

## TRINITY SUNDAY 2017

### SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH

#### FATHER CRAIG LOONEY

##### REVELATION 4.1 ST. JOHN 3.1

✠

Life with the Holy Trinity is a cradle to grave and beyond experience.

We first talk about the Holy Trinity at our baptisms...in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...most of us were too young to remember what was said...so we hear about the Holy Trinity in Church.

We say or sing the Name of the Trinity many times during every Mass...from the *Collect for Purity* in which we ask God the Father to cleanse our hearts and minds by the power of the Holy Spirit, so we can properly love him and others and we ask this in Jesus' Name... in the *Gloria in excelsis*...in the *Prayer of Consecration*...and in the *Blessing* at the end of the Mass.

We acknowledge the power of the Name of the Trinity every time we make the Sign of the Cross...an outward and visible sign the Trinity is ever present in every aspect of our lives.

And in one of the prayers said by the Celebrant at the conclusion of a Requiem Mass we ask God to welcome into heaven "...he (or she) who while living was sealed with the sign of the Holy Trinity."

We call the Holy Trinity a mystery...and indeed they are. Trinity Sunday is the least favorite Sunday for most priests...that's because they often feel obligated to try to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity in ways we can understand...and we can all go home after Mass saying, "Now I get it"! A mystery is something that cannot easily be solved...if it can be solved.

Trinity Sunday celebrates the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity...three persons in One God...Father, Son and Holy Spirit...and they are all of the same stuff...God stuff.

We just professed our belief in the Holy Trinity in the Nicene Creed. We can thank a brave deacon named Athanasius who in 325 AD at the Council of Nicaea stood firm and did not waiver when a popular priest named Arius denied Jesus was fully God.

While we will not find the words Holy Trinity or a clearly spelled-out doctrine about the Holy Trinity in Scripture...they are present at Jesus' baptism...God the Son gets baptized...God the Holy Spirit appears like a dove...God the Father calls Jesus his own Son.

In John's Gospel Jesus says he is doing the work his Father gave him to do and that is proof enough what he says about himself is true. We believe Jesus is God's only Son because the Holy Spirit opens our hearts and minds...and we believe by Faith.

The author of Hebrews writes about Faith...Faith is to be sure of the things we hope for...to be certain of the things we cannot see. We cannot see the Holy Trinity...but we do experience their presence.

We should not look for an explanation of the "how" of the Holy Trinity..."how" does the Holy Trinity operate exactly...or "how" do we figure them out. One Christian web-commentator wrote when we try to do that we muddy things up...we want to stop the Trinity and start examining it. As soon as we do that, they stop being the Trinity and stop being one God.

Christianity is a revealed religion. What that means is the Father has revealed his love for us through Jesus, and the Holy Spirit lets us get caught up in that love. We should not look for anything beyond the way we experience the Holy Trinity in our lives. We should leave the "how" we get caught up in their love alone.

We talk about the **mystery** of the Holy Trinity...a mystery is a truth that we can only know by revelation and we cannot fully understand during this lifetime. So complex theological formulas that try to explain the mechanics of the Holy Trinity will lead us right back to where we started...**a mystery**...to be accepted on the basis of Faith alone.

Life with the Holy Trinity is a cradle to grave and beyond experience...they are to be experienced...not explained away.

✠