



Family Connections

Feast of the Holy Trinity (Year B)



Matthew 28: 16 – 20

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

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Reflection:

Matthew ends his Gospel with a last farewell. The Risen Jesus appears to his eleven closest followers and tells them to go to every country in the world and make everyone followers of Jesus. This has been the mission of the church for two thousand years; we continue to baptize and teach people as Jesus instructed us to do.



Table Discussion (at mealtime):

“What are some of the things that Jesus taught us to do?” Try to come up with as many as you can. You may even try to find out where Jesus instructed his followers to do so.



The Bishop's Coat of Arms:

“Pictures are worth a thousand words.” I wanted to dedicate my personal coat of arms to how God has revealed himself to me on the road that I travelled. Take a moment to look at the picture.

- What does it say about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
- What does it say about God as One?
- Why could the road be easily replaced by a river? (Think Baptism)
- What do the three Latin words mean?
- If you were to make a picture of the Trinity, what would it look like?



Rublev's Famous Icon of the Holy Trinity:

Andrei Rublev created this famous icon in 1411 for a monastery in Russia. In it, Rublev has drawn the three mysterious strangers that visited Abraham in Genesis (18: 1 – 15). Notice that each one of them is of exactly the same size, has the exact same face, carries the exact same rod of divinity in their left hands, and are in constant union with each other in the way they are looking at one another. Though it is pretty easy to find a commentary on all the icon's hidden meanings, can you tell who is who (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)? Share your thoughts within the family. It might be fun to see if you can agree.

Henri Nouwen once wrote (about this icon):

“As we place ourselves in front of the icon in prayer, we come to experience a gentle invitation to participate in the intimate conversation that is taking place among the three divine angels and to join them around the table.” (Henri Nouwen, Behold the Beauty of the Lord: Praying with Icons p.21).

The Lover, the Beloved and the Love between them, all in perfect unity:

Rublev's icon also reminds me of another way we can speak of the "Three Persons" in "One God". I am speaking of the three things necessary in a perfect union (think marriage). You need someone who loves, someone who is the focus of that love and the love between the two.

God as "Mystery"

There are many ways the Church has tried to understand the Mystery of the Holy Trinity. We call God a "Mystery", because we are never able to fully understand God in all His fullness. Our minds are like an empty glass trying to understand the vastness of the sea. No matter how much water you put into the glass, there is still so much more sea that is not contained.



The Three Strangers (a bedtime story): (based on Genesis 18: 1 -15)

One hot day, when Abraham was sitting at the entrance of his tent, he looked up to see three travelers passing near his tent. "Won't you stop and have something to eat and drink?" Abraham asked, as he jumped up from his seat and bowed down in front of the three strangers. "I would be honoured to be your host."

"I will get some water and wash your feet," Abraham continued, "and bring a loaf of bread to satisfy your hunger. Come, come, and make yourself at home and rest in the shade of this big tree. I am delighted if you could stay." "Do as you have said," the strangers replied with one voice, "and we will stay with you for the rest of the day."

And, while the three men sat down together, Abraham entered into his tent to let his wife know that they had company. "Could you serve them some bread and give them some water?" He asked, "and I will prepare a meal with the calf I slaughtered."

"Here you are," Abraham said, a while later, as he placed a delicious meal before the three men. "I hope you like it. We don't get visitors like you each day. Please eat up and don't be shy, I will fill your water jars while you do."

"Where's your wife, Sarah?" The three men asked, when they finished their last bite. "She's in the tent," Abraham replied, "should I go and call her? I will only be a minute." "No, no," the strangers answered, "that won't be necessary, especially after all the trouble you have put yourself through. But, know this, we will be back again next year, and your wife will have had a son. This is the good news we have come to bring."

Sarah laughed on overhearing this. "A son?" She thought, "but I am too old to have any children. They are much too late for that."

"Why did Sarah laugh?" The strangers asked. "Is there anything God cannot do?" "I didn't laugh," Sarah lied, and repeated the lie once more. "But, of course, you did," the strangers replied. "There is no point in saying anything otherwise; we heard it with our own ears." And, with these words, they said goodbye and promised to drop by again next year.

Abraham and Sarah did have a son, and they decided to call him Isaac, a word that means “Laughter”. “God has brought me laughter, in my old age,” Sarah said. “Everyone who hears of it will laugh with me.”



“What Jesus commanded us to do” Poster: (A family work in progress)

Prepare a poster with the heading: **“What did Jesus command us to do?”**. Give it a nice trim and draw a picture in the bottom right-hand corner, then have some fun coming up with things Jesus commanded us to do. Here are a few examples to get you started:

- “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...” (From this Sunday’s Gospel)
- “Do this in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22: 19)
- “Love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15: 12)
- “Forgive your brother or sister from your heart.” (Mt. 18: 35)

The Apostles’ Creed:

Here’s another wonderful way to learn about the Holy Trinity. Write out the entire **Apostles’ Creed** on poster board. You may want to include a picture for one or more of the articles of faith. Make sure that the Creed is split up in three sections, each representing one of the three persons of the Holy Trinity. I have taken the time to type out the **Apostles’ Creed** in one document. Notice that it is one creed with three parts to it. You may even work on memorizing it.

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.



Baptism:

Baptism is the beginning of our life with God. Another word for “Baptism” is “immersion”. We are not only immersed by water but into the life of the Father who created us, the Son who rescued us and restored us to the Father, and the Holy Spirit who gives us New Life (Spiritual Life). Through Baptism God makes us His son/daughter.

Take some time to go through pictures and mementos from your baptism.

Write a short “thank you prayer” or draw a card of your baptism.

A decorative rectangular frame with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns. At the top center, the words "thank you" are written in a cursive font. Below the text are two small birds perched on a branch. The center of the frame is filled with horizontal dotted lines for writing. At the bottom center, there is a small banner with the URL "www.meinilapark.blogspot.com" and a quill pen.