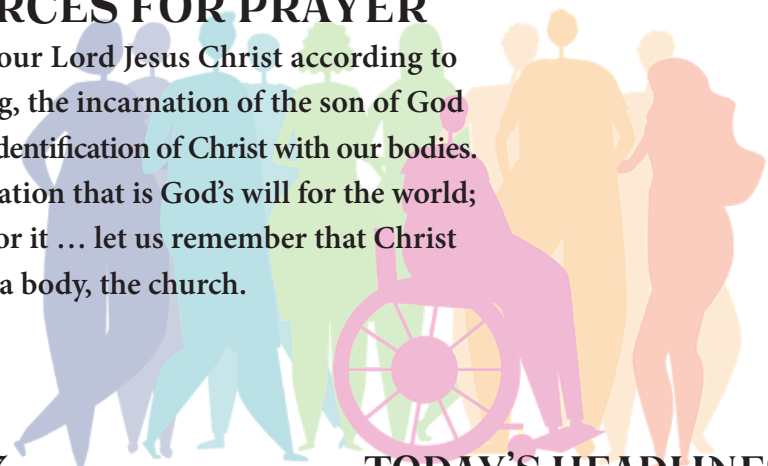


# EMBODIMENT — RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

... in Bethlehem of Judea the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh: the enfleshment, the body-taking, the incarnation of the son of God  
... Christmas is about the body, about the identification of Christ with our bodies.  
... For us there is an experience of incarnation that is God's will for the world; let us be aware of this grace, be thankful for it ... let us remember that Christ came not only to take a body but to make a body, the church.

Andrew Ciferni, O.Praem.



## WORD OF GOD—Hebrews 10:5-7

Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said:

*“Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, my God.’”*

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER

**How have I known the body of Christ to be like a curtain opening a new & living way for me? How is my body a way for extending his Incarnation?**

**What is something I love about my body?  
What does it allow me to do? not do?  
What does my culture say about my body?**

**Gestures, movement, anointings, sprinklings ...  
all are integral to Catholic liturgical prayer.**

**How does my body play a part in my personal prayer,  
now, at my present time of life?**

## TODAY'S HEADLINES

### “Word of the Day: EMBODIMENT

This word has appeared in 177 articles on NYTimes.com in the past year. Can you use it in a sentence?”

### “The impact of body image on mental & physical health: UK government response”

### “BODY IMAGE & ETHNIC BACKGROUND

How does body image vary across people from different ethnic backgrounds?”

### “Reducing social media use significantly improves body image in teens, young adults”

“FOREVER ‘BECOMING:’ Negotiating Gendered and Ageing Embodiment in Everyday Life”

### “THE ROLE OF DANCE IN AFRICAN CULTURE”

“PRESENT TENSE: 9 Ways to Get Out of Your Head and Live an Embodied Life”

### WHAT'S NORMAL AGING?

## Word Made Flesh

by Jim Cotter, to the melody  
of Tantum Ergo

Word made Flesh! We see Christ Jesus  
sharing our humanity,  
loving, graceful, always truthful,  
close to others bodily:  
full of passion, full of healing,  
touch of God to set them free.

Wonderful are these our bodies,  
flesh and blood to touch and see,  
place of pain and contradiction,  
yet of joy and ecstasy:  
place of passion, place of healing,  
touched by God who set us free.

O how glorious and resplendent,  
fragile body you shall be,  
when endued with so much beauty,  
full of life and strong and free:  
full of vigour, full of pleasure,  
that shall last eternally.

Glory give to God the Lover,  
grateful hearts to the Beloved,  
blessed be the Love between them,  
overflowing to our good:  
praise and worship, praise and worship  
give to God whose name is Love.



### Praise We Christ's Immortal Body—

performed by Denise  
LaGiglia & Jerry Gal-  
ipeau from the album

WINDOWS TO PEACE

## The Role of Dance in African Culture

by Mary Morajeyo Okewola, SSL

[Dance] is an experience that moves us beyond the material to the intangible, simply a way we can express ourselves when words are deficient. We can feel the delight of a newly discovered love, assurance in the midst of incredible distress or difficulty, the energetic fire of our childhood, and the serenity of our milder and gentler years. In Africa what we call cultural or social dance are movements that embody our cultural values and standards....



To assure the accuracy of the movements that will preserve the integrity of culture, each clan in Nigeria has someone devoted to design and pass along the clan's customary moves. Because there are unique moves in each clan's culture, this "dance ace" guarantees that everybody knows what the moves are and how they are to be danced. These instructions are passed down through generations and some have never been adjusted. (*NCR Global Sisters Report*) [CLICK to read more](https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/spirituality/column/role-dance-african-culture) <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/spirituality/column/role-dance-african-culture>

