

HOLY TRINITY LESSON

Read: Mt 3:13-17 *The Baptism of the Lord*

Spend 1min imagining this happening-

- 1) What images of God are mentioned in this passage? (submit answer)

Thoughts on the Trinity from St. Therese

St. Therese of Lisieux

“God gave me to see clearly the truth of the most Holy Trinity. It is just as learned theologians told me, but I did not understand it as I do now... What I have seen is this: **three distinct Persons**, each one visible and who speaks and to whom we can speak. Afterwards I thought how the Son alone took human flesh, which shows clearly that the three Persons are distinct. The Persons love each other, communicate and know each other. But, if each one is distinct, how can we say that the three are one essence? For this is what we believe. This is deepest truth, and I would die for it a thousand times. In these three Persons there is but one will and one power and one might; neither can one be without the others. There is one sole Creator of all created things. Could the Son create an ant without the Father? No, because their power is one. The same is to be said of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, there is one God Almighty, and the three Persons are one majesty. Is it possible to love the Father without loving the Son and the Holy Spirit? No, for those who please one of the three Persons please all three Persons, and those who offend one offend all. Can the Father exist without the Son and without the Holy Spirit? No, for they are one in being, and where one is, there are the three; they cannot be divided.

How is it, then, that we see that the three Persons are distinct? And how is it that the Son, not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, took human flesh? This is what I have never understood; theologians know it. What I know is that the three were there when that marvelous work was done. I do not busy myself with much thinking about this; all my thinking comes down to this: God is almighty, that he has done what he would do, and can do what he wills. The less I understand it, the more I believe it, and the greater the devotion it excites in me. May he be blessed forever! Amen.”

Teaching on the Trinity

As Catholics we believe that the **Trinity consists of 3 persons in 1 God. 1+1+1=1**

How this all works is a **MYSTERY**.

- If the Trinity is a mystery- how do we know God is a Trinity?
- There a number of places in the bible where we hear about the various persons of the trinity. The Gospel we heard today is one of them. Jesus is begin Baptized (God the Son) and the Heavens open and the Spirit of God descends like a dove (God the Holy Spirit) and a voice says “this is my beloved son” (God the Father speaking).
- When we say, “the Trinity is a mystery,” we don’t mean that it is something to be solved or completely understood. We mean that it’s **hard for us to wrap our minds around** knowing what the Trinity really is because God is bigger and deeper than any explanation we can come up with.

- It's a mystery because it can only be **revealed by God and we can't "figure God out" on our own**. Only through His Holy Spirit and the gifts we are given by the Holy Spirit can we even begin to approach His mysteries.
- Now, what can be explained is what we can and do know about the Trinity. We know that the **Trinity is one God made up of three divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**. Our belief as Catholics — and the belief of all Christians — is a Trinitarian God.
- Pope Benedict XVI said, "God is not solitude but perfect communion" (repeat this for emphasis). In other words, God in His very existence is not alone. God is love; therefore, in God is a communal love of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- God is love. The Trinity shows us that God is love in that while God is one, in the one true God there are three persons. This is a mystery of our faith — something for us to ponder, not solve. We'll never make sense of it, but we can make sense of the fact that it teaches us **true love**.
- Banana bread, cake & cupcakes- all from the same substance—if you were to make banana bread, banana cupcakes or banana cake, the batter that you would use would all be the same batter- yet once baked they would be 3 distinct baked goods. The Trinity similarly is 3 distinct persons from the SAME SUBSTANCE.

God the Father

God the Father = God the creator= God our Mother= Yahweh = Father = 1st person of the Trinity → all are referring to the same person

- God the Father is eternal. God has always existed and always will exist. God, although often called Father, has no gender and neither male nor female.
- We call God our creator because all things were created by God. God's power is universal, it's all knowing, it's loving and it's mysterious. It's mysterious because God is so great that our minds are far too small to be able to comprehend God. We can only comprehend what God reveals to us.
- God the father has made us in the image of God. We are made like God because our souls are spirits (and God is spiritual); our soul is immortal (or will never die- like God); our soul can reason or think (as can God) and our soul has free will (can choose right and wrong).
- In the Old Testament God spoke to Moses, Abraham, the prophets and other people. God was always trying to help them draw closer to God. God wanted what was best for them and God wants what's best for us now. God knows that what is best for us is God, but does not force us to choose God- instead gives us free will.
- The Old Testament shows us that God is faithful, just and merciful. God the Father fights for us and protects us.
- Jesus reveals the Father to us. Jesus spoke to God the Father in prayer constantly. Jesus showed us that we too can have a personal relationship with God who is our mother, our father, our beginning and our end.

God the Son

God the son = Jesus= Jesus Christ= the Son of God= 2nd person of the trinity → all are referring to the same person

- **God the Son is eternal** (meaning always has existed and always will exist).

John 1:1-2: “It the beginning the **Word** and the **Word** was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.”

This passage taken from John is referring to the **Word (capital W) of God- in other words- God the Son**. So if we replace the word Word with Jesus it would say: In the beginning was Jesus and Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God. He was in the beginning with God.

- When God the Son became human and was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary then **God the Son** became known as **Jesus Christ**. **Jesus is fully and truly both GOD and MAN**. (another mystery)
- We confess in the Creed that Jesus is BEGOTTEN and NOT MADE. Meaning that he is of the same substance as God the father. (like the banana bread and cake) Although we call Jesus the SON of God, we profess that Jesus is ‘consubstantial’ with the Father, which means they **always existed together**.
- Jesus became human and has thus walked the same difficult path we walk every day. Everything we experience, he experienced too- feeling left out, wanting to have a purpose in life, being hungry- the only way he differed from us was that he NEVER SINNED.
- Jesus REVEALS the Trinity to the rest of us. Jesus revealed to us who God is: love. Jesus revealed to us that God is faithful, loyal, loving and sacrificing. Jesus showed us how we are called to live. Jesus shows us the type of relationship we are called to have with God. Jesus showed us how to pray. Jesus lived, died and rose from the dead so that one day we can go to Heaven and be with God.
- Jesus walked the walk.

God the Holy Spirit

God the Holy Spirit = paraclete= helper = 3rd person of the trinity= Spirit of Truth= Spirit of Jesus = Spirit of God = Spirit of _____ → all are referring to the same person

- Pentecost reading: Acts 2:1-4
- Like God the Father and God the Son- the Holy Spirit has always existed as long as the other 2. We learned that God is love. Love by its nature GIVES freely. God the Father and God the Son love each other so much that from their love God the Holy Spirit is born.
- That is why we hear in the Creed that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son but is cut from the same cloth (banana bread).
- The Old Testament reveals much about God the Father, the New Testament reveals much about Jesus, and it is only in living and getting to know God the Holy Spirit that we learn who the Holy Spirit is.
- Jesus told us before going to Heaven that he would send the Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who is with us constantly. It is the Holy Spirit who God sent and who came down upon the Apostles in tongues of fire.
- It is the Holy Spirit who speaks through us and gives us the gifts we need in the times we need them.
- The Holy Spirit INSPIRED the scriptures- meaning told the authors of the bible what to write- and who spoke through the prophets in the Old Testament and still today.
- The Holy Spirit is present in the Mass and assists in the Mass. We hear the priest call down upon the Holy Spirit to change the bread and wine into Jesus’ body and blood.
- The Holy Spirit intercedes for us or brings our prayers to God the Father.
- The Holy Spirit guides our Pope, guided our Church Fathers and guides us today.
- We first receive the Holy Spirit at our Baptism. At Confirmation you are going to have an outpouring of the Holy Spirit- meaning God is going to come upon you like never before.