



ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS
- Initial Formation for Candidates -

Module 7: "[Francis' Approach to Divinity](#)"
sheet 3

1. [Our Relationship with God](#)
[III] [Francis: Christology—rooted in Trinity](#)

Francis: UNDERSTOOD JESUS AS THE EXPRESSIÖN ÖF THE ÖTHER-
WÄSE INACCESSIBLE FATHER [John 14.9— 'He who has seen me has seen
the Father ']

Francis: SAW THAT ONLY IN FÖLLÖWING JESUS AS THE WAY CAN
WE ENTER INTO AN AUTHENTIC, INTIMATE AND VIBRANT RE-
LATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER [John 14.6— 'no one comes to the Father
but by me ']

Francis: REDISCÖVERS JESUS WHÖ OFFERS HIMSELF WHÖLLY FÖR
ALL IN ÖRDER TÖ LEAD EVERYÖNE TÖ THE FATHER IN THE
HEART ÖF THE TRINITY [John 14.10 ' I am in the Father and the Father in
me ']

Traditionally, **Christology** had been understood in two ways (represented by the theological schools of Antioch & Alexandria). This meant that

Christology from above: with its starting point the **divinity** of Jesus (led to an overemphasis on the divine nature, underemphasising the humanity of Christ)

Christology from below: with its starting point the **humanity** of Jesus (led to an overemphasis on the human nature, underemphasising the divinity of Christ)

Council of Chalcedon (451 AD): used four adverbs to preserve the two natures (human and divine) in the Incarnate Christ—

without separation, without division

- refuting Nestorian misconceptions

without confusion, without change

- refuting Eutychian & Apollinarian misconceptions.

Why is Christology [the doctrine of the Person of Christ] important for Francis, and how does it relate to belonging to the Church and to receiving the Eucharist?

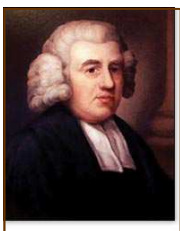


Francis, in rediscovering for us the Christ who offered himself wholly—as God and man, whose self-giving on the cross is re-presented in the Eucharist—offers us a living representation of this Man in himself, by way of his union with Christ that led him into greater and greater intimacy, until, finally he was completely conformed to him on La Verna. [Francis, better than most, understood ‘Atonement’ as ‘at—one—ment’.] This total self-emptying that Francis saw in Christ—who rich became poor for us—is embraced by Francis himself, il Poverello, who follows Jesus in becoming poor, and unites himself with Jesus in receiving his Most Holy Body and Blood in the Eucharist— ‘the source and summit of our salvation’ [as centuries later Vatican II would express it].

Francis’ Christology is Trinitarian—it brings us to the Father;

Francis’ Christology is Ecclesiological—it is a personal, but at the same time a corporal, experience, in that we enjoy it as persons making up the body of Christ which is the Church;

Francis’ Christology is Sacramental—it is in the Eucharist that we continually encounter the living Christ who keeps us at one with the Father with whom he is inextricably and eternally at one.



Rev John Newton [1725-1807],
writer of the hymn, *Amazing grace*, said:

‘What think ye of Christ?’
Is the test to try both your state and your scheme.
You cannot be right in the rest,
Until you think rightly of him.