

32 The Most Holy Trinity Sunday Year A June 11, 2017
Exodus 34:4-6,8-9 Psalm Daniel 3 2Corinthians 13:11-13 John 3:16-18

The mystery of the Holy Trinity, which is the focus of today's Feast, is really the summit or the heart of God's revelation of Himself to us. Anyone who hopes to approach God as He really is must approach Him as the Trinity. This feast is not one that celebrates a historical event, as most of the feasts do. Rather, this feast celebrates a fundamental concept or a *mystery* that is difficult for us to understand.

The Church pondered the revelation of the Trinity for three centuries before it was ready to formulate our faith by means of the first two Ecumenical Councils, that of the Council of Nicea in the year 325 A.D. and that of the Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D.

On this Feast of the Holy Trinity we come face to face with the inner mystery of God as a family of three Divine Persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, where there is complete harmony, love and total peace. The Trinity is the foundational belief of the Catholic Church. It maintains that God consists of *one divine nature, yet three divine Persons in one*. This belief is a great mystery for us. How can God be one and yet three? We do not confess three Gods but we do confess one God in three Persons.

The feast of the Holy Trinity is a celebration of the mystery of God as a family of love. Love is the binding force of the three Persons of the Trinity; so when we love each other we share in that community of love which is the living God.

Even though the mystery of *One God in three Persons* is beyond our finite minds, acceptance of God as Trinity is not beyond our grasp. Our experience of the Holy Trinity, as recorded in the Bible and known for the past 2,000 years, reveals the presence and qualities of God interacting in the life of all humankind.

As we read sacred Scripture, we find different images of God. In the Old Testament we have one image of God as a "burning bush," whereas, in the New Testament, God visits His people in human flesh through His incarnate Son, Jesus. Last Sunday, the image of God was as the Holy Spirit descending as

“tongues of fire” on the Apostles and disciples. Yet these three images of God are One God.

In the Gospels, we find frequent references to the Trinity. The most graphic vision of the Trinity occurs more so in St. Mark’s Gospel. Jesus reveals His startling nature to us for the first time after His baptism. As Jesus comes out of the waters of the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit descends on Him in the form of a dove. The heavens open up and a voice says, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” The voice of God, the dove or Holy Spirit, and Jesus, these three images create a vivid portrait of the Holy Trinity.

You might be wondering what the Holy Trinity has to do with *your life*. This Doctrine of our faith is both profound and very personal because it is the centre of our Catholic faith. In the celebration of the Mass and the Sacramental life of the Church, we are calling upon the family of the Holy Trinity to help us to share in the community of God’s love.

When we enter the Church, we dip our fingers in the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross in the name of the Trinity. Every time we make the sign of the Cross while blessing ourselves we are expressing our faith, and calling upon the name of the Holy Trinity. The action of the words reminds us that it is through the cross of Jesus that the life of the Trinity is open to us, and that the cross we are bearing is the only means by which we can follow Christ our Saviour into eternal life.

We begin and end our Mass with the prayer of the Trinity every time we make the sign of the Cross. Another time is after the homily when we make our Profession of Faith in the Trinity. “I believe in God ... I believe in Jesus Christ, His Only Son . . . I believe in the Holy Spirit.”

Our faith in the Holy Trinity is also reflected in the conclusion of the Eucharistic prayer when the priest, elevating the Body and Blood of Christ, says, “Through Him, with Him, in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all glory and honour is Yours, almighty Father, forever and ever.

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told His Apostles to go forth to all nations “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). In the Sacramental life of the Church, the priest baptizes a person in the name of the Holy Trinity. It is important to note that a person is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, not in their own name, for example, not as John or Gary or Susan.

Today’s feast reminds us that by our Baptism we are raised to a level at which we become sharers in the family life of God. After all, at our Baptism we are made part of the life of the Holy Trinity, and have the same name as the Trinity. We are born of God the Father, God the Son becomes our spiritual Brother and the love of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. This revelation of the Trinity’s inner life of three Persons, in which we have a share, is one of God’s greatest gifts to us.

Made in the image and likeness of God, means we are made in the image and likeness of the Most Holy Trinity. The love we have for one another should then be modelled on the love shared by God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We live in the world of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This is the mystery we are celebrating today. It is not something we can hope to understand fully while we’re here on earth, and perhaps not even when we get to Heaven. It is something to believe now though and to live with love. By prayer and grace, we can get to know each Person of the Trinity more in our lives.

On this special feast of the Holy Trinity, *together* we pray the simplest of Catholic prayers: “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”