

# Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA  
The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity • Year C • June 15, 2025

*Most Holy and triune God,  
we glorify you:  
Father, all-powerful,  
Jesus Christ,  
Lord and Redeemer,  
Holy Spirit,  
fire of divine love.  
Draw us closer  
to your mystery,  
you who are  
One God in Three Persons,  
that we may worship you  
as we proclaim and live  
our faith in you.*



## Sunday Word

Proverbs 8:22-31

Psalms 8:4-9

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

### **Before All Else**

God was, God is, God will always be. Before the earth and the heavens were created, there was God. All things were made by the wisdom of God. The heavens above and earth below, crafted by wisdom, are intelligible and ordered by the command of the divine.

### **Ever Rising to God**

Faith provides access to God. It is a grace gained in Christ, a hope that will not disappoint. In spite of trial and distress, believers stand firm in their hope, for the love of God is poured into their hearts through the Holy Spirit.

### **Bearing Truth**

Jesus promises his disciples that the Spirit will come to them, bearing the fullness of truth. Jesus and the Father are one. The Holy Spirit will draw the disciples into that loving relationship. Guided by love, they will be equipped to bear the truth of our Salvation.

## Catholic Teaching: The Most Holy Trinity

We enter into the Salvation offered by God by being baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Note that we are baptized into the name, not the “names.” This is because we hold that there is only one God: the Father, his beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the Holy Trinity.

Given that the dogma of the Holy Trinity describes God’s very self, it is the central mystery of our Christian faith and life. It is the root of all the mysteries that we hold, the doctrine that underpins all the others.

Our Catholic articulation of the doctrine of the triune God evolved in response to misunderstandings and heretical movements within the first four centuries of the Church. The doctrine, succinctly stated, proclaims One God in Three

Divine Persons. This teaching rests not only on our conviction but also our experience of a loving God who is triune: Father, all-powerful Creator; the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord; and the Holy Spirit, Advocate and Guide. This experience was expressed from the earliest moments of Christianity in the baptismal formula, in Sacred Scripture (for example, 2 Corinthians 13:13 and Ephesians 4:4-6), in preaching, in catechesis, and in the prayer of the Church.

The Church uses a special terminology to delineate the doctrine of the Trinity. The term *substance* (synonymous with the terms *essence* and *nature*) indicates the divine being in its unity. The term *person* (or *hypostasis*) designates the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and the real distinction among them. The term *relation* designates that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live in relationship, each to the others.

In employing these terms, the Church clarifies significant aspects of our belief. First, the Trinity is one. We do not hold that there are three gods but only One God in Three Persons, such that the divinity is not divided between the three. Each of the Three Persons is God, whole and complete, such that each of them is that same reality of divine substance, essence, or nature. Second, the Divine Persons are really distinct from one another. In other words, God is truly one but not solitary. Third, the Divine Persons are relative to one another. Because the divine unity is not divided up between the Three Persons, their distinctiveness arises solely from the relationships, which relate them to one another.

We worship this one God in the Holy Trinity.

### ***Distinctiveness of Church Teaching***

The ultimate aim of the Christian life is union with God and being drawn up into the communion of life and love that is the Most Holy Trinity. Even now, as imperfect as we are, we Christians are invited to become a dwelling place for the Holy Trinity.

Reflecting this ultimate aim, many of the prayers at Mass conclude with a Trinitarian formula. Our prayer and worship is thus articulated by us through the Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

## **Key Terms**

### **MOST HOLY TRINITY**

One God in Three Divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The teaching of the Holy Trinity is a revealed truth at the heart of the Church's living faith as expressed in the Creed. It is accessible to us by faith and revealed to us by Jesus Christ (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 234, 240).

### **DIVINE PERSON**

This is the term used to describe the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in their real relation to and distinctiveness from one another within the unity of the Most Holy Trinity. Each of the Three Divine Persons is God, whole and complete (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 252).

### **DOGMA**

Dogmas are the most central doctrines of the Church (for example, the Trinity or the Real Presence). They are proposed as truths revealed by God, and therefore they require the assent of faith. The Church constantly propounds, explains, and clarifies dogma in every age (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 88).

## **Voices of Faith**

The Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is both holy and perfect and contains nothing alien or additional to the faith. . . . The Lord sent his apostles, teaching them to lay this foundation for the church. As he said: . . . "Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

—Saint Athanasius

True, no one has ever seen God as he is. And yet God is not totally invisible to us; he does not remain completely inaccessible. . . . In the Church's Liturgy, in her prayer, in the living community of the believers, we experience the love of God, we perceive his presence and we thus learn to recognize that presence in our daily lives.

—Pope Benedict XVI

## **Further Reading**

***Catechism of the Catholic Church***: 251 (terminology helps articulate the doctrine of the Trinity), 257 (God reveals self as a loving Trinity), 259 (Christian life aims at being one with God)

### ***United States Catholic Catechism for Adults***

Chapter 5 (I Believe in God), especially the section entitled "God Is the Trinity," pages 51–53

### ***Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church***

42 (God revealed as loving), 44 (central mystery of faith), 48 (Trinitarian faith), 49 (the work of the Trinity)