

How can it be that Jesus became man so that we might become God?

CCC 460 says that Jesus "became man so that we might become God." Can you explain that to me? Do Catholics really believe you can become God?

Good question! Let's provide the context of the Catechism's discussion. In CCC 456-60, the Catechism is providing answers to the question, "Why did the Word become flesh?" He came to save us, to show forth His love for us, and to be our model of holiness.

But there is one other motive. In 2 Peter 1:4, we learn that Christ came to enable us to "become partakers of the divine nature." As He saves us, He incorporates us into His family, of which He is the firstborn (Romans 8:29). We truly have become God's children (e.g., 1 John 3:1), and one can't truly be a child if one doesn't share the same nature as the parent.

That doesn't mean that we become God by nature. He have merely a human nature. Christ is God's only-begotten son. Rather, by grace, we partake of the divine nature. We participate in the very life of God through adoption into His mystical body (see Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7).

Being God's children "by adoption" doesn't cheapen the wonderful, undeserved gift we received at Baptism. Nor is our status as God's children merely a legal fiction.

Rather, the term "adoption" reflects the fact that through grace we are able to participate in the very life of God. If we were "gods" in our own right, we wouldn't need to be adopted. If God were distant and uninvolved with us, we would not truly be His children. The truth is that through Christ God is calling all of us to Himself.

And by the way, the quote from the Catechism provided by the questioner is a direct quote from St. Athanasius, a heroic fourth-century bishop and Father of the Church, known as the champion of orthodoxy. The Catechism didn't make it up!