

Trinity Sunday – Cycle C

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... This is how Father starts every Mass and is a perfect start today for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity.

My wife, Geri, and I were in the same Catholic school when we were young. We were talking about how the nuns taught us from the Baltimore Catechism – a book that was in a question and answer format. We would have to learn the answers for our religion class.

Of course, there were the questions about the Trinity – for instance, “What do we mean by the Trinity? By the Blessed Trinity we mean one and the same God in three Divine Persons”. It would go on to ask if the three Divine Persons are distinct from one another and if they are equal to one another – The answer, of course, is “Yes”.

Then came the best question, “Can we fully understand the Trinity?” The answer is no, it is a supernatural mystery, a truth which we cannot fully understand, but which we firmly believe because we have God’s word for it.

The Church struggled with the theology of the Trinity from the beginning. But with the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople, held in the fourth century, the Church affirmed the doctrine of the Trinity. This is where we get the Nicene Creed, the profession of faith we recite at every Sunday Mass.

Human words will never be enough to describe the Trinity – we have words like “consubstantial with the Father” (de la misma naturaleza del Padre) and the Spirit “proceeds from the Father and the Son”. We need a theologian to really explain these words and even then, we might not fully understand.

But we can come to know the Trinity by the actions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The mystery of Christ coming into the world is a perfect example. Bishop Robert Barron reminds us that this could only happen if Jesus were sent by the Father as an act of (perfect) love.

He writes that, “The Father and the Son are united in love, and this love is itself the divine life. And thus, there is a spirit, co-equal to the Father and the Son, which is the love shared between them”.

The readings for today were chosen to reveal this love and unity.

In our first reading from Proverbs, we find the wisdom of God – there at the creation of the world – who was the witness of the creative power of God at work.

St. Paul tells the Romans that we Christians can even boast of our afflictions. He explains our source of hope. The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

In John's Gospel, Jesus makes it clear that everything that the Father has is His. The Spirit then will take from Christ all that is His and will declare to His disciples the things that are coming. The Spirit will invite the disciples into this community of divine relationship – the community of the love and unity of the one God in three persons.

Jesus invites us into that same relationship today.

The word "Trinity" is not found in Scripture but is one of the most important words for us Christians. It is the word the Church uses to describe God Himself. But it is much more than just a single word. It does three things for us.

First it tells us **who** God is – God the creator of all things, God the Redeemer who gave us His Body and Blood to save us, and God the Advocate who is with us today to guide us to the truth.

Second it tells us **what** God is – merciful, gracious, slow to anger, rich in kindness and fidelity, and most importantly, a God of unbroken and eternal love.

Third it tells us who **we** are and how we are required to act. Each of us - every woman and man - is made in the image of God and each of us is called to be like God – to live the divine life. Our relationship with all our brothers and sisters is to be the unconditional love and unity of the Trinity.

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