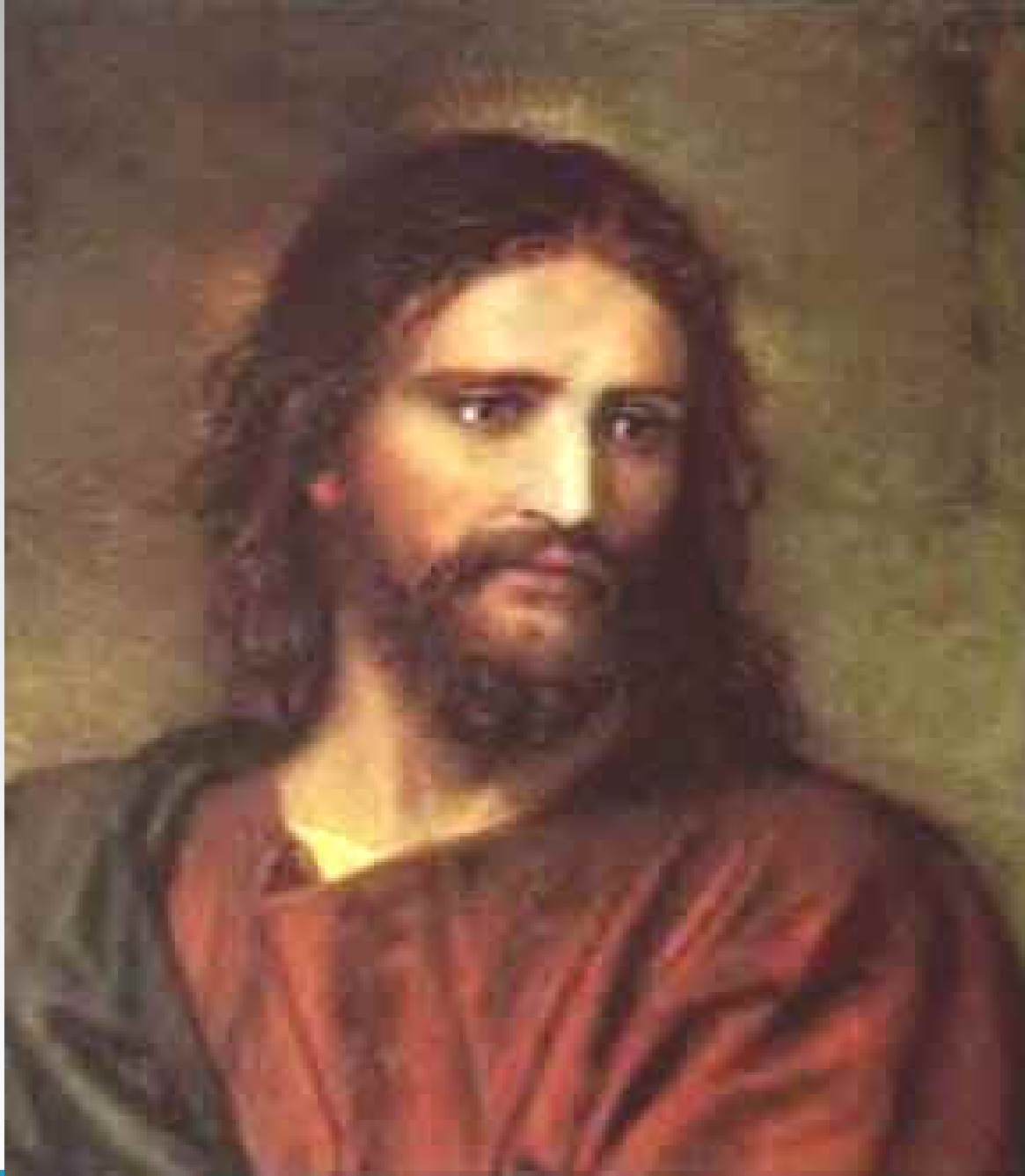
Christology II

Kathy Barkdull, Presenter

Opening Prayer

Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ in me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.
I arise today through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
Through belief in the Threeness,
Through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation.
Amen.

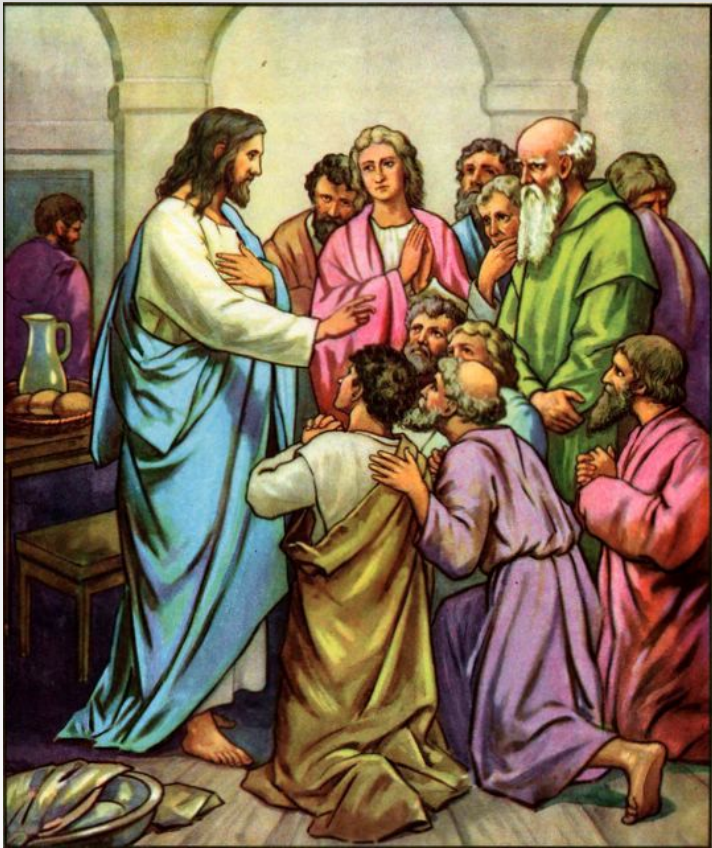




Christology

“the process of interpreting one’s faith experience of God, alive in and through Jesus, the Christ.”

Foundations of Christology



In Jesus because Communities of believers come to awareness of the Transcendent in the *very person* of Jesus.

Through Jesus because believers experience God and God's transforming light and love through the *words, actions and events* of Jesus' life.

Experiencing God in Jesus....

...calls for new commitments.

- Forgive others.
- Love our enemies.
- Accept the cross in our lives.
- Live in hope of a personal resurrection.
- Absolute trust in the Transcendent.
- Unconditional commitment of one's life.



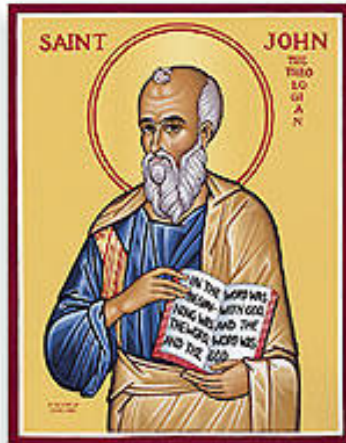
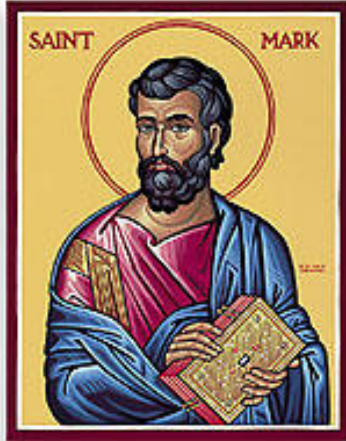
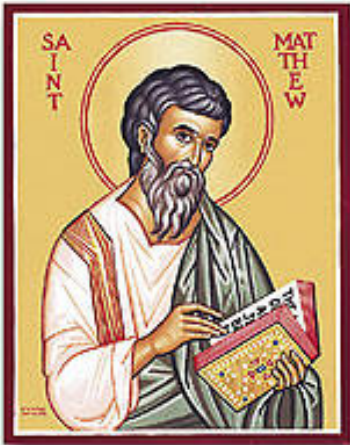
Christology is a Process

- Words and deeds of Jesus
- Life, death and resurrection
- Mediator-ship
- Personal presence of Jesus



The Process of Christology

- Meeting God and Jesus in the community through beliefs handed on by the Church.
- Finding God alive within many interpretations.
- Responding to Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?"
- Gathering responses from the past and the present and search for a meaning for today.



The Gospels

The starting point of understanding Christology

The Four Gospels

- Works of literature written specifically for people of faith by people of faith.
- Not regarded as chronologies or historical records.
- Not apologetic writings to defend a community's faith and beliefs before nonbelievers.
- Strive to preserve the memory of Jesus for those who have been touched by him.
- Strive to inspire and strengthen the faith of a group of people in their own present struggle.
- Short episodes and stories that are easily narrated and remembered.

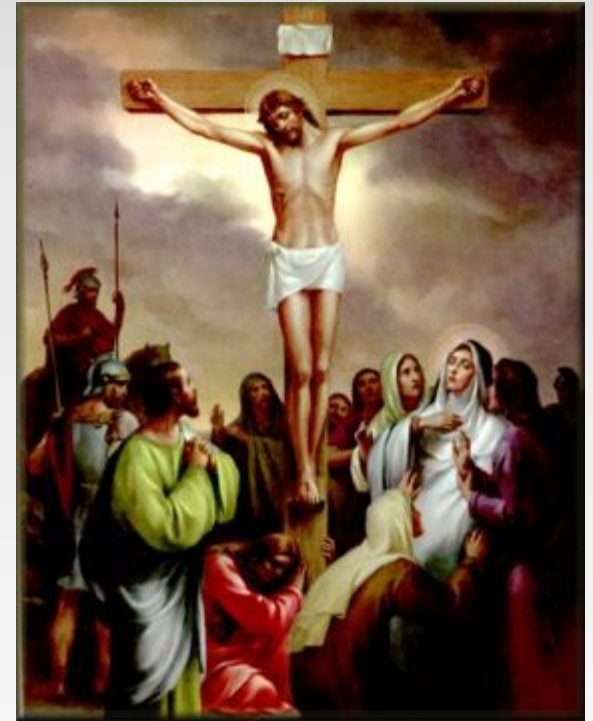


The Gospels as Expressions of Faith

- In the times and situations during Jesus' earthly life.
- In the times and situations within the Early Church.
- In the reflections of the times and situations within the Gospels.

Four Gospels

Four Images of Christ



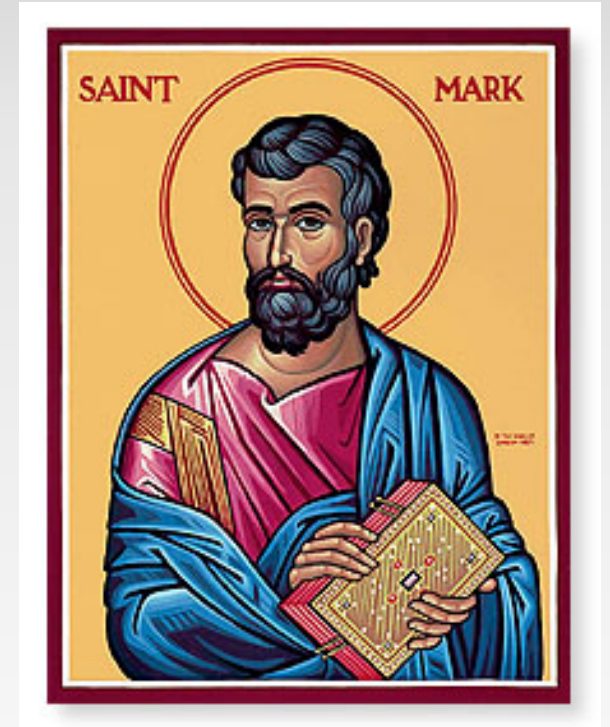


The above painting by Alfonso Cusi is reproduced by permission of the Gallery of Modern Art, Florence, Italy.



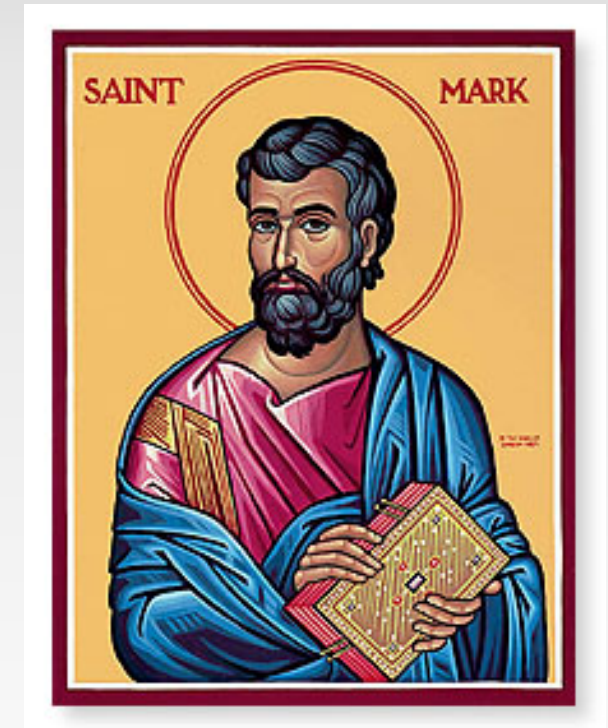
The Community of the Gospel of Mark

- Written in and for Jewish and Gentile Christians living in Rome.
- Written prior to the year 70 but after the death of the Apostle Peter (between 64-67).
- A pervasive threat of persecution under Nero.
- Roman Christian communities were not unified with one single leadership.



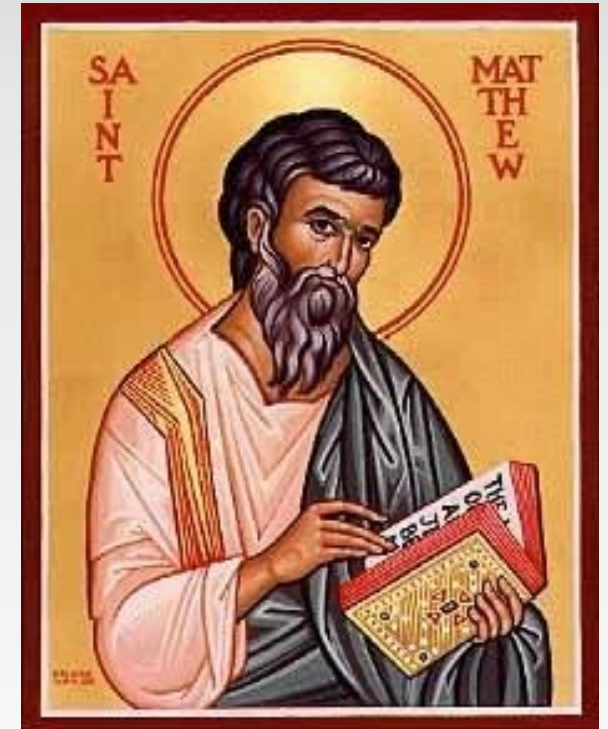
The Christ of the Gospel of Mark

- The shortest and most direct of the four gospel accounts.
- Jesus as a Healer and Exorcist.
- The risen Jesus is alive for us forever.
- Faithful Servant of God.
- Suffering Servant laboring under suspicion of authority.
- The starkness of Jesus' final moments.
- The way to salvation is to walk with Jesus.



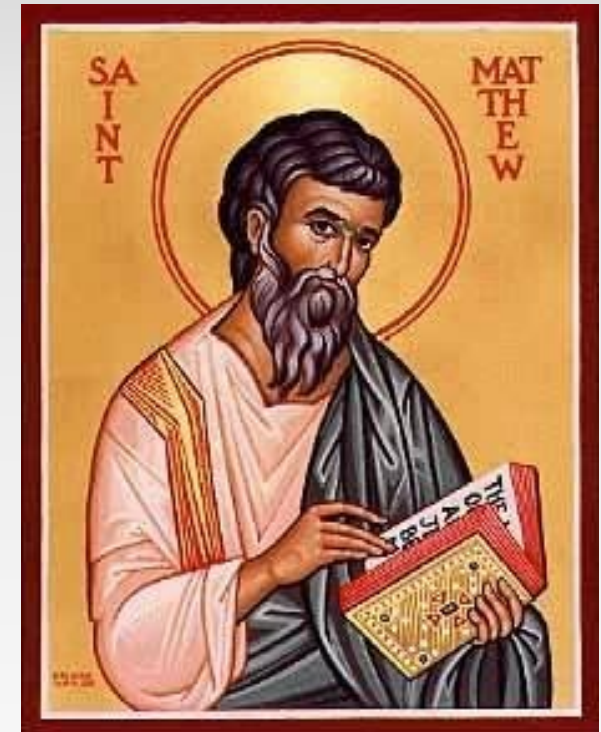
The Community of the Gospel of Matthew

- Written in and for Jewish and Gentile Christians in Antioch.
- Written within the ten-year period of the 80's.
- A Church that had survived the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem and the fall of the city to the Romans.
- A Community that knew a fair degree of stability and peace.
- A time for reflection and careful study of the Law.
- Struggling to understand why Jesus had not returned after the fall of Jerusalem.



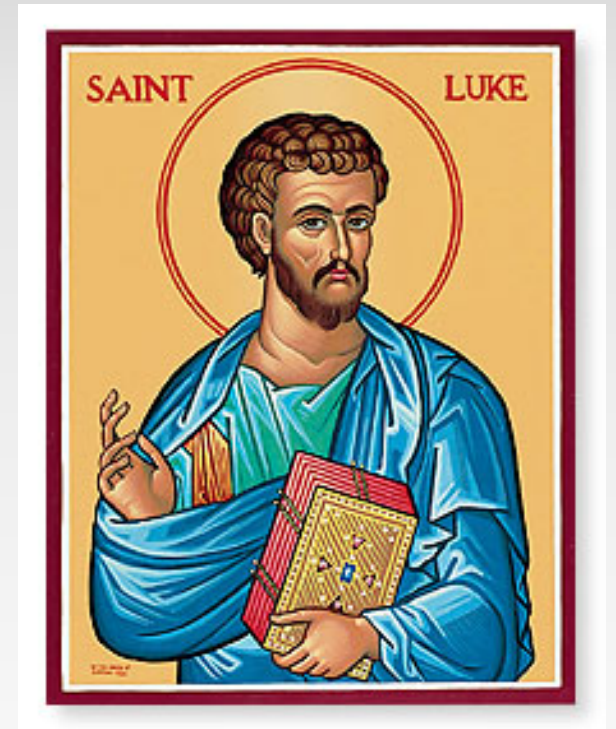
The Christ of the Gospel of Matthew

- The same ministry, death and resurrection of Mark.
- Jesus' human origins as the Son of David.
- Jesus: New Moses.
- Jesus: New Lawgiver.
- Jesus naming Peter as the Center of Unity.
- Guidelines for exercising authority.



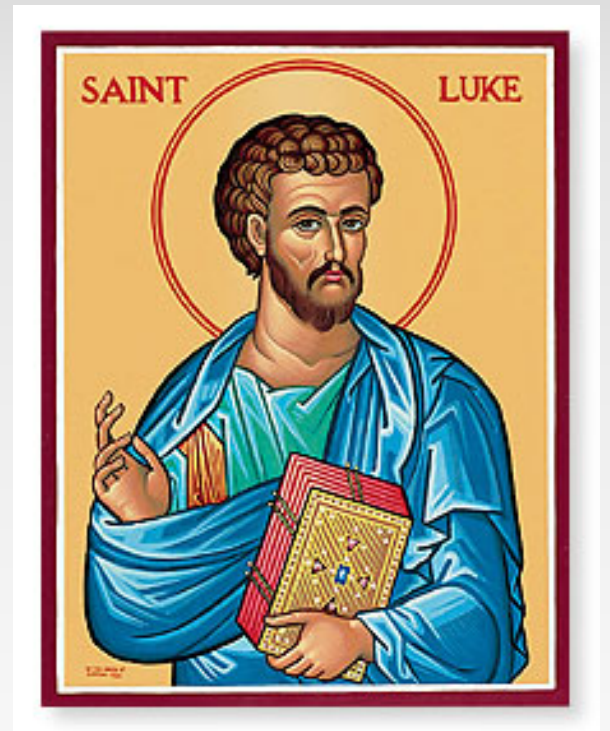
The Community of the Gospel of Luke

- Written in the mid-80's.
- Survivors of the era of persecution under Nero.
- A Greek speaking Gentile community without the authoritative leadership of Peter and Paul.
- Little firsthand knowledge of their Jewish roots.
- Dependent on the Gospel of Mark



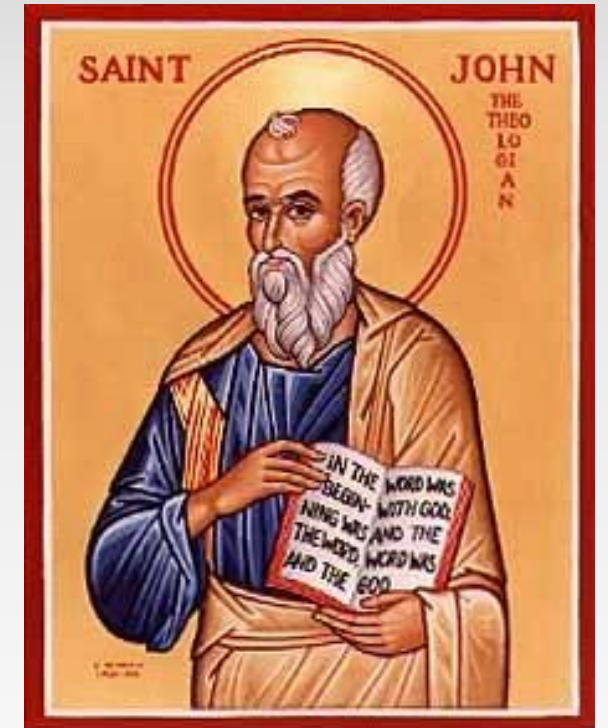
The Christ of the Gospel of Luke

- Christ as the Prophetic Advocate of the Poor.
- Prophet of God's Compassion and Mercy.
- A person of Prayer anointed by the Spirit of God
- Jesus as the Center of History.
- Luke's Gospel continues in the Acts of the Apostles.



The Community of the Gospel of John

- Most likely composed in Ephesus near the year 100.
- Christians of diverse ancestry.
- United in a profound allegiance to Jesus as the “Word made Flesh” – the “preexistent Son of God.”
- A community that faced many issues:
 - ❖ Attacks and persecution from their Jewish antagonists and other religious groups.
 - ❖ Understanding of its origins and defending its beliefs.
 - ❖ The demands of fidelity as a disciple of Jesus.
 - ❖ The increasing length of time for Jesus’ return.



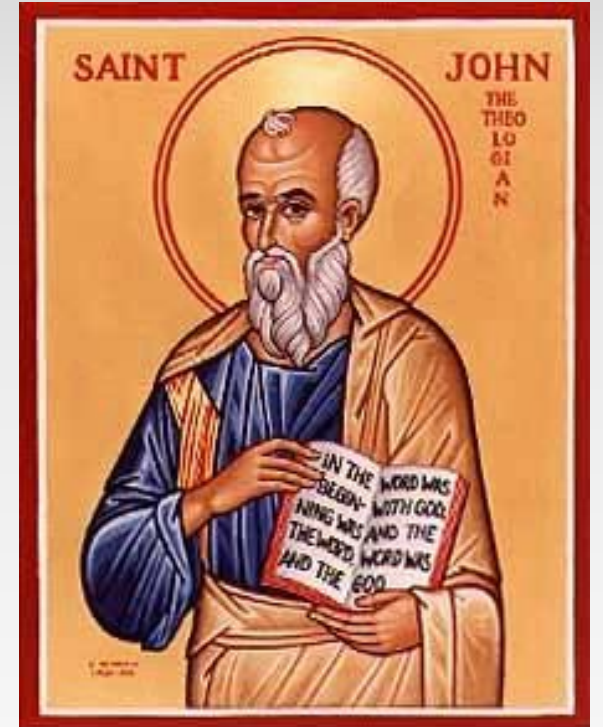


Influences Of the Synoptic Gospels on the Community of John

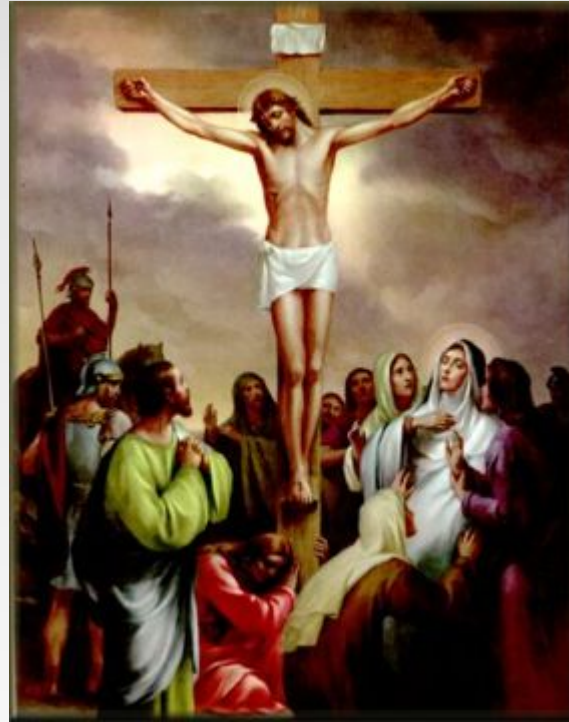
- The Jews who received the Good News through the preaching and witness of those who knew Jesus and saw the Risen Christ.
- The Disciples of John the Baptist.
- The Disciples of the “Beloved Disciple.”
- Samaritan converts
- Jewish Christians of an Anti-Temple bias.
- Gentile Christians

The Christ of the Gospel of John

- An introduction to the Mystery of Christ.
- Pre-Existent Word, Eternal Wisdom.
- Revelation of God's Glory.
- The One Who Is.
- The very Model of Love.
- The Christ who sends the Spirit of Himself.
- Eternal life to all who Believe.



The Significance of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ.





The Cross and Jesus' Own Experience

- Jesus' predictions of his passion, death and resurrection.
- Jesus' foreknowledge of his death and resurrection as an inevitable event.
- Jesus' understanding of his death and resurrection.
- Jesus' human experience of his passion and death.



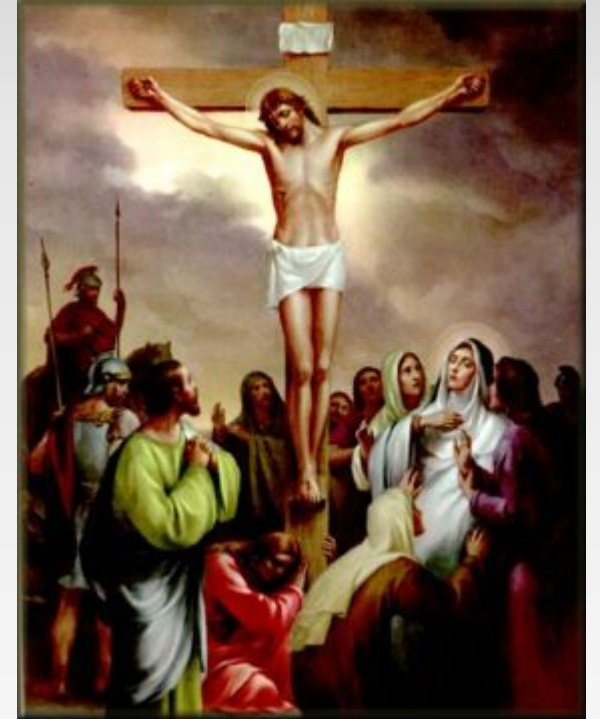


The Cross and its Significance and Power for Salvation

- Salvation is “being alive in God as Jesus was alive in God.”
- Salvation in the Christian tradition involves the eradication of sin.

The Cross of Jesus and Christology

- Reveals the true nature of God.
- Experience of the God of Jesus.
- The experience of God and of Christ in light of the Cross.



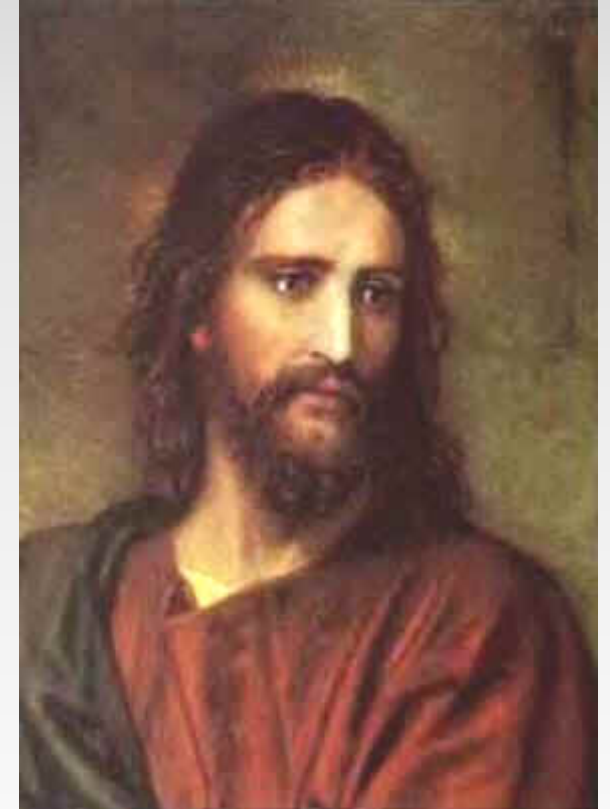
The Resurrection

- The Apostles vision of the Risen Lord.
- The nature of God and human suffering.
- Christian spirituality and asceticism.
- The Cross itself.
- Salvation.



Christology and the Images of Christ

- Beliefs and Traditions
 - Retrieve a belief or tradition.
 - Allow it to shape our understanding in the present.
 - Update and expand that belief or tradition to include the more recent and fuller experiences of God.
- Experience of God
 - In Jesus' action.
 - In Jesus' teachings.
 - In Jesus himself.
- Personal Transformation
- One Christ – One Faith



Understanding Jesus





Hellenistic Influence

- New Testament understanding.
- Hellenistic Culture.
- Radical differences within religious traditions.
- The need for a Theological conversion.



Challenges of the Post-1st Century Church

- A new stage of doing Christology.
- Expansion of Christianity into Hellenistic Culture.
- A changing Theology of Jesus

The Council of Nicea (325)

- The teaching of Arius.
- The teaching of Athanasius.
- Gathering in Nicea.
- The teaching of the Council of Nicea.
- The question of the divine nature of Jesus.
- The outcome of the Council of Nicea.



The Council of Constantinople I (381)

- The humanity of Jesus in the early Church.
- Influence of Gnosticism.
- Docetists.
- The Eastern Church and the interpretation of “*Sarx.*”
- The outcome of the 1st Council of Constantinople.





Jesus: One Person in Two Natures

- The theology of the word “Person.”
- Developing understanding of Three Persons in one God.
- Rivalry between Constantinople and Alexandria.
- Council of Ephesus (431)
- Council of Chalcedon (451)

We affirm that one and the same Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son, must be acknowledged in two natures, without confusion or change, without division or separation. The distinction between the natures was never abolished by their union but rather the character proper to each of the two natures was preserved as they came together in one person. He is not split or divided into two persons, but He is one and the same only-begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Insights of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon.

In affirming that the personal dynamic center of Jesus of Nazareth is none other than the Eternal *Logos*, the Eternal Son of God, Christians confessed their convictions that:

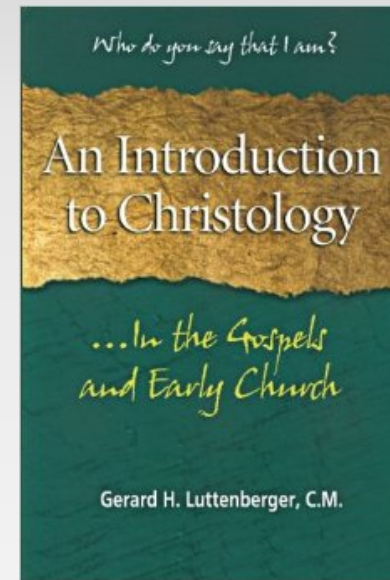
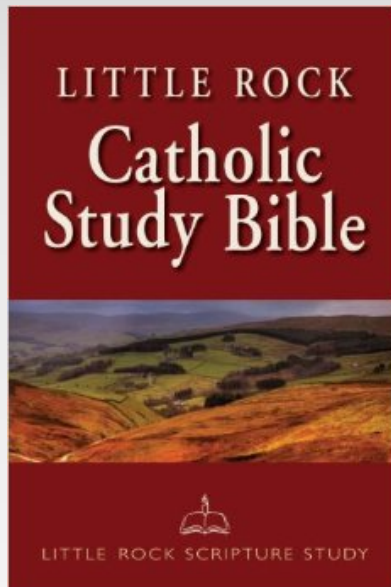
- ❖ When Jesus teaches, God teaches.
- ❖ When Jesus speaks words of encouragement, God speaks words of encouragement.
- ❖ When Jesus heals, God heals.
- ❖ When Jesus forgives, God forgives.
- ❖ When Jesus rejoices, God rejoices.
- ❖ When Jesus struggles, God struggles.
- ❖ When Jesus suffers, God suffers.
- ❖ When Jesus empties himself in love, God pours God's Self out in love.



Reflection Questions

- How has your faith in Christ been fostered and shaped by the beliefs of your community of faith?
- Which images of Jesus described in the Gospels attract or speak to you the most?
- In what ways would you see the Johannine community's experience and images of Jesus as complementary to the synoptic communities experience and images?
- What similarities do you see between the plight of Israel in Jesus' time and the plight of your community and/or the world today?
- How does the image of God's love and acceptance of Jesus, broken on the cross, as well as the life and love of Jesus directed toward the marginalized, affect your understanding of the way of Christian discipleship?
- How would you explain why Christ's divinity, and the affirmation of the Council of Nicea is absolutely necessary for our salvation?
- In what ways have you experienced the presence and power of the risen Lord in your own life?

Christology Resources



Who Do You Say That I Am?
An Introduction to Christology in the Gospels and the Early Church.
Gerard H. Luttenger, C.M.

Diocese of Boise Office of Catechesis



**Jackie Hopper, Director of Religious Education and
Catechetical Leadership**

www.catholicidaho.org

Closing Prayer

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring glad tidings to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.
Amen.

Luke 4: 18-19