

**TRINITY SUNDAY 2015**  
**SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH**  
**FATHER CRAIG LOONEY**  
*THE NICENE CREED HYMN #268 (H1940)*

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Today we bind to ourselves the strong Name of the Trinity...by invocation of the same...the Three in One and One in Three.

Trinity Sunday is the day on which many priests feel compelled to try to explain the Mystery of the Holy Trinity...how the Three Persons of the Trinity cooperate with each other...in a way we can easily understand and say, "Of course...now I get it".

But we say *The Mystery of the Holy Trinity* for good reason. A Christian web-commentator wrote the problem with trying to over-explain the Trinity is that it creates another problem because people want to stop the Trinity and start examining it. As soon as they do, it stops being the Trinity and being one God.

Trinity Sunday is about the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity...there are three persons in One God...Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We just professed our belief in the Holy Trinity in the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed defines the relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit...they are made of the same stuff...God...they were in the beginning, they are now...and they will be forever.

We can thank a brave and determined deacon named Athanasius who at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, challenged a popular priest named Arias, who was teaching Jesus was not of the same stuff as God the Father...he was something else...and the Holy Spirit was something else still. At the conclusion of the Council of Nicaea all but two of the bishops agreed with Athanasius and signed the document we call the Nicene Creed.

Christianity is ultimately about relationships...the relationship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit to each other...what they do for us and how we get caught up in that relationship...and how our relationships to each other are strengthened as believers in the Strong Name of the Trinity.

Doctrines are important insofar as they try to teach us something. Doctrines may define theological concepts or political ideologies. But we do not have a relationship with the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity any more than we have a relationship with the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution of the United States.

We experience the Holy Trinity not through words but through their actions in our daily lives. We experience political ideologies not through the words of the documents that define what it means to be an American but in how those words shape our lives...it's all about relationships!

If we consider how often we invoke...call upon the Name of the Trinity in the Liturgy...the Collect for Purity...the Gloria...the Nicene Creed...the Absolution...the Words of Institution and Invocation at the Consecration...the Blessing...the Last Gospel...and in the hymns we sing...we get a sense of just how important the Holy Trinity is in our lives.

Perhaps the best sermon ever written about the Trinity is the hymn we just sang attributed to Saint Patrick and often called *Saint Patrick's Breastplate*. Patrick may have been thinking about Paul's words in Ephesians in which he tells us to put on the armor of God...when he called upon the Strong Name of the Trinity to protect him and to give him strength to persevere...as he taught and converted many during his travels as Missionary Bishop to Ireland.

Patrick's hymn invokes...calls upon...the Holy Trinity...ever present in the lives of the Church and her people. Baptism and funerals are the liturgical bookends of Catholic Christianity. The Holy Trinity is present in our lives from the moment we are baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...until we ask God at the end of a Requiem Mass to grant eternal rest to the person who has died...who while living was sealed with the sign of the Holy Trinity.

The most powerful outward and visible sign of our belief in the Holy Trinity is the Sign of the Cross we make during Mass...our personal acknowledgement the Holy Trinity is always present and active in every aspect of our lives. The Holy Trinity sustains, protects, gives us wisdom to say and do the right things.

We say the *Mystery of Holy Trinity*. We believe in the Holy Trinity and the relationship we have them and with each other because our Faith...the same Faith once delivered to the Apostles...empowers and enlightens us to say with confidence..."I believe". How the three persons of the Trinity cooperate will be revealed to us in full when we meet them in heaven.

The Christian web-commentator may be on to something. We should not try to over-explain the Trinity...we should not stop the Trinity and start examining it...we should not stop the Trinity from being Trinity and being God.

There is one thing we can do...today we can bind to ourselves the Strong Name of the Trinity...by invocation of the same...the Three in One and One Three.

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