

Contemplating the Trinity

In the Catechism

The Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching in the 'hierarchy of the truths of faith.' The whole history of salvation is identical with the history of the way and the means by which the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit reveals himself to men and reconciles and unites with himself those who turn away from sin.' - CCC 234

The Trinity is a mystery of faith in the strict sense, one of the 'mysteries that are hidden in God, which can never be known unless they are revealed by God.' To be sure, God has left traces of his Trinitarian being in his work of creation and in his Revelation throughout the Old Testament. But his inmost Being as Holy Trinity is a mystery that is inaccessible to reason alone or even to Israel's faith before the Incarnation of God's Son and the sending of the Holy Spirit' - CCC 237

St. Gregory of Nazianzus, also called "the Theologian", entrusts this summary of Trinitarian faith to the catechumens of Constantinople:

Above all guard for me this great deposit of faith for which I live and fight, which I want to take with me as a companion, and which makes me bear all evils and despise all pleasures: I mean the profession of faith in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. I entrust it to you today. By it I am soon going to plunge you into water and raise you up from it. I give it to you as the companion and patron of your whole life. I give you but one divinity and power, existing one in three, and containing the three in a distinct way. Divinity without disparity of substance or nature, without superior degree that raises up or inferior degree that casts down. . . the infinite co-naturality of three infinities. Each person considered in himself is entirely God. . . the three considered together. . . I have not even begun to think of unity when the Trinity bathes me in its splendor. I have not even begun to think of the Trinity when unity grasps me. . . - CCC 256

"O blessed light, O Trinity and first Unity!" God is eternal blessedness, undying life, unfading light. God is love: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God freely wills to communicate the glory of his blessed life. Such is the "plan of his loving kindness", conceived by the Father before the foundation of the world, in his beloved Son: "He destined us in love to be his sons" and "to be conformed to the image of his Son", through "the spirit of sonship". This plan is a "grace [which] was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began", stemming immediately from Trinitarian love. It unfolds in the work of creation, the whole history of salvation after the fall, and the missions of the Son and the Spirit, which are continued in the mission of the Church. - CCC 257

The whole divine economy is the common work of the three divine persons. For as the Trinity has only one and the same nature, so too does it have only one and the same operation: "The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are not three principles of creation but one principle." However, each divine person performs the common work according to his unique personal

property. Thus the Church confesses, following the New Testament, "one God and Father from whom all things are, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and one Holy Spirit in whom all things are". It is above all the divine missions of the Son's Incarnation and the gift of the Holy Spirit that show forth the properties of the divine persons. - CCC 258

Bible

Where do we find evidence of the Trinity in the Scriptures?

Old Testament

In the creation...let us make man in our own image...Jewish tradition understands this literally as God speaking with the Angels "above creation", however, the Church Fathers could not ignore the plurality of God (Elohim) after the revelation of the Son and Holy Spirit.

In Ezekiel it is revealed that God says, "I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you...I will put my spirit within you..." (Ezekiel 36: 24 - 28)

Come near me and listen to this: "From the first announcement I have not spoken in secret; at the time it happens, I am there. "And now the Sovereign LORD has sent me, with his Spirit. This is what the LORD says - your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go." (Isaiah 48:16,17)

In Genesis when God came to Abraham and ate with him to announce that she would have a child and cast judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah.

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oak of Mamre, as he sat in the entrance of his tent, while the day was growing hot. Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. When he was them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them, and bowing to the ground he said: "Sir, if it please you, do not go on past your servant. Let some water be brought, that you may bathe your feet, and then rest under the tree. NOW that you have come to your servant, let me bring you a little food, that you may refresh yourselves; and afterward you may go on your way." "Very well," they replied, "do as you have said." (Genesis 18:1 - 5)