

Trinity Sunday, Cycle C
May 29-30, 2010

“Three Persons, One God”

Today we celebrate a sense of mystery about God; three persons, one God.

The Holy Trinity is described by theologians as a strict mystery. A strict mystery means that it is a central dogma in Christian Theology. We profess and we believe that there are three persons in one God and that the Father creates, the Son redeems, and that the Spirit is sustaining the energy and love of the Father and the Son. It is a strict mystery in that it cannot be known by human reason apart from being revealed. That means it must be disclosed by God. Nor can the mystery of the Trinity be scientifically explained after it has been revealed. That is why we call it a mystery, a religious mystery in its fullest sense. On the other hand the complexity of the Trinity is not contrary to the principles of rational thought. The Trinity is not contrary to

reason. The Trinity cannot be explained by the scientific method.

The word “Trinity” is not itself found in sacred scripture. It is implied. It is a deduction from the scriptures. We understand from reading the scriptures that the Father is known by reason of the activity of creation. The Son is known by reason of the activity of redemption. The Spirit is known by reason of the activity of sustaining the love and action of the Father and the Son. The love and action of the Father, Son, and Spirit are known through the accounts of the Book of Genesis all the way through to the Book of Revelation. The Trinity is specifically noted at the end of the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus addressed His disciples in these words:

“Full authority has been given to me both in heaven and on earth; go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of

the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”
[Matthew 28: 18-20].

In 180 ad. a Catholic Christian known as Theophilous of Antioch coined the word Trinity. In 400 ad. St. Augustine wrote a great treatise called De Trinitate, On the Trinity. In that treatise, using the classical thinking of Aristotle, Augustine compared the Holy Trinity to human relationships: God the Father, for all eternity looked out and saw His reflection. The reflection of Himself is the Son. The Son looked back at the Father and the love and relationship they both had is the Spirit, the Holy Spirit. To help even more, St. Augustine described the Trinity as analogous to a married couple. The man looks out, sees the woman as his reflection. The woman looks back at the man and sees herself as part of him. They both see their children in each other. The children are the result of the love and active concern that the father has toward the mother and the mother toward the father. The children are

the Spirit of the father and the mother. It is no wonder that parents often say to their children, “You are just like your father, or, you are just like your mother.” Similarly, God, the Blessed Trinity can be explained by the analogy of the father, mother and child.

The Book of Proverbs describes a beautiful relationship of God the Son with God the Father. *“From of old I was poured forth [from the Father] and I found delight in the Human race.”* Paul’s Letter to the Romans describes the love and action of the Trinity for us. We can have peace in God, through Jesus, and be sustained in that peace and love through the Holy Spirit. In the Holy Gospel of John, Jesus promises that although His mission in the world is complete and He must return to the Father. The Holy Spirit will guide all new believers into a full expression of living and loving as Jesus did.

I guess one of the most inspiring and interesting stories of the Trinity comes from St. Patrick, when in

front of the pagan high priests and the Irish people he explained the Trinity by example of the Shamrock. *“One little stem, three leaves. The three leaves are intricately connected to each other.”* You cannot have a Shamrock without the three leaves We cannot have Trinity without the three persons in one God.

More than anything we want to think and wonder this weekend. We want to stop and think and wonder about the fathomless creativity of the Father, the depths of redemption of the Son, and the limitless, wise mentoring of the Spirit.

So we pray: *Thank you God the Father for creating us. Jesus Saviour, thank you for redeeming us. Spirit of the Father and the Son, thank you for sustaining us in the ways of the Father and the Son. Praise the Holy Trinity, Undivided Unity, Holy God, Mighty God, God Immortal be Adored.*

Amen.

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