

Homily for Trinity Sunday

Three Russian monks lived in a faraway Island. Nobody ever went there.

However, one day their bishop decided to make a pastoral visit to learn more about their religious life. But when he arrived, he discovered that they did not know even the Lord's Prayer.

So, he spent all his time and energy teaching them the Our Father and then left them, satisfied with his pastoral visit.

But when his small ship had left the island and was back in the open sea, he suddenly noticed the three hermits walking on the water – in fact they were running after the ship. When they approached it, they cried out, "Dear bishop we have forgotten the Lord's Prayer you taught us. The bishop, overwhelmed by what he was seeing and hearing asked them, "But dear brothers, how then do you pray?" They answered, "We just say, there are three of us and there are three of you, have mercy on us."

The bishop, awestruck by their sanctity and simplicity said, "Go back to your island and be at peace."

A great deal of the general public debate in the 20th century centred on the thought of three outstanding figures: Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx; described irreverently as "the unholy trinity."

They pushed us into the modern world, often in spite of our protests.

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution was greeted, particularly by the established churches, with howls of derision, and had to battle hard for recognition.

Sigmund Freud opened up the universe of the unconscious and profoundly affected conventional attitudes.

The socialist theories of Karl Marx came to dominate one half of the planet and considerably influenced the other.

Of the three, only Darwin and his theory of evolution remain intact.

Recent events in the Eastern Bloc have largely discredited Marx.

The theories of Freud are more and more contested in recent times.

Time has taken its toll of "the unholy trinity."

The Holy Trinity, whose feast we celebrate today, is beyond the reach of time and the grasp of human reasoning.

It is a mystery of our faith.

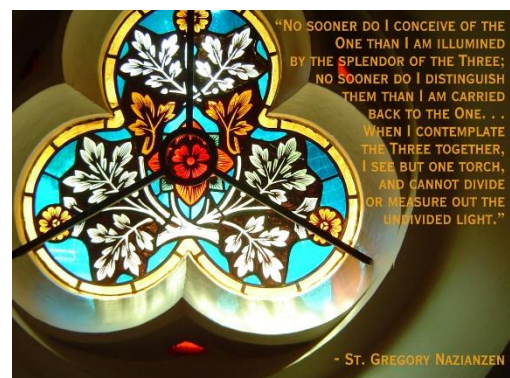
We can only fumble in the dark in search of glimmers of light.

"Two is company, three is a crowd" is a popular expression. The gospel would have it otherwise. There, the figure three symbolises completeness and perfect symmetry, and re-appears at all the key moments of the Christ story.

Jesus' life itself constantly reflected the Trinity. Three figures make up the nativity scene in Bethlehem — the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Their first visitors were the three wise men.

Later, in the desert preparing to begin his public life, Jesus was tempted three times by the devil.



A good story should have a beginning, a middle and an end.
Christ was a storyteller par excellence and three figures are prominent in His parables.
The Prodigal Son is about a father and his two sons;
the Good Samaritan tells of the behaviour of three passers-by, the priest, the Levite and the Samaritan;
the sower sowed his seed in three different types of terrain, yielding three different levels of harvest.
The end of His life, as the beginning, has again the three motif.
During his Passion, Peter denied him thrice.
On the road to Calvary, he fell three times.
The crucifixion scene has three figures: Christ between two thieves.
Before his resurrection, he spent three days in the tomb.

God is love. There are Three Persons in the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Together they represent the fullness of love.
The Father loves the Son, the Son loves the Father.
The Holy Spirit is their love for each other.
We are made in the image of a triune God.
God the Father, who created us, his Son who saved us, and the Holy Spirit who continues to guide us.
Our lives should reflect the Trinity.
We should be always creative like the Father, compassionate like his Son, and dispose our talents in the service of others like the Holy Spirit.

Trinity in the New testament:

The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38), describes how God the Father sent the angel Gabriel to Mary to announce to her that God the Holy Spirit would "overshadow" her, and that God the Son would be made flesh in her womb.

During the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16-17), the Holy Spirit was shown descending on Jesus in the form of a Dove, while the Voice of God the Father was heard from the clouds.

John (Chapters 15 through 18), presents the detailed teaching of Jesus on the Persons of the Holy Trinity.

In the preaching mission given by the risen Lord to his disciples, Jesus commanded them to baptise people "*in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*" (Refer also Matthew 28:19; John 10:30).

Life messages:

If we read the New Testament with care, we observe a sort of rule.
Each one of the three divine persons does not speak about himself, but about the other; does not attract attention to himself, but to the other.
Every time the Father speaks in the Gospel, he does so always to reveal something of the Son.
Jesus, in turn, speaks only of the Father.

When the Holy Spirit reaches a believer's heart, he does not teach him to say his name, which in Hebrew is "Ruah," but teaches him to say "Abba," which is the Father's name.

Let's try to think what this style would bring about if it were transferred to family life. The father, who is not so concerned about asserting his authority as that of the mother; the mother, who before teaching the child to say "Mommy," teaches him to say "Daddy." If this style was imitated in our families and communities, they would truly become a reflection of the Trinity on earth, places where love is the rule that governs everything.

There is a story told of St Augustine of Hippo, a great philosopher and theologian. He was preoccupied with the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. He wanted so much to understand the doctrine of one God in three persons and to be able to explain it logically. One day he was walking along the sea shore and reflecting on this matter. Suddenly, he saw a little child all alone on the shore. The child made a hole in the sand, ran to the sea with a little cup, filled her cup with sea water, ran up and emptied the cup into the hole she had made in the sand. Back and forth she went to the sea, filled her cup and came and poured it into the hole. Augustine drew up and said to her, "Little child, what are you doing?" She replied, "I am trying to empty the sea into this hole." "How do you think," Augustine asked her, "that you can empty this immense sea into this tiny hole and with this tiny cup?" She answered back, "And you, how do you suppose that with your small mind you can comprehend the immensity of God?" With that the child disappeared.