

*In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Today is a very important feast in the life of the Church. Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity. This feast is unique to Western Christianity. It is not an ancient feast, but rather a more modern feast, which developed out of a desire to fight against heresy.

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity was instituted and placed on our calendar to fight against false teachings about who God is. It is a myth of the Devil that all of the heresies surrounding the Trinity were put to death in the earliest days of the Church. These heresies are alive and well and exist like parasites within churches around the world. For this reason, Trinity Sunday is a sobering day. It is a day to ask ourselves, "Do we have a right belief about who God is?" It is a day to let the Church instruct us in what we must believe if we are to know God and be saved.

Saint Athanasius, one of the most influential Fathers of the Church, reminds us of the ongoing threats of heresy. Writing about the dogma of the Trinity, he says, "It will not be irrelevant to examine the ancient tradition and the doctrine and the faith of the Catholic Church, which, as we know, the Lord handed down, the apostles preached, and the fathers preserved. For on this tradition the Church is founded, and if anyone abandons it, he cannot be a Christian nor have any right to the name." As Athanasius states, it will never be irrelevant to regularly examine who God has revealed Himself to be. In this life, heresy will always be a threat to the faithful.

A Christian falls into heresy when he willfully believes something that is contrary to the Church's teaching. When he does this, he becomes unorthodox. In other words, a heresy is a wrong teaching and a heretic is one who willfully clings to that false teaching. A Christian becomes a heretic when he is told by the Church that his belief is not right, and, even in light of the correction, he still chooses to cling to that which is false. Those who do so become numbered among the Apostate and we pray that they will repent and return to the Catholic Faith.

We do not need to worry about becoming heretics ourselves, so long as we remain obedient to what "the Lord handed down, the apostles preached, and the fathers preserved." If we seek to cling to the Catholic Faith, allowing the Church to purify our thinking, we shall never have to worry about whether or not we are heretics. It should be a great comfort to our consciences that our Lord has taught us that we need only have faith as big as a mustard seed and that he considers the simple faith of children not only valid, but laudable.

In this life, many people are confused about who God is, but this is not so for the Church and her members. There have been various opinions, or beliefs, concerning who God is throughout the centuries. Just take a look at all of the religions of the world and you will see very different beliefs concerning the identity of God. But there is only one opinion, one belief, one dogma that is the Orthodox Faith. And that is the dogma that we celebrate today on the feast of the Holy Trinity: *that God has revealed Himself to be 3 persons, 1 God.*

Today, it is the custom of many parishes to recite what is known as the Athanasian Creed. Although it is not a creed proper, and its exact origins are unknown, it is one of the Church's clearest articulations of who God has revealed Himself to be.

Because the Athanasian Creed is so clear, it is rather lengthy and composed with words and concepts that we may not be familiar with, since we are not exposed to them in our day-to-day lives. For this reason, let us consider only a brief portion of the symbol as we reflect upon who God has revealed Himself to be.

In the Athanasian creed, it is declared that “the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; Neither confounding the Persons; nor dividing the Essence. For there is one Person of the Father; another of the Son; and another of the Holy Ghost.”

The dogma of the Holy Trinity is a mystery. But, what do we mean by this? What kind of mystery are we talking about? The dogma of the Holy Trinity is not a mystery in the sense that it is a puzzle that needs be solved. No, rather, it is called a mystery because it is a truth so grand, that it is beyond the capacity of our finite minds to fully grasp.

The dogma of the Holy Trinity is a revelation that deserves the highest degree of our reverence, honor, and awe. C. B. Moss, one of the greatest theologians of the English Church, encourages us not to be persuaded by the attacks of those who claim that belief in the Trinity is illogical. In his work, titled, *the Christian Faith*, Moss writes, “God has revealed to [men] truths about Himself which are beyond the reach of reason, though not inconsistent with it.”

The dogma of the Holy Trinity is not a mystery because it is unreasonable. It is a mystery because it is a revelation that has been given unto us even though it is beyond the power of our reason.

The mystery of the Holy Trinity has been given to us by divine revelation. That is to say, it is no invention of man; God Himself has told us who He is. If we think back to some of the various Scripture lessons that we have heard throughout the liturgical year, we will remember that many times we have been told that Jesus is the one who leads us to the Father. We have been told that the Son is the Icon of the Father.

In these last days our Lord has shown us the Father. He has been for us the Icon of the Father, and in being so, He has enabled us to know not only the Father, but the Comforter as well. Jesus has made it possible for us to know His Father, Himself, and the Holy Ghost. Jesus has revealed the Holy Trinity. He has revealed Himself.

God is closer to us than we think. When we feel discouraged about our inability to know Him fully, may we remember that it is in God that we live, and move, and have our being. What should puzzle us most in this life is not who God is...we can trust that He has faithfully revealed

Himself to us. No, what should puzzle us are the countless times that we fail to love God in return. If it is true that God the Holy Trinity has chosen us to be His children, to partake in His divine life, to become a very partaker in His divine nature, why then is it that we reject Him and the destiny He so freely offers us? If we were made to be like Him, why do we so often disfigure ourselves by sinning against Him?

Every time that we sin we reject the Holy Trinity and the Love He offers us in Himself. Every time that we decide willfully to sin against God, we reject the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The Good news for all of us is that the Holy Trinity has not left us in our sin. He has provided a means of healing, a means of becoming whole, a means of becoming like Him. All we need do is listen to His Son...to trust that His witness is true...to repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

On this Trinity Sunday may we not be merely caught up in a scholarly reflection upon who God is. May we not be here today like students in a classroom, merely seeking an answer to a burning question. But rather, may we be set ablaze today with a burning passion to know God deeper each day. May our hearts long to know Him, even as we are known.

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