

# We Are a Unity of Body and Soul

**PRO TIP**  
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grades for alternate  
activities!

## **CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

CCC 365, 1703, 1803

## **MATERIALS**

- ▶ A balloon (not blown up)
- ▶ One piece of construction paper per student
- ▶ Markers
- ▶ Masking tape

*Note: This activity has no student worksheets.*

## **CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY STANDARDS**

4.7.1 TOB Connect how virtues (which have to do with man's inner life) are expressed through the body. (TOB 51:5-6, 53:4, 54:2-55:7; CCC 2516, 2520-2524)

## **SUGGESTED TIME**

30 minutes

## Teacher Background

The human person is both corporeal and spiritual. We have a body (material) and a soul (spiritual). A soul is what animates (gives life to) a body. Everything that is alive has a soul. But our soul (*anima* in Latin) is different from that of the animals. This reality is symbolized by God breathing His own spirit into the nostrils of the first human, something He did not do for any other creature. Our bodies make visible our invisible souls.



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

Gender ideology asserts that the body is a tool of the will or a canvas for self expression. But the truth is that human bodies share in the dignity of the image of God. The body and soul are a unity. We express our inner lives, including virtues, through our bodies.

## Activity

- A. Begin by showing the class a balloon (not blown up) and ask why it seems incomplete. Guide students to the understanding that balloons are meant to look like big round bursts of color – they are meant to be inflated.
- B. Explain that only when you blow air into it does it become what it is meant to be—a balloon!
- C. Next, blow up the balloon and show it to the class. You could say that the air is the form of the balloon!
- D. Focus the class’s attention on the balloon, and how the outside and inside are both necessary to make the balloon what it is.
- E. Then, explain that God breathed His Spirit into Adam’s nostrils at creation. Adam’s body and soul were united in one person. It is the same with every one of us. Each of us has a body and a soul. Sometimes, people talk about the body as if it is not important. They think the “real self” is on the inside, and that what is on the outside (our bodies) doesn’t matter as much to who we are. However, that is not true, the outside – your body – is just as much a part of you as the inside— your soul. Your visible body makes your invisible soul visible!
- F. Direct the class’s attention back to the balloon, and how the outside and inside are both necessary to make the balloon what it is. In other words:
  - Without the outside part, the air inside would just float away; we would not be able to see it.

- Without the air inside it, the uninflated balloon would have no form — it would not be complete either.
- The same is true of us! Our bodies (physical) and souls (spiritual) are so united that the soul is the form of the body. It makes the invisible soul visible.
- Explain that another word for soul is spirit. Spiritual means relating to the soul. Spiritual comes from the Latin word *spiritus*, which means breath.

Note: Ask the class if anyone remembers how we said God gave life to Adam? *He formed Adam out of dust and breathed His spirit into Adam.*

- G. Explain that one way our bodies make our souls visible is the way we live out virtues. Virtues are good habits, or the habit of choosing good. Examples of virtues are courage, love or charity, faith, justice, and many others. Virtues are always good, in every situation. For example, it is always good to be courageous. It is always good to show love and to have faith in God. It is always good to be just. When we act with virtue, we are living as God made us to live. And we express these virtues with our bodies!
- H. Ask your students to think about ways they have seen their classmates act virtuously. For example, they may have helped someone with their homework, gone out of their way to be friendly to a new student, given of their time in volunteer work, or other activities.
- I. Finally, explain the following activity about living in virtue. Each student will have a piece of construction paper taped to his or her back, and the class will write positive and uplifting comments on their classmates' backs, recognizing the ways they have acted with virtue. Examples can include: "You are a loyal friend!" "You have a kind smile." "You are an amazing soccer player." And so forth.
- J. Then, distribute the paper, markers, and tape. After all the students have a piece of paper taped to their backs, provide adequate time for your students to write on their classmates' backs. Circulate around the classroom adding your own comment for each student, and monitoring the comments being written if necessary.
- K. Conclude the activity by giving students a few quiet moments to read the comments from their classmates.
- L. Have them think about how each of the examples they received is something they use their body to live out. For example, a kind smile is shown by one's mouth, eyes, cheeks, etc. Fantastic soccer player = one's feet, legs, and so on.