

The Most Holy Trinity

June 15, 2025

The first Sunday after Pentecost is always dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity. The Church sets aside this time for us to meditate on one of the foundational truths of our faith - that our God is One God in three Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

It's tempting to want to spend this day trying to wrap our minds around this mystery. We can get bogged down in technical language and academic concepts. Those things are good, and they have their place. But if that is the only way we approach it, we can start to believe that the teaching of the Holy Trinity is only something for professors and highly educated people to busy themselves with. We can forget that the mystery of the Holy Trinity is one that involves each of us no matter how much or how little we may know. It is not just a doctrine to be studied and debated. It is a mystery for us to meditate on in wonder and to put into practice in our lives.

The mystery of the Trinity can be boiled down to one simple truth - that God is love. That is something that even children can understand. The Holy Trinity is the mystery of a God who exists in an eternal exchange of total, self-giving love. The Father gives Himself wholly and completely to His Beloved - God the Son. God the Son eternally receives this outpouring of love from the Father. And the love which they exchange is Himself a person - Himself caught up in an eternal dance.

Because God is a community of persons, He is totally self-sufficient. He has no need for love outside the love He experiences within Himself. Still, because of His goodness, He makes space to bring other creatures into that relationship of love. God didn't create the universe because He was bored or needed something to do. Rather, He created simply out of the goodness of His pure love. The universe does not add anything to God. There is nothing that the universe can give God that He does not already have. He creates to share His love, pure and simple.

We get a hint of this in today's first reading from the Book of Proverbs. It speaks of the "wisdom of God" which existed before the world was created. This wisdom is also the pattern by which God created the universe. Think of it like a blueprint God used to make sure that the world reflected His beauty and goodness. This wisdom of God is described like a child "playing before him all the while, playing on the surface of the earth." It is not until

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the New Testament that we understand that this "wisdom of God" is God Himself - most specifically God the Son who is the Word of God and God the Holy Spirit who is the "wisdom from on high."

The first reading goes on to say that the wisdom of God "found delight in the human race." That is because we, unlike any other being in creation, are made in the image and likeness of God. God sees His reflection in us. And being made in the image and likeness of God, we are created for love. So, in the mystery of the Holy Trinity, we find the purpose for our existence - to give love, to receive love, and to become love.

Just as God the Father gives Himself totally and completely in love to God the Son, we are meant to make ourselves a gift of love for others. This is reflected in the Sacrament of Marriage in which a man and a woman pledge to love each other exclusively and faithfully until death. And it is also practiced by bishops, priests, and religious who make themselves a gift of love to the people they serve. Whatever path of life we have chosen; love has to be at the heart of it. Not only are we called to be gifts of love to our family and friends, but we must be gifts of love to strangers and enemies alike. Sometimes our love will show itself in acts of kindness. Other times it will show itself in acts of forgiveness. Sometimes the people we love will love us back. Other times they will take advantage of us or take us for granted. Sometimes they will thank us, and other times they will be totally unaware of the love we've shown them. Whatever the case may be, we should show love to everyone in all circumstances because that is the way God loves.

Just as God the Son receives love from God the Father, we are called to open our hearts to the love that is continually being offered to us. All of us desire love. But as strange as it may sound, receiving love can be harder than giving it. Just consider how hard it is to receive a compliment. Many times we don't believe the person complimenting us is being honest. Our first reaction may be to deflect the compliment and claim that we are not as good as we seem. That is because we don't always believe that we are worthy of love. Our pride gets in the way and tells us that we cannot accept anything that we haven't earned. So, as much as we yearn for love, our hearts are often too hard and defensive to accept it from others.

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But the truth is that we cannot give what we do not have. If we do not accept love from God and from others, then we cannot truly love others. We are like mirrors, reflecting the love of God. The more we turn to Him, the more of that love we'll reflect. The more we turn away from Him, the less we will reflect. And the more we can accept that we are loveable even with our flaws and imperfections, the more we will be able to love others even with their flaws and imperfections. So the mystery of the Holy Trinity teaches us that receiving love is just as important as giving it.

Finally, the mystery of the Trinity teaches us that we are called to become love. God the Holy Spirit is the love that flows between the Father and the Son. In the same way, we are called to be love so that love becomes our identity, our purpose, and what drives us. When that happens, our first thought when we meet someone is "how can I love this person." Or even, "How can I let this person love me?" That is what it means to be a saint - to do everything out of sheer love so that it becomes all consuming.

God is a mystery of love - a mystery not only to be studied by scholars but to be lived by saints. In that mystery, we discover who we are. If we let love become our very identity then, one day, we will be brought into that eternal exchange of love between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit which is Heaven - the fulfillment of our heart's yearning for perfect, total love.