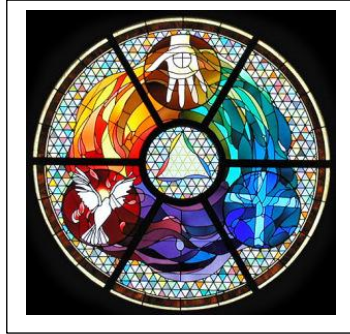


# The Most Holy Trinity



The Trinity is one of the most important theological ideas ever. The basic idea behind the Trinity is this: God is three things, but also still one thing. God is three persons who have existed for all eternity, are equally powerful, wise, and good, and who have always depended on each other.

There's the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, existing in perfect harmony as one God. How can this be? How can you have three things that exist perfectly together?

Find a piano. Pick any white key, put your thumb on it. Then skip a white key and put your index finger on the next one. Then skip one more and put your middle finger on the next white key. Now press down your thumb, then index finger, then middle finger. There's a harmonic chord. Three distinct sounds all existing in a perfect harmony.

Three things that are also one thing. The three-ness and the oneness work together perfectly. This gives us a picture (or rather a sound) of what God is like.

There is one God (like the one chord) with three persons (like the three notes) all existing in perfect harmony forever.

Now, unlike the chord we just played, which came into being when we played them, but then ceased to exist, the three persons of the Trinity have always existed. And they've always existed in the relationship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father has always been the Father of the Son. (You can't be a father without a son.) The Son has always been Son to the Father. And they have always been unified by the love of the Spirit.

What this means is that the most basic fact about all reality is loving relationship.

Before there was a world, there was a family: the family of the triune God.

We know God is love because God is a Trinity. We know God is a Trinity because God is love.

So the Trinity is this perfect, loving relationship that's always existed. One God in three persons. And because the Trinity is one God, the persons work together in everything they do.

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus said we are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The entire Trinity is at work in saving us, so we must name the whole Trinity as we're made part of Christ's body through baptism.

And it's not just baptism, all throughout the story of Jesus we see all three persons at work. There's a pattern here.

The Father is the source of everything and He sends the Son into the world in the power of the Spirit.

- We see this in Jesus' birth. By the Holy Spirit, the Son of God is born into the world (Luke 1:35).
- We see this in Jesus' baptism. The Son carries out the mission of the Father in the power of the Spirit (Luke 3:21-23).
- We see this in Jesus' blessing of His disciples when He ascends. When the Son goes back to the Father He sends the Spirit to empower us (John 15:26).

The Father is the source and goal of our salvation. Jesus is the way. And the Holy Spirit is the power to get there.

Imagine it like this:

- The Father is the one who says, “Let there be light.”
- The Son goes and flips on the light switch.
- The Spirit is the electricity that powers the light bulb.

The Father is the source. The Son is the way. And the Holy Spirit is the power.

Another way of thinking about this is to imagine yourself kneeling to pray the Lord’s Prayer. We are praying the prayer Jesus taught us. Now imagine Jesus is standing beside you. We begin by praying, “Our Father.” Jesus is helping us to have right relationship with the Father. Now imagine that it’s the Holy Spirit inside you who is giving you the power to pray the prayer Jesus taught us.

The Son beside you. The Father above you. The Spirit inside you. All working to give us a right relationship with God. The Father is the source. The Son is the way. And the Holy Spirit is the power.

All this might seem a bit mysterious and complicated. But once you start looking for the Trinity, you see it everywhere. For instance, the very words of the Creed that we say in Mass are shaped by the Trinity. We begin with the Father (the source), move to the Son (the way), and end with the Spirit and the Spirit’s area of work (empowering the church).

The Father above you. Jesus beside you. The Spirit inside you. The Most Holy Trinity.