

## HOMILY — MOST HOLY TRINITY A

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*Ex 34:4b-6, 8-9*

*Canticle: Dan 3:52-56 R. Glory and praise for ever!*

*2 Cor 13:11-13*

*Jn3:16-18*

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The great St. Augustine spent more than 30 years writing his book *De Trinitate* [On the Trinity], trying to find a clear way to explain the mystery of the Trinity. The story goes that, one day, while walking by the sea, pondering the mystery of the Trinity, he saw a young boy running back and forth from the water to the shore. The boy was using a seashell to carry water from the ocean to a small hole in the sand.

The Bishop approached him and asked, “My boy, what are doing?” “I am trying to bring the whole sea into this hole,” the boy replied with a sweet smile.

“But that is impossible, my dear child,” said Augustine. The boy stopped, and looked up at Augustine, saying, “It’s no more impossible than trying to understand the mystery of the Trinity.” Then he vanished.

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If Augustine, one of the greatest theologians in the history of the Church, had a hard time understanding the Trinity and putting it into words, then it’s no surprise that we do, too. And that’s okay! That’s why today, as we celebrate this great mystery, we marvel at God’s greatness. And we rejoice because, in His great love for us, God allows us to participate in His life, in His very Being, in the Trinity!

Last week we closed the Easter Season by remembering in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Today, we reflect on God’s love by rejoicing that He’s revealed Himself to us as Father, Son and Spirit. But we rejoice not merely in knowledge, but in the experience God. Because God has revealed Himself to us precisely so that we might be able to participate in His divine life!

The Trinity can be explained briefly in this way: God the Father is, by His very essence, love, and allowing His love to flow from Himself, He begets the Son, who receives this love. But because the Son is also God and shares in the same nature as the Father, He, in turn, overflows with love to the Father, returning love for love. And it’s in this dynamic of mutual love that the Spirit proceeds from them both.

But the really cool part about all of this, is that, through the Incarnation — by joining our human nature to His divine nature — Jesus has brought us into this dynamic communion of love! In Baptism we were united to God — Father, Son and Spirit —, and received a share in His divine life. And that’s what it means to be saved: to have God’s very life within us! That’s why we belong to Him, why He is our God and we, His people. Through Baptism, we enter into the Trinity. And this is God’s desire for everyone; God wants everyone to be saved!

But as we say during the Rite of Baptism, this divine life needs to be “kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in [our] heart” (no. 177). Just because we’ve been Baptised, it doesn’t mean that we’ve got a free ticket to Heaven. If we don’t live, here and now, according to this gift we’ve received, then we will lose it; the divine life within us can be killed.

That’s why Jesus gave us the Sacraments: in particular, Confession to heal and forgive us, and the Eucharist to make us stronger. And every time we receive any of the Sacraments — but especially Confession and the Eucharist —, we’re sanctified and increasingly conformed to Christ, and enter more deeply into the life and mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. This — and only this! — is salvation.

This is the mystery we celebrate today, indeed that we celebrate at every Mass, as we marvel at the mystery of the one God in three Persons who shares His love and His life with us. What a beautiful mystery to ponder as we return to the public celebration of Mass. By opening our hearts to the Spirit, and living more and more according to the law of Christ, may we come to share fully in the Father’s life. Amen.