

The Trinity – Preview Sheet

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I look forward to joining you for a study of the Trinity in the Ministry Formation program. Earlier this year, *Magnificat* had the following paragraph in its introduction to the Mass on Trinity Sunday.

“We may think the doctrine of the Trinity is too complicated or abstract to make much of a difference in our day-to-day life. Yet, ‘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 other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching’ (CCC 234). The Trinity is who God really is: a real, personal, wise, and loving God. And because he has revealed to us who he really is, we can really speak to him and love him.... Life in the Trinity is truly the whole point of the Christian faith and the goal of every human life.” Introductory Comment to the Mass of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity in *Magnificat*, June 16, 2019

What this statement affirms is that most Catholics shy away from exploring or discussing the Trinity due to its complexity, and yet it is so central to our faith. As pastoral leaders in the Catholic Church, we are challenged to address this shortcoming. This is the goal of our brief time together.

To prepare for this class, please read:

- *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* - #232-267 (I will include this selection from the *Catechism* with the class handouts for your convenience)
- I would also ask that you spend some time reflecting on the Nicene Creed. How is it different than the Apostles Creed? Why do we profess the Creed at Sunday Mass?

Here are some questions to consider as you prepare for this class:

1. Can you remember being taught about the Trinity? How was it presented to you? Was it helpful? Instructive?
2. The CCC speaks of the “Economy of Salvation” or the “Divine Economy” (see CCC #236). The CCC’s Glossary explains it on page 876 (Green edition). Could you explain this in your own words?
3. What does it mean when the CCC refers to the Trinity as a “mystery”? Does this mean that we can never begin to understand it?
4. Why do you think the Catholic Church does not permit one to be validly baptized “In the name of the Creator, and the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier”?
5. CCC #246-248 presents the Latin word “*filioque*.” What does it mean and what was the controversy over its usage?

May the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless and enlighten your prayerful preparation for this class!

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