

Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity
Homily by Deacon Jim Olshefski
June 12, 2022

You may have noticed that Mary and I have not been present for the last few weeks. First, we each had a mild case of COVID-19 that caused us to remain in isolation for about 10 days (as a result, I missed my 50th high school reunion). Then, I attended the Indianapolis 500 with our older son and had a marvelous time! Finally, we assisted that same son, who is a doctor in the US Air Force, with his family move from Alabama to Florida, near Cape Canaveral. That trip was fraught with challenges: 3 flat tires and a fire on the rental moving trucks; all of which resulted in spending more time on the side of the road waiting for repairs than actual driving time. However, the retelling of the details of these last three weeks must wait for another time. Suffice it to say, we're VERY glad to be back home!!

A positive development from these events was the opportunity that we had to spend time with two of our granddaughters: Almost three year old, Nora, and almost one year old, Eva. While every grandparent lays claim to the brightest, most beautiful grandchildren in the world, I have to say that I was pretty impressed that Nora can count up to 15. And their cousin, four year old, Charlie, can count to 100, in both French and English! In a relatively short time, they'll all be learning addition, subtraction, their multiplication tables, then Algebra, Geometry, Calculus and who knows? Maybe even Differential Equations!

This process, in which basic concepts are learned before those more advanced is called Sequential Learning, which is exactly what we, the children of God, have experienced throughout our human history insofar as our understanding of God is concerned.

As we read in the Catechism, God made himself known to us in the beginning with Adam and Eve. Then, through Noah, the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament, God gradually revealed more and more of himself to us. In certain Old Testament passages, such as that which we hear in today's first reading from the Book of Proverbs which refers to "the wisdom of God," God left traces of his Trinitarian being. Then came the nativity, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, who is the "fullness of all revelation," and who promised, as we hear in today's Gospel, to send the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of truth, [who] will guide [us] to all truth." In this passage, God has fully revealed to us his Trinitarian nature: One God in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And that is what we celebrate today, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, the first Sunday after Pentecost. As Pope Benedict XVI tells us in his encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, Trinity Sunday is an invitation to remember the "[being] Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." In revealing himself as Trinitarian, God hasn't merely shared impersonal facts about himself; rather, God has shared his very self with us. He has revealed to us that "God is love." And he has invited us into his inner life and communion of love, which alone is the origin, goal, and meaning of our life. As we again read in the Catechism, "By sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret: God himself if an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange" (CCC221).

The dogma on which the entirety of the Christian faith is based is that of the Most Holy Trinity. The concept of "one God in three persons" is a mystery which is "the central mystery of Christian faith and life...It is the most fundamental and essential teaching in the 'hierarchy of the truths of faith.'" Yet, this mystery, rooted in Trinitarian love, is that from which all creation unfolds and to which we, God's children, are called through our baptism "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." We are called to model this love, however imperfect we humans are, in our relationships with God and one another. It is quite a challenge that God has presented us. It's oftentimes hard to model that Trinitarian love when we're confronted with the rude driver on the highway, the inconsiderate person at the grocery store, or sometimes, even our own "loved ones." But that's what we, Christians one-and-all, are called to do: Love as completely, as totally, as we humanly can—In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.