

Resource Sheet 54

1. We awaken in Christ's body by Symeon the New Theologian

English version by Stephen Mitchell

-abridged-

*We awaken in Christ's body
as Christ awakens our bodies,
and my poor hand is Christ, He enters
my foot, and is infinitely me.*

...

*I move my foot, and at once
He appears like a flash of lightning.
Do my words seem blasphemous? — Then
open your heart to Him*

*and let yourself receive the one
who is opening to you so deeply.
For if we genuinely love Him,
we wake up inside Christ's body*

*where all our body, all over,
every most hidden part of it,
is realized in joy as Him,
and He makes us, utterly, real,*

*and everything that is hurt, everything
that seemed to us dark ...*

...is in Him transformed

*and recognized as whole, as lovely,
and radiant in His light
he awakens as the Beloved
in every last part of our body.*

Possible questions:

What did you like most about this poem and why?

What can you tell about Saint Symeon the New Theologian from this poem?

Why do you think his words might be considered 'blasphemous'?

What words are associated with Christ in the poem?

Is there any connection between this poem and your play-doh object?

Why does Saint Symeon the New Theologian talk about ‘us’ and ‘our bodies’ and not about his own body only? Think about the Holy Communion.

According to this poem, what do we need to do in order that Christ transform ‘*everything that is hurt, everything/that seemed to us dark*’?

2. Saint Symeon the New Theologian (Greek Orthodox Christian Society Sydney):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NE827fg2sx4>

Saint Symeon’s parents were _____ [rich Christians/
upper class Christians].

Saint Symeon went to the monastery in Constantinople because he _____
[was bored/ wanted a change].

At the monastery, Saint Symeon enjoyed very much his discussions with a monk named
_____ [Symeon].

At first, Saint Symeon could not become a novice in the monastery, because he was [young/
inexperienced].

After studying the Scriptures and the Fathers thoroughly, he was admitted to the monastery
when he was ____ [27] years old.

When he was ordained as a priest, he took his _____’s [spiritual father] name,
Symeon.

As abbot, he imposed strict rules on the monastery, which the others monks _____
[did not fancy/ did not agree with/ protested against].

Other members of the church who did not like his new measures convinced the patriarch to
_____ [exile] him.

Although he was called to return to the monastery, he remained in his chapel to
_____ [compose hymns and poetry/ pray] until his repose unto the Lord.