

We celebrate the Resurrection, Ascension & Pentecost

Resurrection Morning occurred on the Feast of First Fruits. Pentecost was seven weeks later. That's why it's sometimes called the Feast of Weeks. The actual dates of both were established by counting from the first Sabbath after Passover. First Fruits was the first day after the Sabbath and Pentecost was the 50th day, so there are 49 days in between First Fruits and Pentecost with Pentecost being on the 50th day.



After his resurrection on Easter Sunday, Jesus appeared to his disciples during a period of forty days. He spoke to them about God and the future that he had prepared for the people: the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:3).



Forty days after Easter Sunday, we commemorate Jesus' ascent to heaven, or "**Ascension**". Acts 1:3 says that Jesus ascended into Heaven 40 days after His resurrection. His disciples spent the days after Ascension in prayer (Acts 1:14). In John 16:7 the Lord had told His Disciples, "*I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.*" Just like us, they were looking forward to the arrival of the Helper or Comforter, the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised (Jn. 17:7, Acts 1:9-11).



Pentecost is the fiftieth day after Easter. This is the day when we celebrate the entry of the Holy Spirit into the life of Christians. The Apostles were so filled with the Holy Spirit, that they felt compelled to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus.



The following readings may be used only when the celebration of the liturgy of the word for the children is held in a place apart from the main assembly.

FIRST READING

Why are you standing here looking at the sky?
Jesus has been taken into heaven.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

1:8-11

Jesus told his disciples:

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you power.
Then you will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem,
in all Judea, in Samaria, and everywhere in the world.”

After Jesus had said this and while they were watching,
he was taken up into a cloud.

They could not see him, but as he went up,
they kept looking up into the sky.

Suddenly two men dressed in white clothes
were standing there beside them.

They said, “Why are you men from Galilee
standing here and looking up into the sky?

Jesus has been taken to heaven.

But he will come back in the same way that you have seen him go.”

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

1:12-14

The Mount of Olives was about half a mile from Jerusalem.

The apostles who had gone there were Peter, John, James, Andrew,
Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew,
James the son of Alphaeus,
Simon, known as the Eager One,
and Judas the son of James.

After the apostles returned to the city,
they went upstairs to the room where they had been staying.

The apostles often met together
and prayed with a single purpose in mind.

The women and Mary the mother of Jesus would meet with them,
and so would his brothers.

The word of the Lord.





**Holy Trinity, depicted by Szymon Czechowicz
(1756–1758)**



The Holy Trinity

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity (Latin: Trinitas, lit. 'triad', from trinus, "threefold") holds that God is three consubstantial persons or hypostases -the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit-as "one God in three Divine Persons". The three persons are distinct, yet are one "substance, essence or nature" (homoousios). In this context, a "nature" is what one is, whereas a "person" is who one is. The opposing view is referred to as Nontrinitarianism.

According to this central mystery of most Christian faiths, there is only one God in three persons: while distinct from one another in their relations of origin (as the Fourth Lateran Council declared, "it is the Father who generates, the Son who is begotten, and the Holy Spirit who proceeds"); and in their relations with one another, they are stated to be one in all else, co-equal, co-eternal and con-substantial, and each is God, whole and entire. Accordingly, the whole work of creation and grace is seen as a single operation common to all three divine persons, in which each shows forth what is proper to him in the Trinity, so that all things are "from the Father", "through the Son" and "in the Holy Spirit".

Christian theologians believe that manifestations of the Trinity are made evident from the very beginning of the Bible. Genesis 1:1-3 posits God, His Spirit and the "creative word of God" together in the initial creation account. While the Fathers of the Church saw Old Testament elements such as the appearance of three men to Abraham in Book of Genesis, Chapter 18, as foreshadowings of the Trinity, it was the New Testament that they saw as a basis for developing the concept of the Trinity. One of the most influential of the New Testament texts seen as implying the teaching of the Trinity was Matthew 28:19, which mandated baptizing "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit". Another New Testament text pointing to the Trinity was John 1:1-14, in which the inter-relationships of the Triune God are reflected in the gospel author's description of "the Word", again showing the elements of the Triune God and their eternal (always was, always is, and always shall be) existence. (Revelation 1:8) Reflection, proclamation, and dialogue led to the formulation of the doctrine that was felt to correspond to the data in the Bible. The simplest outline of the doctrine was formulated in the 4th century, largely in terms of rejection of what was considered not to be consonant with general Christian belief. Further elaboration continued in the succeeding centuries.

Scripture does not contain the word Trinity, yet, the expressly formulated doctrine of the Trinity is indicated in 1 John 5:7. Early Christian belief in the unified deity of God the Father and Jesus Christ existed since the first century, in the writings of the John the Apostle. (John 1:1) Jesus is also quoted as attesting to being one with the Father. (John 10:30).

Subsequently, in the understanding of Trinitarian Christian theology, Scripture "bears witness to" the activity of a God who can only be understood in Trinitarian terms. The doctrine did not take its definitive shape until late in the fourth century. During the intervening period, various tentative solutions, some more and some less satisfactory, were proposed. Trinitarianism contrasts with nontrinitarian positions which include Binitarianism (one deity in two persons, or two deities), Unitarianism (one deity in one person, analogous to Jewish interpretation of the Shema and Muslim belief in Tawhid), Oneness Pentecostalism or Modalism (one deity manifested in three separate aspects). Additionally, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three separate deities, two of which possess separate bodies of flesh and bones, while the Holy Ghost has only a body of spirit; and that their unity is not physical, but in purpose.

Questions

1 What is the Holy Trinity?

2 What is a theist?

3 What does omnipotent mean?

4 Who said, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"?

5 Ask your older children to write a short (1-2 paragraph) letter to a friend explaining the Holy Trinity

'The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life' (Catechism of the Catholic Church {CCC} 234)

A useful way of understanding the Trinity is by thinking of how H²O comes in three forms: liquid, ice and steam. These different forms are still all H²O, just like the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are different but still God.

Catholics believe that there are three distinct Persons to this one God and that these three Persons form a unity. This belief is called the doctrine of the Trinity:

God the Father - the creator and sustainer of all things

God the Son - the incarnation of God as a human being, Jesus Christ, on Earth

God the Holy Spirit - the power of God which is active in the world, drawing people towards God

