

- This weekend we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity—in which we especially recall this greatest and most profound of the mysteries of our faith.
- Try as we might, to understand the Trinity is an impossible thing for us. Who can understand three persons...each co-equal—making up one divinity...one God?
- You've probably heard people try to explain the Trinity by analogy—3 folds of one blanket, three candles together making one flame, the three sides of a triangle, the famous three-leafed clover of St. Patrick, and other such things.
- But simply because it is beyond our understanding does not mean there is no value in reflecting upon it.
  - As a comparison, relatively few people understand higher mathematics, and nobody knows it all...but we wouldn't be able to do much if we never studied math at all.
  - ...but, knowing more math, the more we are able to understand the natural world...though we can never know it all.
- Likewise, the more we study the Holy Trinity, the more we learn about God...though His infinity is far beyond our ability.

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- God gives us glimpses of the Trinity even from the very first verses of the Bible:
    - Genesis 1:2— *The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.* (Gen 1:2 RSV)
    - In the account of the creation of Man, we read: *God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;* (Gen 1:26 RSV)

- In the story of the tower of Babel, God muses: *Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language...* (Gen 11:7 RSV)
  - And many times—especially in the book of Judges and speaking of the prophets, scripture speaks of the Spirit of God animating His servants.
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- What about Jesus? How do we know he is part of the Holy Trinity—this three persons that make up the One God?
  - One of the themes of John’s Gospel is the oneness of the Father and the Son:
    - The first verse, referring to Jesus: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* (John 1:1-3 RSV)
    - Jesus praying in John 17: *Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made.* (John 17:5 RSV)
    - *[Jesus said]: “I and the Father are one.”* (John 10:30 RSV)
  - Then, of course, you have the similar revelation events at Jesus’ baptism and the Transfiguration, as in Luke 3: *“...the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon [Jesus] in bodily form, as a dove, and a voice came from heaven, “Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased.”* (Luke 3:21-22 RSV)... and at the Transfiguration, the Spirit as a cloud which descended upon the mountain.
  - And the early Church certainly recognized the Trinity, though the theology would also develop over centuries and millennia. Paul himself wrote the invocation we use often at Mass: *“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”* (2Co 13:14 RSV)...and read the Acts of the Apostles and see how packed it is with explicit references to the Holy Spirit.
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- Yet, even now—after two thousand years of the collective thought of our Church—our understanding of the Holy Trinity is minimal at best. But then...how can it be otherwise?
- We cannot understand God completely. Even the collective knowledge of all the saints and angels can only scratch the surface of the knowledge and greatness of God.
- ...because the created can never understand the totality of its creator. A house cannot understand its builder, nor a painting understand its sculptor.
- How much less so, then, can we expect to understand the depths of God...the Creator of all?

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- You may have heard the legend of St. Augustine on shore of the sea.
    - Walking along, contemplating the mystery of the Trinity, he encountered a small boy who had dug a small hole in the beach and was running back and forth to the ocean filling it.
    - Augustine asked: “What are you doing?”, and the boy replied: “I am emptying the ocean into this hole.”
    - Augustine said: “Don’t be ridiculous. You can’t empty the entire ocean into that hole.”
    - And the boy replied: “I can more easily empty the ocean into this hole, than you can understand the mysteries of the Holy Trinity.” And with that the boy vanished.

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- So...if you find yourself perplexed while thinking about the Trinity, don’t feel alone.
  - But we are fortunate that we have the assurance of Jesus Himself that the Church is to be led into all truth, and that the Holy Spirit will guide her in her knowledge.

- And we proclaim this knowledge every time we recite the Apostles Creed, or the Nicene Creed after the homily—proclaiming one God in three persons.
- And each of the three persons of the Trinity are God, and are *wholly* God—co-equal in greatness, dignity and perfection. When we praise one, we praise the other two. When we adore one, we adore the entire Trinity, for one Divine Person does not—CANNOT—exist without the others.
- The Father is called the principle person from which proceeds the Son, and from both proceeds the Holy Spirit. But neither are the Son and Spirit created, but exist eternally with the Father...co-equal in all things, and yet the only and eternal One God.
- As another (unavoidably limping) analogy, think of yourself: You are you, the principle...and yet, because you exist, your mind exists...your soul exists...and are essential to you being you.
- Because the Father exists, the Son exists...and because they exist, the Spirit exists.
  
- In the Trinity we see the greatness of God the Father...the wisdom of God, the Son...and the eternal love of God, the Holy Spirit—a love not simply within God Himself, but for us.
- So when you pray: “*In the name [not the names] of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*”...say it with great reverence, considering what it really means...that you are dedicating this prayer or work or day you are about to do to the One eternal God in Three Persons...and, therefore, it is to be a work to be dedicated to God for eternity.
  
- *To you , O blessed Trinity, be worship and honor, glory and power, praise and joyful adoration through the eternal ages...forever.*

Reading 1

[Prv 8:22-31](#)

Thus says the wisdom of God:

"The LORD possessed me, the beginning of his ways,  
the forerunner of his prodigies of long ago;  
from of old I was poured forth,  
at the first, before the earth.

When there were no depths I was brought forth,  
when there were no fountains or springs of water;  
before the mountains were settled into place,  
before the hills, I was brought forth;  
while as yet the earth and fields were not made,  
nor the first clods of the world.

"When the Lord established the heavens I was there,  
when he marked out the vault over the face of the deep;  
when he made firm the skies above,  
when he fixed fast the foundations of the earth;  
when he set for the sea its limit,  
so that the waters should not transgress his command;  
then was I beside him as his craftsman,  
and I was his delight day by day,  
playing before him all the while,  
playing on the surface of his earth;  
and I found delight in the human race."

[Ps 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9](#)

Responsorial Psalm

R. (2a) **O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!**

When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars which you set in place —  
What is man that you should be mindful of him,  
or the son of man that you should care for him?

R. **O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!**

You have made him little less than the angels,  
and crowned him with glory and honor.  
You have given him rule over the works of your hands,  
putting all things under his feet:

R. **O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!**

All sheep and oxen,  
yes, and the beasts of the field,  
The birds of the air, the fishes of the sea,  
and whatever swims the paths of the seas.

R. **O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!**

[Rom 5:1-5](#)

Reading 2

Brothers and sisters:

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith,  
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
through whom we have gained access by faith  
to this grace in which we stand,  
and we boast in hope of the glory of God.  
Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions,  
knowing that affliction produces endurance,  
and endurance, proven character,  
and proven character, hope,  
and hope does not disappoint,  
because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

[Jn 16:12-15](#)

Gospel

Jesus said to his disciples:

"I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now.  
But when he comes, the Spirit of truth,  
he will guide you to all truth.  
He will not speak on his own,  
but he will speak what he hears,  
and will declare to you the things that are coming.  
He will glorify me,  
because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.  
Everything that the Father has is mine;  
for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine  
and declare it to you."