



### Catechist Background

As Catholics, we call to mind the Trinity by making the Sign of the Cross in all our liturgies. However, we celebrate the Trinity in a special way today, the first Sunday after Pentecost. The word 'Trinity' does not appear in the Bible, nor in today's Gospel reading, but the concept of God as three-in-one is very much present in both. In the Gospel reading, the Father and the Son are discussed, as is their relationship: their incredibly unity in thought and action *is* the Spirit at work between them and in the world. Today's Gospel reading can be seen as a mini-Gospel, a concise summary of all Jesus came to do and teach. In the original Greek, the word we translate as 'condemn' means condemn *and* judge. Also, in John's Gospel, the phrase 'eternal life' is not just about length of time but about the quality and intensity of the experience of our life with God. The Trinity is a relationship of love, and it is our goal to be intimately united and caught up in that Love, so that our lives are totally infused with it.

### Setting the Scene

Although the usual liturgical colour for Ordinary Time is green, this feast is highlighted by the use of the colour white (the colour which signifies that Jesus is here). You might also show symbols of the Trinity, shamrocks, Celtic knotwork, etc in your worship space today. Also, beforehand, write out the words of the Grace from St Paul in large writing so that you can put it up for them to read aloud), and prepare copies of the Apostles' Creed (see below) for the children who can read.

- Remind the children that it is Trinity Sunday;
- Ask if anyone knows what 'Trinity' means;
- If nobody can explain it very well, remind them that we believe in one God, but we know God as 'Father,' 'Son,' and 'Holy Spirit.'
- If the children find this difficult to understand, demonstrate that it is not so strange: they may be able to think of someone who is sometimes called 'Mum,' sometimes called 'Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_,' and sometimes by her first name, depending on who is speaking to them and what they want. *(The theology of the Trinity is more complicated than this, but this brief explanation will allow you to move on to the rest of Children's Liturgy.)*
- Invite the children to make the Sign of the Cross, and to pay particular attention to the names of the Trinity as they do so.

### We Say Sorry

*Leader:* Lord Jesus, you have revealed yourself as the way to the Father, Lord, have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You have poured out on your people the Spirit of truth, Christ, have mercy.

*All:* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You lead us to eternal life, Lord, have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

### Gloria

#### We Pray (1)

Father, you sent your Son to show us love and your Spirit to guide us. Thank you! Amen

### Gospel Acclamation

## Gospel: John 3:16-18

### Reflecting on the Gospel Reading with Children

- Warn the children that you are going to ask them a slightly peculiar question:
- Ask: What is the point of God? Or to put it another way, why does God bother to do anything? *If they do not grasp the point, read again, 'God loved the world so much...'*
- Ask: If Love is the most important thing for God, then what does God want for us? *If needed, read, 'So that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but have eternal life.'*
- Explain: We have heard recently about Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who came so that we have life in its fullness, and this is also what today's Gospel tells us. It is such an important message that we hear it slightly differently today as well.
- Invite the children to look at each other in the room.
- Ask: Do we look as if they know that God loves us totally, and wants us to have a fantastic life?
- *If everyone is looking sleepy/nervous/shy, invite them to jump up and down 5 times or wriggle and jiggle for five seconds to remind themselves that God loves us. Then repeat the question.*

### Response

As today is Trinity Sunday, it is a good week to think about Love because the Trinity is a communion of Love, to use a very fancy term.

- So, we are invited to show God's love to each other. How can we do that?
- St. Paul, in one of the readings for today, says to his friends a very powerful greeting. He says:
- 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always.' (Show the text of this as you read it aloud)
- Invite the children to repeat the greeting, one phrase at a time. Explain that it is a much stronger way of speaking to someone than saying, 'I hope you have a nice day.'
- Invite the children to say this greeting to each other, cheerfully!

### We Believe

For Trinity Sunday, explain that we say the Apostles' Creed together in which we declare what we believe. (Have copies for the children who can read, and invite them to join in if they want).

### We Pray (2)

Relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: 'God loves us totally and so we give God our concerns...'

*Leader:* We pray that Christians everywhere will be able to live their lives joyfully. Lord in your mercy,  
*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray that all people in the world will feel your love. Lord in your mercy,  
*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for those who are feeling heavy with sadness. Lord in your mercy,  
*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for people who are dying and will soon meet you face to face. Lord in your mercy,  
*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Lord, thank you for hearing our prayers and knowing what is best for us. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

*All:* **Amen.**

## **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,

and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.