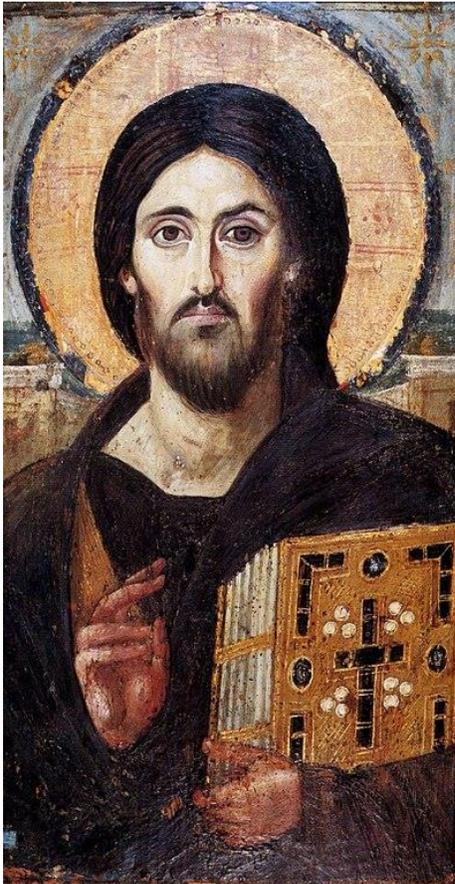


On the Human Knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

I. The Scripture Mk 13:32 touches upon Christology, which is the Church's faith about who Christ is:



In the Christology of East and West, it may surprise some, but the Church Fathers' opinion on Christ's human knowledge was mixed. This is revealed by their comments on Mark 13:32, where toward the end of his prophetic discourse, Jesus says, "But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." Some Church Fathers took this as a straightforward indication that the Son did not know the day or hour in his human knowledge.

St. Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 140-c. 202), combatting Gnostics who claimed to know all divine mysteries, wrote, "even the Lord, the very Son of God, allowed that the Father alone knows the very day and hour of judgment" and that "the Son was not ashamed to ascribe the knowledge of that day to the Father only" ([*Against Heresies* 2:28:6](#)).

St. Athanasius (c. 295-373), combatting the Arians, wrote that, as the Word, Christ knew all things but, as man, did not know the time of the end: He knows also the hour of the end of all things, as the Word, though as man he is ignorant of it, for ignorance is proper to man, and especially ignorance of these things. Moreover this is proper to the Savior's love of man; for since he was made man, he is not ashamed, because of the flesh which is ignorant, to say "I know not," that he may show that knowing as God, he is but ignorant according to the flesh. ([*Discourses Against the Arians* 3:43](#))

St. Gregory (the Theologian) of Nazianzus (c. 330-c. 389), similarly wrote that "everyone must see that he knows as God, and knows not as man" and that "we are to understand the ignorance in the most reverent sense, by attributing it to the manhood, and not to the Godhead" ([*Orations*30:15](#)).

It is worth noting that Athanasius and Gregory of Nazianz are not only Fathers but also Doctors of the Church (even St. Thomas Aquinas taught the same). But others, however, disagreed: Fathers and Doctors!—such as St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory the Great were on the other side of the question. They taught that Christ remained fully omniscient throughout His human life on earth, and their view came to dominate the Middle Ages.

II. The Catechism of the Catholic Church on Christ's human knowledge:

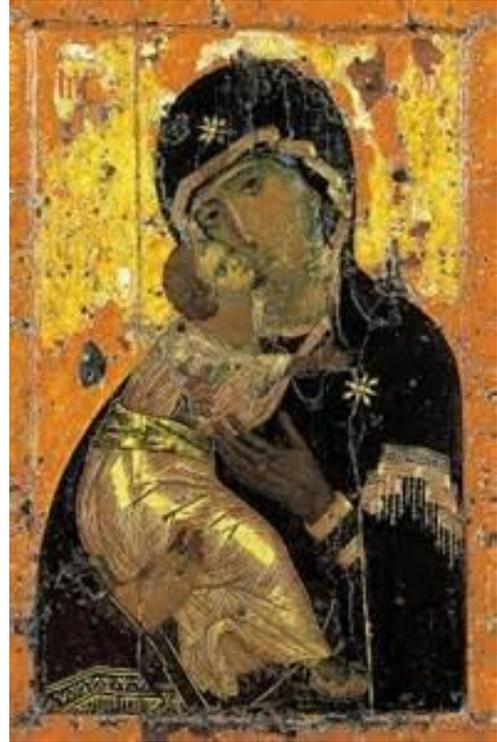
In its [section on the human knowledge of Christ](#) the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* begins by stating:

This human soul that the Son of God assumed is endowed with a true human knowledge. As such, this knowledge could not in itself be unlimited: It was exercised in the historical conditions of his existence in space and time. This is why the Son of God could, when he became man, “increase in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man,” (Lk 2:40 & 52) and would even have to inquire for himself about what one in the human condition can learn only from experience. *This corresponded to the reality of his voluntary emptying of himself, taking “the form of a slave.” [Emphasis mine]* (Phil 2:7; CCC 472)

It also says his human knowledge “expressed the divine life of his person” because of his human nature’s “union with the Word” (CCC 473).

Most significantly, the Catechism states:

By its union to the divine wisdom in the person of the Word incarnate, Christ enjoyed in his human knowledge the fullness of understanding of the eternal plans he had come to reveal. What he admitted to not knowing in this area, he elsewhere declared himself not sent to reveal. (CCC 474)



III. Conclusion:

As God incarnate Jesus knew that He was the Only-begotten Son and Word of God. Because He was God incarnate He knew everything He needed to know to save the world through His life, death and resurrection. These beliefs are essential dogmas of the Orthodox Faith which the whole Catholic Church, East and West, hold together.

Adapted from:

<http://www.catholicworldreport.com/2016/03/18/the-magisterium-and-the-human-knowledge-of-christ/>