

# ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 3

The Church

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**Our Sunday Visitor**

# Trinity



## Our Catholic Tradition

- The mystery of the Holy Trinity is the most important mystery of our faith. (CCC, 261)
- The Trinity is the one God in three Divine Persons who are united in love. (CCC, 263)
- Each of the Divine Persons of the Trinity is distinct, and they work together in love. (CCC, 267)
- We worship the Trinity when we gather for Mass and in personal prayer. (CCC, 1325, 2565)

How do we grow in love with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit?

The assembly comes together at Mass to worship the Holy Trinity.



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# The Holy Trinity



## Let Us Pray

**Leader:** Lord God, send the Holy Spirit to set our hearts on fire!

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the holy Spirit be with all of you.” **2 Corinthians 13:13**

**All:** God, you are so much more than our minds can ever understand. Be with us as we explore the mystery of your great love. Amen.



## God's Word

This is how we know that we remain in Jesus, and he is with us, that he has given us his Spirit. “Moreover, we have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as savior of the world. We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us.”

**Based on 1 John 4:13–14, 16**

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## What Do You Wonder?

- Who is God?
- If you cannot see God right now, how do you know he is here?



# One God, Three Divine Persons

## What can we learn about the Holy Trinity?

Have you ever learned something that was hard to understand? The story of Saint Patrick tells how the people of Ireland learned about the Holy Trinity.

### Catholic Faith Words

**mystery** a spiritual truth that is difficult to perceive or understand with our senses, but is known through faith and through signs

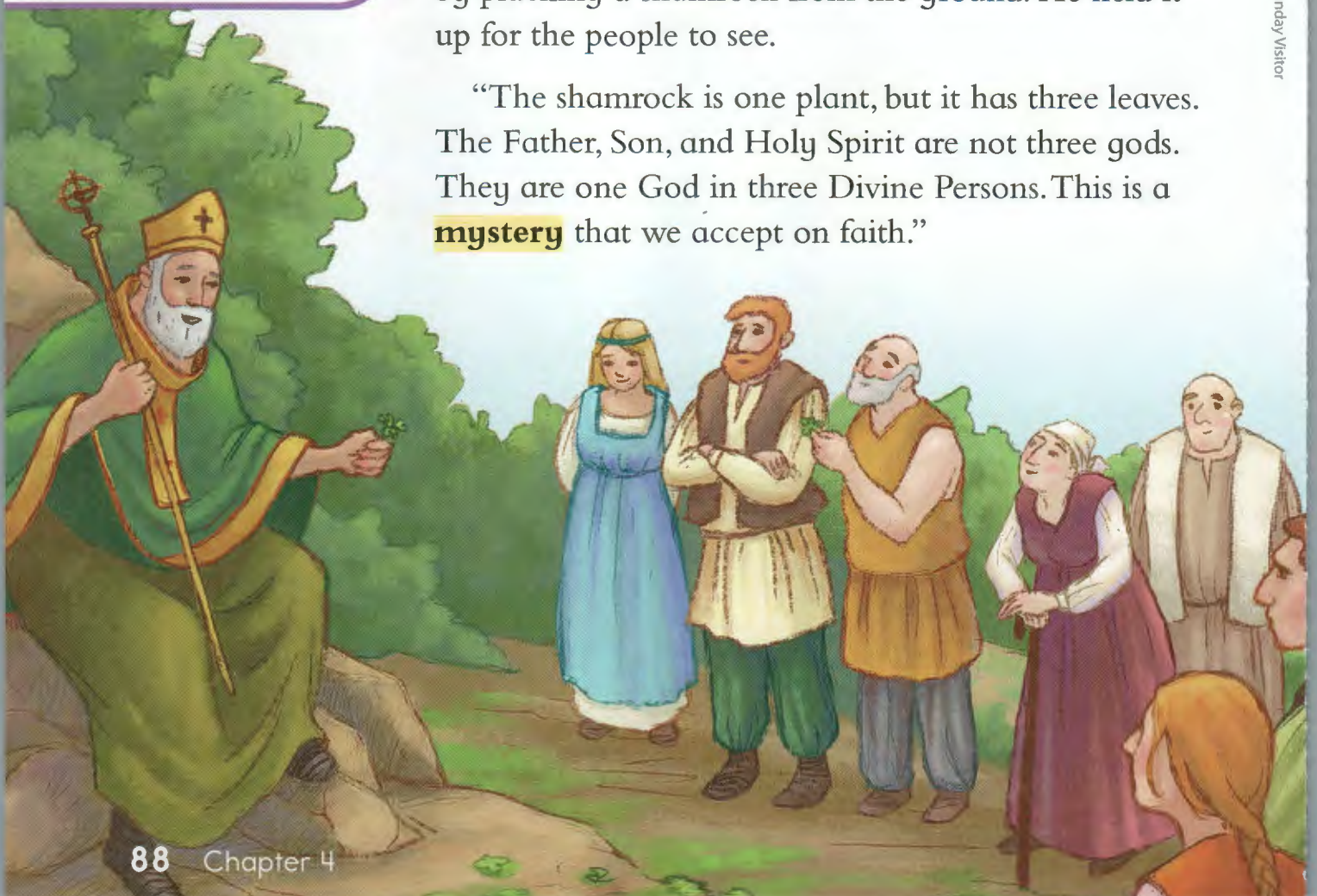
**Incarnation** the mystery that the Son of God became man to save all people

## Saint Patrick

Long ago, the people of Ireland had questions about God. As a bishop, Patrick was teaching about the three Divine Persons in one God. Someone asked, “How can you say that there is only one God when you pray to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?”

Patrick explained the mystery of the Holy Trinity by plucking a shamrock from the ground. He held it up for the people to see.

“The shamrock is one plant, but it has three leaves. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three gods. They are one God in three Divine Persons. This is a **mystery** that we accept on faith.”





## Jesus Makes the Mystery Known

Patrick helped the people understand that there is only one God. You can also learn from Jesus, who told his followers about the Father and the Holy Spirit.



Along with the shamrock, a triangle or three interlocking rings are also used to explain the Holy Trinity.

### God's Word

#### The Father and the Spirit

One day Jesus was talking with his followers about God. Jesus told them, "No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father."

Jesus promised to ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to teach and guide the people. **Based on John 14:6-7, 16-17**



**Underline what Jesus said about the Father.**

There are three persons in one God:

- **God the Father** Jesus called God "Father," and he taught his followers to call God "Father," too.
- **God the Son** By his actions, Jesus showed that he is God the Son, who became man to save all people. This is known as the **Incarnation**.
- **God the Holy Spirit** Jesus asked his Father to send the Holy Spirit, who is God's love and grace, to be present with us.

### Share Your Faith

**Think** How can symbols help you understand that the Trinity is one God in three Divine Persons?

**Share** your answer with a partner.





## Catholic Faith Words

**creed** a statement of the Church's beliefs

**Apostles' Creed** one of the Church's oldest creeds. It is a summary of Christian beliefs taught since the time of the Apostles. This creed is used in the celebration of Baptism.



Underline the most important thing about the Holy Trinity.

# Communion of Love

## What is the work of the Holy Trinity?

The most important thing about the Holy Trinity is that he is a loving communion of Divine Persons joined as one in love.

The Holy Trinity is a mystery, a truth of faith that Catholics believe even though we cannot understand it completely. A mystery is a truth that only God can fully understand. But, Jesus came to help us begin to see that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are a perfect communion of love. The Holy Trinity is one God in three Divine Persons.

Through God's revelation and with his help, you can understand more about a mystery like the Trinity. You can see the Trinity at work when you see love in the world. You can see the reflection of the Trinity in the Church. You will better understand the Trinity when you see God in Heaven.





## Honoring the Trinity

The Church remembers and honors the one God in three Divine Persons in such prayers as the Sign of the Cross and the Glory Be and in the creeds. A **creed** is a statement of the Church's beliefs. One of the oldest creeds is the **Apostles' Creed**. It is a summary of faith in the Holy Trinity. Here is how the three parts begin.

"I believe in God, the Father ...

I believe in Jesus Christ ...

I believe in the Holy Spirit ..."

## Working Together

God the Father created you. God the Son, Jesus Christ, saved you and is your brother. God the Holy Spirit is with you now, making you holy and helping you bring God's love and peace to the world. All three Persons of the Trinity work together as one God.

➔ **When can the Holy Spirit help and guide you?**

### Connect Your Faith

**Write a Prayer** Finish each prayer in your own words.

God our Father, \_\_\_\_\_

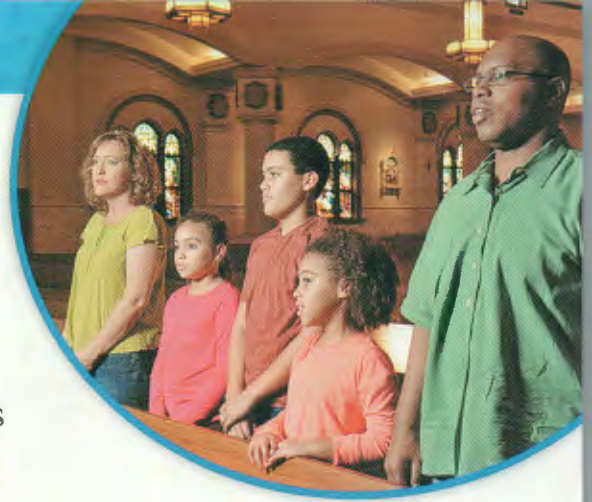
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus, Son of God, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Holy Spirit, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# Our Catholic Life

## Who answers your questions about the Church?

You are growing in your understanding of the Catholic faith. You probably have some questions about what you have been learning this year. It is all right to ask questions when you want to understand something better. There are people in the Church who will be glad to help you find the answers.

## Finding Answers

There are many places to go to find answers to your questions about the Catholic faith. Ask your parents or guardians, your parish priest, or a religious education teacher to help you find the answers. They can probably lead you to the correct information source. Here are some places to look:



Place a check mark next to one resource you will use this week to help you find answers.

### Resources

The Bible

The parish library

The Our Catholic Tradition section at the back of this book

With a parent or other adult, websites such as **aliveinchrist.osv.com**, or sites from the U.S. Bishops (**usccb.com**), your local diocese, and the Vatican





# People of Faith

## Saint John of Matha, 1160–1213

February 8

Saint John of Matha was born in France. From the time he was a very little boy he tried to show his love for the Trinity. He obeyed his parents and studied hard. For a while he lived alone as a hermit. But he decided that God wanted him to become a priest, so he went to Paris. After he was ordained, he started a group of priests called the Order of the Most Holy Trinity or Trinitarians. They worked to free Christians who were slaves. There are still Trinitarian priests today. They honor the Trinity by working in schools and churches.



**Discuss:** How can you show that you love the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?



Learn more about Saint John at [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com)

## Live Your Faith

**Write a Letter** Who do you think can help you learn more about the Catholic faith? Draft a letter to that person and ask a question about your Catholic faith.



Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

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 Let Us Pray

## Profess Our Faith

Gather and begin with the Sign of the Cross.

**Leader:** Joined together as one community, we are called to one faith.

**Reader:** A reading from the Letter to the Ephesians.

Read Ephesians 4:1–6.

The Word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**Leader:** Let us share our belief in the Trinity.  
Do you believe in God the Father?

**All:** I do.

**Leader:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son?

**All:** I do.

**Leader:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life?

**All:** I do.

**Leader:** This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church.

**All:** Amen.



Sing “Yes, Lord, I Believe”





## YOUR CHILD LEARNED >>>

*This chapter examines the mystery of the Holy Trinity and the relationship between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.*

### God's Word



Read **1 John 4:13–14, 16** and talk about how each of you know and believe in the Trinity.

### Catholics Believe

- The Holy Trinity is one God in three Divine Persons.
- Jesus, God the Son, taught about God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

To learn more, go to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #253, 237 at [uscbb.org](http://uscbb.org).

### People of Faith

This week, your child met Saint John of Matha, the founder of the Trinitarians. Saint John is known for his work in freeing Christian slaves in Tunis.

## CHILDREN AT THIS AGE >>>

**How They Understand The Trinity** Because community is so important to many third-grade children, this is a perfect age to explore our understanding that God himself is a communion of Divine Persons. Your child is learning that community (and communion) between persons means mutual giving of self (especially important in parent-child and spousal relationships). This self-giving love is also evident in God's revelation of himself to us. The Trinity is a communion of three Divine Persons.



## CONSIDER THIS >>>

*How important is it to live what you believe?*

Most people want to be seen as a person of integrity—a person who lives what he or she believes. So, we must be clear about what we believe. “The Church hears the perennial questions that each person asks at some point: ‘How shall I live?’ ‘What values or principles shall I accept?’ ‘What norms shall I make my own?’ ‘What gives meaning to my life?’ To answer questions such as these, we turn to a wise teacher. Christ is the ultimate teacher, and he continues to be heard in and through the Church today” (*USCCA, p. 330*).

## LET'S TALK >>>

- Ask your child to explain how the shamrock helps us understand the Holy Trinity.
- Give examples of how the Holy Spirit has helped guide you in your life.

## LET'S PRAY >>>



Saint John, pray for us that we may honor the Trinity by serving others at work, at school, and at home. Amen.



For a multimedia glossary of Catholic Faith Words, Sunday readings, seasonal and Saint resources, and chapter activities go to [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com).



## Chapter 4 Review

**A Work with Words** Complete the following statements.

1. A statement of Church beliefs is a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The name given to the one God in three Divine Persons is the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. A spiritual truth that is hard to understand is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. All three Persons of the Trinity work together as one \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Saint Patrick taught about the Trinity by using a \_\_\_\_\_.

**B Check Understanding** Fill in the circle beside the correct answer.

6. The \_\_\_\_ describes the Son of God becoming man.  
 Incarnation  
 Mystery  
 Annunciation

7. Jesus called God “\_\_\_\_\_.”

- Trinity  
 Father  
 Sir

8. One of the Church’s oldest creeds is the \_\_\_\_\_.

- prayers  
 Scriptures  
 Apostles’ Creed

9. The Holy Spirit helps bring love and \_\_\_\_\_ to the world.

- peace  
 sin  
 riches

10. You \_\_\_\_\_ learn more about your Catholic faith from people in the Church.

- can  
 cannot  
 should not

