

35 Most Holy Trinity Sunday
Proverbs 8:22-31 Psalm 8

Year C
Romans 5:1-5

June 12, 2022
John 16:12-15

Today's Feast of the Most Holy Trinity is *not* one that celebrates a historical event, as most of our other feast days do. Rather, this feast celebrates a fundamental concept or idea of a mystery that is difficult to understand. The Church pondered the revelation of the Trinity for three centuries before it was ready to formulate our faith by means of 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.

The mystery of the Trinity, the focus of today's feast, is the summit and the heart of God's revelation of Himself to us. Anyone who hopes to approach God as He really is must approach Him as Trinity, as *three Divine Persons in One*.

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. Love is the binding force of the three Divine Persons of the Trinity; so, when we love, we share in that community of love, which is the living God.

The Catechism teaches, "*The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of our Catholic faith and life. It is the mystery of God in Himself. It is, therefore, the source of all the other mysteries of faith.*" In other words, the mystery of the Trinity makes our Catholic faith distinctive. The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of our Catholic faith and life.

The Trinity is the foundation belief of our Catholic Church. It maintains that God consists of *one divine nature, yet three divine Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*. This belief is a great mystery. How can God be one and yet three Divine Persons? We do not confess three Gods. No, we confess *one God in three Persons*.

We would never have known that God as a family of three Persons had Jesus not told it to us. Throughout His life on earth, Christ was talking about God as His Father and about His mission to do the will of His Father. Jesus refers to Himself as God's only Son, and He teaches that the Holy Spirit is to carry on and continue the work He has begun in the Church. In today's Gospel of John, Jesus says, "*When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own.*"

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 Scripture and known for the past 2,000 years, reveals the presence and qualities of God interacting in the life of all humankind.

The most graphic vision of the Trinity occurs in St. Mark's Gospel where Jesus reveals the Holy Trinity 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 wide 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 create a vivid portrait of the Trinity.

You might be wondering what the Holy Trinity has to do with *your life*. This Doctrine of Most Holy Trinity 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 call upon the family of the Holy Trinity to help us to share in that community of God's love. We live in unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, not apart.

Though we may struggle in understanding the Holy Trinity, we nevertheless take the Trinity into our very hands each time that we mark ourselves with the sign of the cross. When we enter the Church, we dip our fingers in the holy water and make the sign of the cross, saying "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*"

The last thing a priest will do at our graveside is make the Sign of the Cross over our remains. Between those two moments, a Catholic's life is lived with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We begin and conclude our Mass with the prayer of the Trinity every time we make the Sign of the Cross. Every time we make the Sign of the Cross while blessing ourselves, we are expressing our faith and calling upon the family of the Trinity. After the homily 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, while elevating the Body and Precious 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, a priest baptizes a person and gives him or her a new name of the Trinity by saying the words of Jesus, “I baptize you 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.

In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, or Confession, a person’s sins are forgiven and the person becomes reconciled in the name of the Trinity. After hearing a person’s confession, it is not just the priest saying the words of absolution. It is Christ who is saying *“I absolve you of all your sins in the name of the Trinity.”*

We can all know the redeeming, cleansing love of the Trinity, so powerfully close to us in the Mass, in the Sacraments and in our lives. The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity does not distance us from God. Far from making God seem remote, the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity is the powerful truth that God is close to us in hundreds of ways as the Father, as the Son, and as the Holy Spirit. To be a Catholic is to have the privilege, the grace, the power of knowing God as all three: as the Father, as the Son, and as the Holy Spirit.

We can do something more important than trying to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity. *We can live in its power.* We live in the world of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This is the feast day 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 we now believe by faith and live with love in unity with the Holy Trinity. By prayer and grace, we can get to know each Person of the Trinity more in our lives. To be a Catholic is to have the privilege and the power to know God as all three, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: God Who sustains, Who redeems, and Who makes holy.

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.”*