



# Catholic Truth League

3 February 2017

*Induite vos arma Dei*

*Ineffable Creator, who from the treasures of your wisdom, have established three hierarchies of angels, have arrayed them in marvelous order above the fiery Heavens, and have marshaled the regions of the universe with such artful skill, You are proclaimed the True Font of Light and Wisdom, and the primal origin raised high beyond all things.*

*Pour forth a ray of your brightness into the darkened places of my mind; disperse from my soul the twofold darkness into which I was born: sin and ignorance. You make eloquent the tongues of infants. Refine my speech, and pour forth upon my lips the goodness of your blessings. Grant to me keenness of mind, capacity to remember, skill in learning, subtlety to interpret and eloquence in speech.*

*May you guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress, and bring it to completion. You who are True God and True Man, who live and reign world without end. Amen.*  
(St. Thomas Aquinas)

***Our Lady of Fatima, Pray for Us!***

## Announcements

### T-shirts

CTL will be designing and printing t-shirts for members (pricing TBA). If you enjoy graphic design or drawing, show us your ideas! Designs should be submitted no later than Friday, 2/10.

**Ask-a-Catholic: 11 am-3:30 pm Monday, 3/6**

**Location:** Class of 1950

**Next Meeting: 7 pm Friday 2/10 in room 24**

**Topic:** Theology of the Body

Above: A detailed and accurate depiction of the human soul.

## General Information

President: David Schena

Vice President: Mick Krane

Secretary/Webmaster: Christine Mintert

Treasurer: John Redding

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Website: [www.purdue.edu/TRUTH](http://www.purdue.edu/TRUTH)

## This Week in CTL

**Topic:** The Soul

### Subtopics

1. What is the soul?
2. What is it made of?
3. How does the soul interact with body and mind?
4. Arguments for and against the soul
5. Christianity and the soul

### Defining the soul: three definitions

**Aristotle** defines the soul as the act of a natural body with the capacity for life, and as the first act of a natural organic body. The soul is thus the formal cause of the animal, the efficient cause of its motions, as well as its final cause.

- The body cannot be the principle that accounts for life, since a body is still a body when deprived of life. Thus the body is matter to the soul and the soul is form or act to the potentiality of the body.
- There is a hierarchy of souls such that higher souls perform all the functions of lower souls (such as vegetative or reflexive functions) in addition to higher ones (such as rationality).

**The Catechism** defines the soul as the spiritual principle of human beings. The soul is the subject of human consciousness and freedom; soul and body together form one unique human nature. Each human soul is individual and immortal, immediately created by God. The soul does not die with the body, from which it is separated by death, and with which it will be reunited in the final resurrection.

The secular definition of the soul is the "spiritual dimension of human beings - deep dispositions,

## This Week in CTL (continued)

feelings and desires.

- Doubted by many to exist due to lack of scientific evidence.

### What is the soul made of?

The soul is by definition immaterial.

### How does the soul interact with body/mind?

- The soul is what makes the person a person. It is the animating principle that is what makes things alive.
- The soul can have possession of certain faculties that give traits to the thing it is animating. Human souls contain faculties such as Intellect and Will.
- These faculties give the human access to these abilities; in a human, the ability to have an unparalleled intellectual capacity and to utilize free will to direct his or her own actions, rather than being deterministically controlled.
  - In plants, which are alive and have souls, their soul has neither the faculties of Intellect or Will, meaning that plants cannot have intelligence, and their actions are set by the environment.
- The soul and the mind and the body all form the human being; without one of the three, the human is incomplete. In a similar way, a building cannot be a full building without a foundation, walls, and roof. They impact one another. For example:
  - The experiences of the body influence the perceptions of the mind
  - The soul enables conscious experience, the actual experience of which is impacted by the processes of / soundness of the mind.
  - The soul enables the faculty of free will, which allows the mind to make independent decisions based off of what it knows and believes, which are acted upon by the body.

(Thanks to Fr. Cassian Sama, OP for his input in this section)

### Arguments for/against the soul

Many neuroscientists doubt the soul's existence, giving the following reasons:

1. Materialism: existence and faculties of the soul cannot be empirically tested, supported

or disproven by orthodox methods. In this view anything that cannot be observed does not exist.

2. Neuroscientific advances: Scientists are now able to track the progress of cognitive experience as stimuli enter the brain, are assimilated, and commands issued. Based on such observations, a soul is deemed unnecessary.

## Resources and Further Reading

Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 355-384  
- the nature of man, body and soul

CCC 1020-1060 - on the judgment of the soul and its immortal nature

Dr. Richard Geraghty (2001, Nov 6). "Soul and Spirit" Question from Henry Karlson on 2001, Oct 30. EWTN Catholic Q&A - on the difference between soul and spirit, as well as Thomistic philosophy