

## The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity: A Mystery of Power and Love

Many priests and deacons look towards this Sunday's homily with dread. They ask themselves, "How do I preach on the Trinity, when it's a mystery we will never understand?" I have decided to hit the mystery head on.

I want to begin this way. During the last week or so, I have been focusing on this beautiful paradox: Knowledge leads to mystery, and mystery leads to knowledge.

Consider this on the human level. The more that we know someone, the deeper we enter into the mystery of whom that person is. A young man goes to his cousin's wedding. He can't help but notice one of the bridesmaids, who he immediately thinks is the most beautiful girl he has ever seen. At the reception he asks her to dance, and she responds that she was hoping to dance with him. They start going together. Over the months they learn more and more about each other. As their relationship develops from that initial infatuation to love, they begin to realize that they will never fully understand each other. And that's OK. They realize that they approach things differently, not just due to their gender differences but due to the whole body of experiences that make each of them whom they are. The more they know each other, the more they respect the mystery of each other. Knowledge has led to mystery. They marry. And they really and truly work on their marriage. Their respect for each other grows because they allow the mystery of each other to bring them to a new knowledge of each other. Mystery has led to knowledge. One husband told me that he knows his wife is not wired for this or that career, and he is perfectly OK with that. He's entered into the mystery of whom she is and now understands how she reacts to various situations. That is what I mean by saying that knowledge leads to mystery, and mystery leads to knowledge.

Now, I want to apply this to our faith life and to our understanding of the Trinity. First of all, knowledge leads to mystery. How is it that we have come to the statement that there is one God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One God, yet each person is God? We are introduced to this concept through our knowledge of Sacred Scriptures. Yes, the early Church Councils codified the dogma of the Trinity, but these truths flowed from what we learned in Sacred Scripture. The Bible makes it very clear that there is only one God. Yet, scripture also speaks about the Son being the Eternal Word of the Father. The *Gospel of John* states that the Word Became Flesh and dwelt among us. In Scripture before the Ascension Jesus said that he was returning to the Father so the Father and Son can send us the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised his disciples that once they received the Holy Spirit they would be led by the Spirit to grow in an understanding of God. So knowledge of the Bible leads us to the Mystery of the Trinity.

Second, the Mystery of the Trinity leads us to a deeper knowledge of God. We ask ourselves, "Why did the Father send the Son? Why did the Son sacrifice his physical life for us? Why did we receive the Holy Spirit?" The answer we come to is that God loves us with a love so profound, so deep, that it is unfathomable. We may

not understand how the One can be Three and the Three can be One, but we do know this: we are loved with a love beyond our fondest imagination.

On St. Patrick's day I often read the Breastplate of St. Patrick. Consider the last lines of that prayer:

*I arise today Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, Through belief in the threeness, Through confession of the oneness, Of the Creator of Creation.*

St. Patrick knew that there was a force infinitely greater than the forces of the world, natural or manmade. He knew that God would prevail over anything and everything that might attack him.

Knowledge leads to mystery, and mystery leads to knowledge. The mystery of the Trinity provides us with the knowledge that God is All Powerful, and God is All Loving. He will never desert us or even leave us to our own imperfect solutions to complicated problems. We need to remember who He is, then we will have a deeper understanding of whom we are: we are the children of the Almighty Lover. We trust in Him. We trust in His Power. He will use the pandemic to work His wonders. He will care for our country. He will heal us. God is more powerful and more loving than our fondest hopes. He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I want to tell you about something I found in my Mom's house after she passed away. I came upon a note in bold print on her dresser, where she would get ready for the day every morning. The note read:

*Good Morning. This is God.  
I will be handling all your problems today.  
I will not need your help.  
So, relax and have a good day.*

The greatest mystery of God is the depth of His Love for all of us and for each of us.