

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity A - We are Trinitarian Christians

May 31, 2026

We are Trinitarian Christians: we begin our day in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit in our morning prayers and we end our day the same way in our evening prayers. We bless ourselves with the holy water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit when we enter the church and we leave the church the same way. We begin our liturgy and end the liturgy the same way. In other words, the Trinity is with us in our coming and going, in our beginning and our ending. The Trinity is our way of life and God is Trinity, the same way that God is love. St. Augustine once said, "if you see love, you see the Trinity." "How so?" we might ask. The first thing to note is that love is perhaps the best place to start when talking about God as Trinity. In the First Epistle of John, we hear this: "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them" (1 John 4-16).

In the high Middle Ages, Richard of St. Victor showed how reflecting on love can lead us to thinking of God as Trinity. We begin with the basic claim: God is love with the emphasis on God. God, we believe, is the most perfect, the greatest, the most truly good and beautiful. So, if God is love, then the love that is God must also be the most perfect, the greatest, the most truly good and beautiful love we can imagine, with the emphasis on love. Richard of St. Victor thinks the nature of love is to be directed towards someone or something. Perfect love cannot be directed solely toward itself. God's love flows into all of creation and into every trembling heart. We give thanks to God for the goodness and love made known to us in creation, in the calling of Israel to be God's people, and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus God's Son. So, the God who is love must be *interpersonal*. There must be more than one perfect person who *are* this love and the perfect love overflowing from the two persons toward another person, and this third person is the Holy Spirit who is the perfect love that overflows from the love of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father.

In the Gospel of John, we hear another clear statement: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16). That is to say, in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, God has acted by the power of the Holy Spirit to save the world. This is, in many ways, just rock-solid, basic Christianity. God, in love, has acted, by the power of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ, for us and for our salvation.

The Trinity is a theological way of making sense of this gospel message in light of the Bible's unwavering commitment to belief in one God. From beginning to end, in the Old Testament and the New Testament, scripture affirms a faith in the one God, the Holy One of Israel. Jesus himself quotes the ancient Jewish prayer, the *Shema*, which says, "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The early church maintains Israel's commitment to monotheism, to trust in and loyal to one God. The action of God in Jesus Christ is the action of the God who is love from beginning to end. The God of love who created us out of and for love. The God of love who took on our humanity, took on the burden of our guilt, and put an end to it on the cross. The God of love who, through the Holy Spirit, now offers us forgiveness, so that we can participate in and share God's forgiving love with the world.

The Trinity is an invitation to discover and deepen the relationship between God and ourselves in the light of what the gospel tells us about his inner life. However, to come to an awareness of our true dignity as children of God demands a great deal of change and conversion on our part. Pope Francis teaches that the Holy Trinity is not just an abstract theological exercise, but a "revolution in our way of life". He emphasizes that because God is a loving communion of three persons who live with and for

one another, Christians are called to reflect this love through service, self-giving, and unity in daily life. It requires a basic readiness to let go of everything which binds us to this world. It is very easy for us to be lured into worshipping false gods such as money, power and prestige and turn away from our one and only true God who is a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger and rich in kindness and faithfulness. Because God loves us and wants us to return that love, he offers us a share in his own life. That demands that we allow the risen Christ to make his home within our hearts. If our behaviour is to mirror the life of the Trinity, then the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit should cover our every word and action. So let the Trinity be not a doctrine at a distance, but a home we are already inside.