

# We Are a Unity of Body and Soul

**PRO TIP**  
Download other  
grades for alternate  
activities!

## CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CCC 362, 371-372

## MATERIALS

- ▶ [Body Language](#)
- ▶ [Two Sexes, One Human Nature](#)

## SUGGESTED TIME

45 minutes

## Teacher Background

Pope St. John Paul II's series of reflections entitled *Theology of the Body* focus on the first three chapters of Genesis, which help us better understand the dignity of the human person, the meaning of the body, and the nature of human love. We also learn from these reflections how God calls man and woman to a communion of love through a mutual gift of self. Original solitude describes not only the state of being of Adam before the creation of Eve (alone or in solitude), but also explains that the human person is alone (or unique) among all the other visible creatures on earth. Of all material creation, only humankind is a unity of body and immortal soul.



### HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

Gender ideology asserts that there is no inherent meaning to our bodies. The truth is that each person is a unity of body and soul. The body expresses the interior life of the person. Not only do our physical human bodies make visible to the world our spiritual interior, but they also make visible God Himself, in whose image we are made. "The body, in fact, and only the body, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It has been created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it" (*Theology of the Body* 19:4)

## Activity

- A. Begin by writing on the board the phrase "I am my body" and asking the class if they tend to think of their body this way. Do we tend to think that our body is ourself? *Allow discussion.*
- B. After a few moments, explain that even though it may seem obvious, human beings are bodily creatures. So yes: we are our bodies, but we are also more than our bodies. As human beings, we also possess immortal souls. It would be wrong to say that our souls are more "us" than our bodies, or that our bodies are more "us" than our souls. We are a unity of body and soul. Our bodies are so important to who we are, in fact, that we believe as Christians that we will be united with our resurrected, glorified bodies at the end of time, and it is in this bodily form that we will live for eternity with God. We profess belief in this fact every time we say the Nicene Creed at Mass ("I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come") and when we say the Apostles' Creed when pray the Rosary ("I believe in ... the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting").

C. Distribute the **Body Language** worksheet and have students complete it with a partner. Students will decide whether each phrase is something that is knowable from observing a person's body. If the answer is yes, have them briefly record how it is knowable from observing a person's body. (*Note: Every statement is knowable from observation of a person's body.*) When students have completed the activity, review and discuss their answers.

**Body Language**

**Directions:** Read each phrase and decide whether it is something that is knowable from observing a person's body. If the answer is yes, briefly record how it is knowable from observing a person's body.

1. If someone is happy Yes / No  
If yes, how?

2. If someone is sad Yes / No  
If yes, how?

3. If someone is angry Yes / No  
If yes, how?

4. If someone likes you Yes / No  
If yes, how?

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D. Then share with the class that our body speaks a language that is even more significant to who we are than the examples we just discussed. Pope St. John Paul II shared a series of reflections entitled Theology of the Body. These reflections help us better understand the meaning of our bodies, and the nature of human love. We also learn from these reflections how God calls man and woman to a communion of love through a mutual gift of self.

**Two Sexes, One Human Nature**

You probably know the story of the creation of human beings from the Bible. After helping Adam see that none of the animals made a suitable partner for him, God created another person like Adam: Eve. By taking a rib from Adam's side, God created Eve from his side. Eve was a woman, in body, and, most importantly, another person like Adam, made in God's image and likeness. Like Adam, Eve possessed the rational faculties of intellect or reason, free will, and the ability to make a gift of herself in love.

Adam and Eve were different from one another because, in important ways, in the creation of Eve, God distinguished her from Adam by the complementarity of the two sexes. God created this woman from Adam's side, which signified her equality with man, since God made her from the bone of Adam's bone and flesh of Adam's flesh (Genesis 2:23). Yet, her body was different and her way of being human was distinct in union with each other, they were together made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:27).

Pope St. John Paul II used the phrase "original cellular" to describe not only the state of being of Adam before the creation of Eve (when Adam was alone or in solitude), but also to explain how the human person is one (or unique) among all the other visible creatures on earth. Unlike other animals, a human person is made up of a body and a rational, immortal soul. The body is just as much an essential part of the human person as the soul. The body is not merely a vehicle or container for the soul, nor is the soul the real person longing to escape the confines of the material body. A human person is an essential composite of body and soul.

Because body and soul are so united, the Church teaches that the body is the

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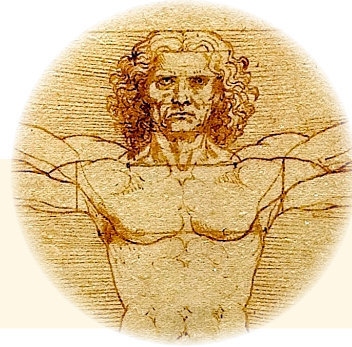
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E. Distribute **Two Sexes, One Human Nature** and read it aloud while students follow along. Have students return to their pairs to discuss the questions before discussing them as a large group.

F. Before concluding, write on the board the quote from the reading: "The body, in fact, and only the body, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It has been created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it" (Theology of the Body 19:4) and ask your students the following questions:

- What does Pope St. John Paul II suggest is capable of making the invisible visible? *The human body.*
- What does he mean by "invisible"? *The spiritual and divine.*
- What does he mean by "visible reality"? *The physical, material world around us that we can see and touch and use our senses to know.*
- Then, explain to your students that Scripture tells us that "God is love" (1 John 4:8). Therefore, the human body makes visible and is a sign of God Himself, who is love. God's love is manifested in His Trinitarian nature, and He made us, male and female, united in marriage as a sign of that eternal exchange and communion of love.

# Body Language



**Directions:** Read each phrase and decide whether it is something that is knowable from observing a person's body. If the answer is yes, briefly record how it is knowable from observing a person's body.

**1** If someone is happy

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**2** If someone is sad

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**3** If someone is angry

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**4** If someone likes you

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

**5** If someone is tired

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**6** If someone is lying

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**7** If someone is an athlete

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**8** If someone is nervous

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**9** If someone is embarrassed

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**10** If someone is hungry

Yes / No

If yes, how?

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## Two Sexes, One Human Nature

You probably know the story of the creation of human beings from the Bible. After helping Adam see that none of the animals made a suitable partner for him, God created another person like Adam: Eve. By doing so, God enabled Adam and Eve to live the life for which He created them.

While Adam was in a deep sleep, God created Eve from his side. Eve was a woman, a wife, and, most importantly, another person like Adam, made in God's image and likeness. Like Adam, Eve possessed the rational faculties of intellect or reason, free will, and the ability to make a gift of herself in love.

Adam and Eve were different from one another, however, in important ways. In the creation of Eve, God distinguished her from Adam by the complementarity of the two sexes. God created this woman from Adam's side, which signaled her equality with man, since God made her from the bone of Adam's bone and flesh of Adam's flesh (Genesis 2:23). Yet, her body was different and her way of being human was distinct. In union with each other, they were together made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:27).

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Image courtesy Lawrence OP

immortal, soul. The body is just as much an essential part of the human person as the soul. The body is not merely a vehicle or container for the soul, nor is the soul the real person longing to escape the confines of the material body. A human person is an essential composite of body and soul.

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## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

sign of the person; it expresses the interior life of the person. Pope St. John Paul II explained: “The body, in fact, and only the body, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It has been created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it” (TOB 19:4). Not only do our physical human bodies make visible to the world our spiritual interior, they also make visible God Himself, in whose image we are made.

Because Eve’s body was different from Adam’s, it also meant she was interiorly different. Adam, a man, embodied what it means to be a human in a masculine (or manly) way. Eve embodied what it means to be human in a feminine way. Masculinity and femininity, Pope St. John Paul II taught us, are “two reciprocally completing ways of ‘being a body’ and at the same time of being human” (TOB 10.1). Thus, the differences in our bodies

are not just physical. They are ontological – that is, they have to do with our very being. Men and women share the same human nature, but we possess that nature differently.

As men and women, human persons reflect unique truths about God and have unique callings in the world. Men are called to fatherhood (spiritual or physical) and women are called to motherhood (spiritual or physical). They make the world a richer, fuller, and better place. The world needs both men and women, and the masculine and feminine ways of being human. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve lived God’s plan for the human family by living out their differences in a complementary way. Their unity in distinction brought them into a deep communion of love with each other. Pope St. John Paul II called this united and complementary state of Adam and Eve’s relationship original unity.

### Discussion Questions

- 1 What do you think “complementarity” means in this sentence from the essay? “Eve was, however, different from Adam in important ways. In the creation of Eve, God distinguished her from Adam by the **complementarity** of the two sexes.” *See suggested answers on next page.*
- 2 Sex role stereotypes can be common in the culture. Why would it be wrong to say that a female who has many stereotypically masculine qualities or interests may be a male, or should identify as a male, or as something beyond male or female? *See suggested answers on next page.*
- 3 God did not intend for the differences between men and women to divide us, but rather to unite us. Pope St. John Paul II wrote, “Femininity finds itself, in a sense, in the presence of masculinity, while masculinity is confirmed through femininity. (TOB 49).” What do you think the Pope meant by this statement? *See suggested answers on next page.*

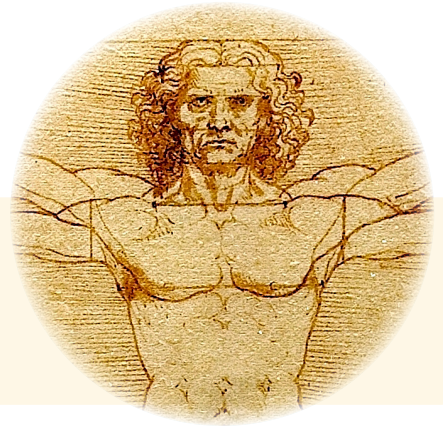
## TWO SEXES, ONE HUMAN NATURE ANSWER KEY

1. “Complementary” things “complete” each other; they are different in ways that mean they fit together, and that make them a whole by their coming together.
2. Because she is a woman. She is a woman even if she looks more masculine than most females, does stereotypically masculine things or has interests commonly associated with males. We are not defined by these kinds of qualities or interests.
3. In general, masculinity is active while femininity is receptive. For example, in *Beauty and the Beast*, both main characters become more their authentic selves by the other’s masculinity/femininity. Princess Leia inspires Han Solo to be a more honorable man in the original *Star Wars* trilogy, and in the process learns more about herself and her own femininity; Hermione in the *Harry Potter* series inspires Harry and Ron to be braver, as she comes into her own as a young woman. Accept additional reasoned answers. Note: Do not hesitate to offer correction if students give responses from more modern films which can tend to portray masculinity as something inherently bad, rather than something powerful which should be harnessed and directed for the good.



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Yes / No

If yes, how?

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**5 If someone is tired**

**Yes / No**

If yes, how?

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**Yes / No**

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