

**May31, 2015**

**Feast of the Holy Trinity**

**The Spirit bears witness that we are children of God**

*The shape of the Trinity is the shape of the universe;  
the dancing of the universe is the dancing of Trinity*

**Background**

In 325 AD, the Council of Nicaea defined the dogma of Trinity. The Eastern Church understood Trinity as the experience of the Church, whereas the Western Church focused on the “Three-in-One” - “One-in-Three.” This difference finally led to a schism between the two churches in 1054, which still exists to this day.

**Trinity**

German Jesuit Fr. Karl Rahner once observed that the Trinity is the central doctrine in Christianity, and that if it were ever removed, it would have vitually no impact on the life of the average Christian. How can this be?

Let us look today at what is meant by Trinity, and then at the relationship of Trinity is to us. Please understand that I am not trying to explain Trinity here. Trinity can't be explained any more than the brilliant red sunset we had last night can be explained. We can only look at it and appreciate it. Hear what I am saying as poetry, and stay with what strikes you and hold it, letting it sink into your soul. Trying to articulate our experience of Trinity sharpens our awareness of it. The more we hang out with God, the more we enjoy God.

**What does Trinity mean?**

The Greek Fathers, the church theologians of the first five or six centuries, used the Greek word, “*Pericoresis*”, to describe Trinity. Pericoresis means “*dancing*,” not dancers, but dancing. Trinity is the “moving flowing energy ” among all things, like loving. Love is not the persons but the energy flowing back and forth among them. Trinity is the flowing within the universe; Trinity is the dancing of the universe.

Franciscan Fr. Richard Rohr says that “*scientists are seeing this same pattern of movement within the neutrons and protons and the atoms as well as the planets, stars and gallaxies - all influencing each other as they move around in their orbits.*”

*“This is why so many of them are interested in Trinity. We’re finding both physics and cosmology are at a level of development where the sciences in general are confirming our use of old Trinitarian language, but with a whole new level of appreciation. It is only within our generation that we are beginning to see that the shape of God is the shape of the universe. Great science, once considered an enemy of religion, is now helping us see that we are standing in the middle of awesome Mystery. Astrophysicists are much more comfortable with this than most Christians. Who could have imagined this.”* This is not some new age religion, it’s the tradition, dating back to the 2nd and 3rd centuries

### **What is the relationship of Trinity to us?**

We relate to Trinity through participation. It’s how we know God. God cannot be known as an object, like a tree. Our knowledge of God comes through an inner experience of God. We know Trinity by participating in Trinity, in the dancing of God. We are not God, but we are not - not God!

Fr. Rohr confirms this. *“The Mystery of God as Trinity invites us into a dynamism, a flow, a relationship, a waterwheel of love, or a ‘fountain fullness of love,’ as Bonaventure put it. Trinity says that God is a verb much more than a noun, an energy and action more than a concept. God as Trinity invites us into a shared experience, where we are invited as participants.”*

Most religions don’t see this. They maintain a division between the sacred and the profane worlds, resulting in their identifying certain places and times as sacred, which leaves the overwhelming majority of life un-sacred. Any distinction between the natural and the supernatural is bogus. Early stage religion does this and thus remains largely ineffective. It puts God “out there,” so that God can’t dance “in here,” and that impacts our religion and our Christian life. Our prayer will be to a distant God to come and help us, as if God ever left us in the first place. Instead of seeking God, we should be celebrating Divine Presence. Just listen to how we pray; it reflects our perception and experience of God.

### **If the universe is sacred, how does sin fit in?**

All situations, including bad ones, are meant to work for good. God's plan is so perfect that even sin, tragedy, and painful deaths are used “to bring us to into Divine Union.” God makes the problem part of the solution. Look at people who are in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. Once they “hit bottom,” they find there is nothing left but God. This is a holy moment because in their recovery, they find themselves being drawn into Divine Union. Their problem became part of their solution.

**If the entire universe is included in the dance, where does evil fit in?**

Evil is anything that blocks the flow of life. It is sin. It needs to be stopped wherever it is, but not out of hate, revenge, or anger. Anything done out of revenge, hate, or anger blocks the flow of this universal dance, which itself is sin. It is through union with the Divine that evil is converted into good.

The applies equally to how we treat our planet. Caring for the earth is participating in Trinity. Any abuse of the earth interrupts the dance of nature and is sin.

I hope this helps. Again, this is not doctrine, it is poetic contemplation. Just let what strikes you strike you, and then simply let yourself enjoy God.

*The shape of the Trinity is the shape of the universe;  
the dancing of the universe is the dancing of Trinity*

**This is the feast of Trinity - it's about us**

*Happy Feast of Trinity, Everyone!*