

# THE SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

JUNE 7, 2020

## MASS READINGS

MONDAY: 1 KGS 17:1-6/MT 5:1-12

TUESDAY: 1 KGS 17:7-16/MT 5:13-16

WEDNESDAY: 1 KGS 18:20-39/MT 5:17-19

THURSDAY: ACTS 11:21B-26,13:1-3/MT 5:20-26

FRIDAY: 1 KGS 19-9A,11-16/MT 5:27-32

SATURDAY: 1 KGS 19:19-21/MT 5:33-36

**NEXT SUNDAY: THE MOST HOLY BODY  
AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (CORPUS CHRISTI)**

**DT 8:2-3,14B-16A/I COR 10:16-17/JN 6:51-58**

## MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: RAYMOND BROWN

TUESDAY: FERRITER FAMILY

WEDNESDAY: SI-MIKE ROBERTS FAMILY

THURSDAY: LYNN YOUART

FRIDAY: POOR SOULS

VIGIL: LILLIAN MILLS

7:30: LYNN YOUART

10:00: RAYMOND BROWN

NOON: FOR THE PARISH

## MEMORIAL FLOWERS

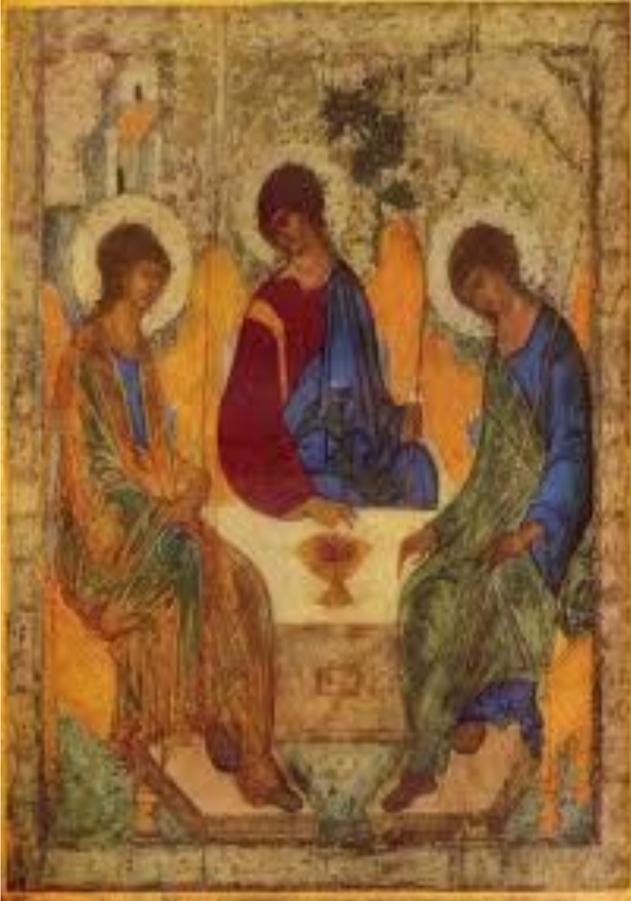
For the Holy Father, all priests, deacon & religious: (Norb & Mark FitzSimons, Larry White). (Frank Tymoski, Debbie Kennedy, Martha Chapman, Al Stanley). (Burnell, Anna & Henry Totten, Robert Stump, Victor & Dorothy Ringle). (Judy Buckles, Mary Salrin, Larry Johnston). (deceased members of the Schlosser & Kanthack families). Bob Bohan. Carl & Scott Waclawik. (Robert Bennett & Dick Livingston). (Karen Fox, Mike & Rosemary Cavanaugh).

## The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

In its earliest days the Church prayed to the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit. This manner, repeated today, reminds us of the way in which the Three Persons/One God unite us to him and one another and the very act of praying in this fashion unites within each and every one of us the true self and dismisses the fragmentary aspect that we have inherited through sin and to which we have contributed through our own personal and actual sin. This union often baffles us when it comes to trying to understand just exactly what we mean by "Three as One". Let us keep in mind the words of one theologian, "the Trinity is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be adored." Herein lies the very heart of our own problems both natural and supernatural. While there are many things we might be able to "solve" and work out on our own (although I'm increasingly finding it difficult to imagine what those are as I get older), the one thing we cannot do for ourselves is assure our own salvation and that of others. We are told to work out our salvation in "fear and trembling". A rather frightening prospect unless we bear in mind that the fear we are speaking about here is what happens when we cannot know and do for ourselves. This can be a palpable fear for some, for others it is just something we dismiss and carry on with our own personal fantasies and call that life. For the courageous who don't mind a little fear what this means is that we "let God be God". We allow him to provide for us precisely just what he alone knows we need and what will bring about the true satisfaction for which our souls long and for which they were created, much of which we haven't a clue most of the time. That we need a Trinity to do this is surprising to some but to those who are painfully aware of this interior and exterior "fragmentation" this is not such a difficult question. The Triune God is that "perfect community" that perfect union in which we were created and for which we live. Seeking this in our lives we try a number of ways and means and each, in its own way, mirrors the life of the Trinity within us, but try as we might we cannot quite grasp that necessary aspect which "brings it all together". In this we have the example of the Son who brings the truth about the Father to us in his person and through the gift of the Holy Spirit allows us to finally find that home for which we long. His Father is Our Father. He, the Son is both Brother and Lord. His Gift, the Spirit, is Advocate, Counselor, Guide and Power of Union. In this way we need only Adore for there is then nothing more to solve. To Him be Glory and Honor and Praise now and always and forever and ever. AMEN

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*Be near us, Holy Trinity,  
One God of equal majesty;  
All things that are on thee depend,  
Who art beginning without end.*

*The myriad armies of the sky  
Praise, worship, tell thy Name most high:  
This triple frame, earth, air and sea,  
Doth bless thee everlastingly.*

*We also come, thy servants all,  
And at thy feet adoring fall:  
O join the vows and prayers we bring  
With those high hymns the angels sing.*

*Thee we confess one Light to be,  
Thee we adore, co-equal Three:  
Alpha and Omega we cry,  
And all things having breath reply.*

*Praise to the Father, made of none,  
Praise to his sole-begotten Son,  
Praise to the Holy Spirit be,  
Eternal Godhead, One in Three.*

## Enjoy the Hospitality of the Trinity (with Rublev's Icon)

Bill Gaultiere

Welcome to the embrace of the Trinity! I invite you to enjoy with me this beautiful ancient painting by Rublev and experience the hospitality of the Trinity. Let's enjoy the love of the Father, Son, and Spirit. Let's open our hearts to the Lord as we meditate on Rublev's icon...

*Yes, Lord, I want to sit at the table with you. I love to enjoy your company. I'm eager to hear what you want to say to me...*

### History of Rublev's Icon

St. Andrei Rublev painted *The Hospitality of Abraham* in 1411 for the abbot of the Trinity Monastery in Russia. Rublev portrayed what has become the quintessential icon of the Holy Trinity by depicting the three mysterious strangers who visited Abraham (Genesis 18:1-15).

Many in Rublev's culture were confused by the doctrine of the Trinity and others rejected it altogether. Rublev's Trinity showed them a lovely understanding of God as Three-in-One that is beyond trying to "figure out." Almost 600 years later Rublev's icon continues to draw people into the mysterious and wonderful presence of the Trinity.

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## Abraham's Three Visitors

In the Genesis account the Lord visits Abraham in the form of three men who are apparently angels representing God.

Abraham bows low to the ground before his three visitors and they speak to Abraham in union and are alternatively referred to by the Genesis writer as "they" or "the Lord." Abraham offers them the hospitality of foot washing, rest under a shade tree, and a meal and they offered him the announcement that God was going to give he and his wife Sarah a son, though Sarah was far past the age of childbearing.

## Symbolism in Rublev's Icon

In Rublev's icon painting he depicts the three heavenly visitors sitting at a table with a cup placed before them on the table. Most scholars understand the figures to be seated left to right in their doxological order of Father, Son, and Spirit.

Others had painted this Biblical story, but Rublev was the first to paint only the three angelic figures and to make them of equal size. Rublev depicts the three as One Lord. Each holds a rod in his left hand, symbolizing their equality. Each wears a cloak of blue, the color of divinity. And the face of each is exactly the same, depicting their oneness.

The Father is like the figure on the left. His divinely blue tunic is cloaked in a color that is light and almost transparent because he is the hidden Creator. With his right he blesses the Son – he is pleased with the sacrifice he will make. His head is the only one that is lifted high and yet his gaze is turned to the other two figures.

The Son is portrayed in the middle figure. He wears both the blue of divinity and reddish purple of royal priesthood. He is the King who descends to serve as priest to the people he created and to become part of them. With his hand he blesses the cup he is to drink, accepting his readiness to sacrifice himself for humanity. His head is bowed in submission to the Father on the left.

The Spirit is indicated in the figure on the right. Over his divinely blue tunic he wears a cloak of green, symbolizing life and regeneration. His hand is resting on the table next to the cup, suggesting that he will be with the Son as he carries out his mission. His head is inclined toward the Father and the Son. His gaze is toward the open space at the table.

Did you notice the beautiful circular movement in the icon of Father, Son, and Spirit? The Son and the Spirit incline their heads toward the Father and he directs his gaze back at them. The Father blesses the Son, the Son accepts the cup of sacrifice, the Spirit comforts the Son in his mission, and the Father shows he is pleased with the Son. Love is initiated by the Father, embodied by the Son, and accomplished through the Spirit.

## Henri Nouwen's Meditation on Rublev's Icon

What a joy it is for us to be drawn into this circle of divine love portrayed in Rublev's icon! In the words of Henri Nouwen:

The more we look at this holy image with the eyes of faith, the more we come to realize that it is painted not as a lovely decoration for a convent church, nor as a helpful explanation of a difficult doctrine, but as a holy place to enter and stay within.

As we place ourselves in front of the icon in prayer, we come to experience a gentle invitation to participate in the intimate conversation that is taking place among the three divine angels and to join them around the table. The movement from the Father toward the Son and the movement of both Son and Spirit toward the Father become a movement in which the one who prays is lifted up and held secure...

We come to see with our inner eyes that all engagements in this world can bear fruit only when they take place within this divine circle... the house of perfect love (*Behold the Beauty of the Lord: Praying with Icons*, p. 20-22).

Praying to the Lord before Rublev's icon painting can help us to join Abraham in hosting the Lord in our hearts. As we do we discover that the Father, Son, and Spirit were already inviting us to join in their circle of love! "We love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

When we participate in "The Hospitality of Abraham" to the Lord we discover that really we are responding to "The Hospitality of the Trinity."

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## THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

“...the Spirit of truth...will glorify me.”

Outside of some obvious liturgical mentions and gestures some have gone so far as to suggest that if the Church stopped speaking about the Trinity no one would notice. There is some truth in this if we consider how we orchestrate our personal prayer life and how we often focus exclusively on a notion of God as a solitary figure somewhere off in the “somethingsphere”. One of the fundamental teachings of our faith involves looking at God in a rather unusual way. We believe that Jesus, as Son of God revealed a rather intimate detail about divine activity in that he came to bring us a closer look at his Father and subsequently through grace, our Father, and he unites us to himself and this Father through what we have come to call the Holy Spirit, namely the love which exists between Father and Son. This union constitutes a very important change in us, in that it allows us a share in the Divine Life. With this share comes some rather frightening revelations particularly in light of our thoughts about ourselves. We have always accepted the popular definition of “person” as synonymous with individual. This tends to isolate us from others and causes us to ignore a fundamental truth about ourselves in light of the revelation regarding God as Triune. We are persons in so far as we are united to one another. We are not isolated individuals having minimal contact and even then at our discretion. We are united in a variety of ways and the Scriptures give us some helpful direction in this matter. Truth be told our faith, flowing from this understanding of God as Triune then unites us even more closely within ourselves, among other persons and even within creation as a whole. In light of this sin is often spoken of in terms of “fragmentation”, a tearing apart. Our faith conquers this and provides a model for that kind of “wholeness” or holiness which allows us intimate union with the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. This may all seem very confusing but as one writer put it, “the Trinity is a mystery to be adored, not a problem to be solved.” In light of this we too become a mystery in union with a Father who so loves us that he sent his only Begotten Son and who, with that Son bestows upon us the gift of the Holy Spirit. This “*communio*”, this communion with the Blessed Trinity cements us ever more closely to a union of our persons in God, a union of persons one to another and a union with the entire created order. Our interior lives begin to reflect this transformation when we, taking our baptismal resolutions seriously, begin to model our lives after that of the Son, becoming by grace what he is by nature. Becoming so united we acquire a dignity greater than we had in the beginning and with this dignity we model this new life in what we think, say and do. Thus demonstrating the power of this union which as the Apostle reminds us, is progressing along as the Divine Plan unfolds and we with it for the greater honor and glory of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

### *Hymn to the Trinity*

*Blessed angel spirits offer praise undying,  
Ever crying Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Sabaoth.*

*Saints and Martyrs praise thy Name, Trinity  
lifegiving,  
Earthborne sorrow leaving before Thy throne,  
Evercrying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.*

*Father omnipotent, mighty in glory, Christ,  
Thy Son, our Saviour who died that we might  
live,*

*Holy Spirit, mystic dove, dwelling with us ever  
more,*

*We praise Thee, Blessed Trinity.*

*With the Angels' sacred hymn,*

*All thy might proclaiming,*

*With the mystic cherubim*

*in songs of praise we join,*

*Holy, Holy, Holy,*

*Join we all in songs of praise for ever;*

*Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah,*

*Lord God of Sabaoth.*

*(Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovski-English translation)*

*St. Patrick went to Connaught where he met two of King Laoghaire's daughters, Ethne and Fedelm. St. Patrick had been unable to persuade the king to convert, but he convinced the king's daughters. During their time of instruction St. Patrick used a shamrock to visualize the mystery of the Trinity, how a single plant with three leaves is analogous to the one Triune God with three separate and distinct Persons.*

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## Triune God

### FATHER MISAEL BACLEON

One aspect of God that can hardly be understood by the human mind is the reality that our God is a Triune God. This truth took time to come to us and be fully realized. Even then, no one could understand it with much clarity and explicit fullness.

It's easy to note that God is the Creator and is the Infinite, Absolute and Powerful. But to think that he is one in three Divine Persons seems to be very unbelievable. God is the creative word that gives life to every creature.

"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." He is the second person of the Holy Trinity, the ultimate expression of God's love for us. God the Father, as love himself, must have a Son as the being of his love. So, Jesus Christ is the revelation of what God really is; the fullest being is in God.

Life sparks between the Father and the Son that is so dynamic, so powerful that the Holy Spirit comes forth eternally as one living-giving person. As love generates love and life generates life, so also the essential meaning of Trinity. It is the overflowing of love into the entire universe that ultimately generates life, creating and renewing the face of the earth.

Since our minds are very limited, we can only appropriate the mystery of the Trinity as separate works of God. We always think of the Father as the Creator, the Son as the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit filling us with love and sanctity. But the truth is, each of these works, the Three Persons in one God, is present all the time and every time.

Whatever is said of one attributes also to the rest of the Trinity. The unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is so perfect that in every work of creation, redemption and sanctification they are all present and active.

Today, let us make our faith in the Triune God a reality that will surely bring others to a meaningful faith in God. Make our Church a witnessing community that proclaims the reality of our God.

Though we are too many we are one in our God, one Body of Christ. This is our reflection of the mystery of the Trinity, the unity of one God in three Divine Persons.

*Father Bacleon is parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception parish in Manhattan.*

## Catholic Faith Series: The Trinity

The Catholic Church teaches the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The Godhead contains three distinct and separate persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not three Gods, but one God in three persons. "The Divine persons do not share the one divinity among themselves but each of them is God whole and entire." ([Catechism of the Catholic Church §253](#))

"During the first centuries the Church sought to clarify its Trinitarian faith, both to deepen its own understanding of the faith and to defend it against the errors that were deforming it. This clarification was the work of the early councils, aided by the theological work of the Church Fathers and sustained by the Christian people's sense of the faith." (Catechism of the Catholic Church §250)

Even though the word Trinity cannot be found anywhere in scripture there are numerous references to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. In the Old Testament the Father and the Holy Spirit are evident, but the Son is only alluded to. The early church struggled to put together a workable definition for the concept of a triune God. It was not until the [First Council of Nicaea](#) in 325 that the Trinity became part of church doctrine and a century or more later that the doctrine of the trinity took on the form it has maintained ever since.

As mentioned earlier, the doctrine of the Trinity is not plainly revealed in the Old Testament; it is only alluded to. Without the teaching of the New Testament one would not be aware of the concept of a triune God. One of the clearest Old Testament indicators of the Trinity is found in the book of Isaiah. In chapter 48, verse 16 it can be argued that it is the Son speaking. He refers to God (the Father) and to the Spirit. In the next verse the Son is identified as the Lord your God.

*"Draw near to me, hear this! From the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there. And now the Lord God has sent me and his spirit. Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord your God, who teaches you for your own good, who leads you in the way you should go" ([Isaiah 48:16-17](#)).*

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Other statements in the Old Testament allude to God being with others of the same rank when the plural form of the word for God is used.

*"The Hebrew word for God is Elohim. Elohim is a plural noun but it is used here with a singular verb bara. In the remainder of the Old Testament, when Elohim speaks of the true God, it is always used with a singular verb. The conclusion to be drawn is that in some sense God is both singular and plural. The doctrine of the Trinity states this – within the nature of the one God there are three eternal persons" (quote from [Don Stewart](#), "The Bible Explorer").*

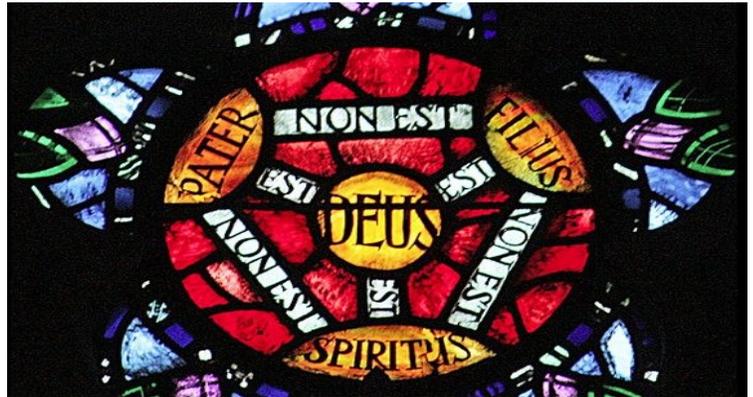
*"Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" ([Genesis 1:26](#)).*

There are many obvious references to a triune God in the New Testament. Two of the best known examples are the following:

*"And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." ([Matthew 3:16-17](#))*

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." ([Matthew 28:19](#))*

Although the belief in the Trinity is part of church teaching and is confirmed every Sunday when the Creed is recited at Mass it is difficult to articulate what this really means. A complete understanding of this doctrine is beyond the finite human mind to comprehend, but one can glean a number of truths from the teaching of a Triune God. Even though they are individuals with distinct characteristics and responsibilities the Trinity always exists in complete harmony. From this one can deduce humankind's need for others if life is to be worthwhile, and in the possibility for cooperation and peace to exist among all people. Ultimately though, one must accept the doctrine of the Trinity on faith and be content to rest in the mystery of God.



## Consider:

The mystery of the Trinity:

- Three distinct persons in one God
- Each person with individual characteristics and responsibilities
- Each person in cooperation and unity

Today I will spend time with the Holy Trinity in prayer.  
Today I will ponder each person of the Trinity.  
Today I will strive to live in harmony and unity with those with whom I share this planet.

## Question:

1. What does the doctrine of the Trinity say about God?
2. How is the teaching of the Trinity alluded to in the Old Testament?  
Why do we need the New Testament to see examples of the Trinity in the Old Testament?

## Pray:

Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
Creator, Savior and Sanctifier.  
You have loved me from all eternity  
And at the decided hour set my feet upon this earth  
Lead me, I pray, in the way that I should go.  
Help me to glorify you always through all of my actions.  
Amen.