

ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 7

Jesus Christ and the New Testament

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Our Sunday Visitor

TRINITY



How does Jesus' Incarnation help you to understand the Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity?

CHURCH HISTORY TIMELINE

- 325 The First Council of Nicaea convenes
- 387 Conversion of Saint Augustine
- 1265 Saint Thomas Aquinas begins to write *Summa Theologiae*
- 1986 First official World Youth Day is held in Rome

Go to page 348 for more



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Our Catholic Tradition

- Believing in the Holy Trinity is central to our Catholic faith. The Father sent the Son and the Holy Spirit to help us know him and to guide us to him. (CCC, 261)
- The Son of God has existed for all time, and through the Incarnation, became fully man while remaining fully God. Because Jesus is truly Divine and truly human, he saves us and brings us back into relationship with the Father. (CCC, 479, 480)
- The Holy Spirit gives the Church life and unites us as one Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit is our Advocate, comforting and strengthening us to know and live by the truth. (CCC, 729, 747)

Our Catholic Life

- Making the Sign of the Cross reminds us of our Baptism into the life of the Trinity. (CCC, 1235)
- In our worship and personal prayer, we call on Jesus using different titles from Scripture—such as Emmanuel, Christ, Lord, and Messiah. (CCC, 452–455)
- The Holy Spirit guides the Church in her Sacred Tradition and her prayer. The Holy Spirit helps us pray at different times, in different ways, and in different circumstances. (CCC, 2650, 2661)

God Is Trinity

Let Us Pray

Leader: O God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—always present, always true. Show us the way to you.

“Guide me by your fidelity and teach me,
for you are God my savior.” **Psalm 25:5**

All: O God, give us the gift of faith that we may come to know you better.

Scripture

“Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world also does not know you, but I know you, and they know that you sent me. I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them.”

John 17:24–26

Have you ever thought...

- How is it possible that God’s love for his Son is in each of us?
- How much can we ever really understand God?


Detail from the Triptych of the Trinity of Marchiennes, Jean Bellegambe



Getting Started

In this chapter, you will explore how our belief in the Holy Trinity is central to our Catholic faith. The Father sent the Son and the Holy Spirit to help us know him and to guide us to him. You will also learn about God's plan of loving goodness and how the love of the Holy Trinity is a model for our own relationships.



In the web below, record what you know about each Person of the Holy Trinity. 

The Holy Trinity

God the Father

God the Son

God the Holy Spirit

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Catholic Faith Words

• faith

• Holy Trinity

• grace

REFLECT

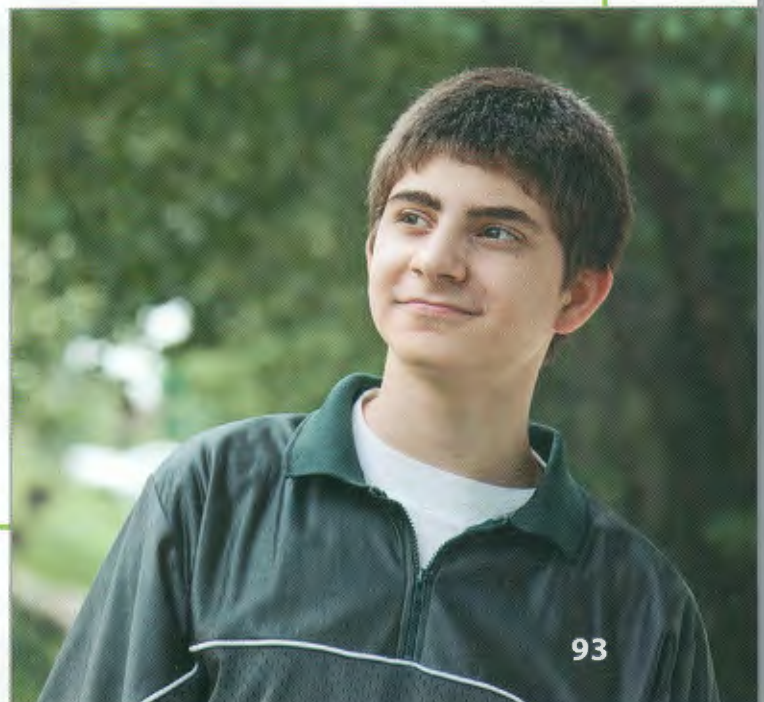
Step Deeper into Faith Reflect on what you know to be true about God.

Write down a few ideas. Then consider what you'd like to learn about God.

What I know to be true about God ...

What I want to learn about God ...

Name a person you know who you believe has a deep faith. What makes you think that?





Go to the Source

For the full account of Jesus' commissioning of the Apostles, read *Matthew 28:16–20*. This gathering took place soon after Jesus' Resurrection. How do you think the Apostles felt about Jesus' words? If you had been with Jesus at this time, what would you have asked him? What does Jesus' promise to always be with us mean to you right now?

God Is Always There

How do we get to know God?

Have you ever ended up with a problem turning around and around in your head, not sure what to do about it? With so much going on in your life, you might not think of turning to a family member for help. You might wonder how others could even understand what you are feeling, much less help you. Sometimes family and friends can help. Different individuals within a family relate to each other in love—over time and through difficult times.

God is always there, even when you don't think your family and friends can help much. The strongest guide through the ups and downs of life is our faith in his presence and in his words.

God Takes the First Step

God created the universe and keeps it going through Jesus Christ, the Word who has existed forever, and through the Holy Spirit, the giver of all life and goodness. We know God because he chooses to show himself to us. If it were left totally up to us, we could never really know the true God, because he is a mystery beyond our own comprehension. Only with faith can we begin to know God.

Fortunately, God doesn't wait for us to make the first move. He has been there from the beginning of time, and he is with us from the first day of our life. He understands us, even when we don't understand him.

On our own, we would be stuck in misunderstanding and confusion. We would never get close enough to God to

understand the truth. But he loves us so much he wants us to know the way. God the Father sent us his Son and the Holy Spirit to help us find our way to him. Whenever God sends his Son to us, he also sends his Spirit.

Help from Heaven

The Son of God came down from Heaven to show us the way to God the Father and to bring salvation to all. When his earthly mission was accomplished, Jesus returned to his heavenly Father. Before he ascended, Jesus told his Apostles to continue his work, sharing his message of hope and new life to people everywhere. He instructed them, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19).

Jesus told his Apostles to baptize new disciples in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. He promised his friends he would always be with them.

Jesus is always with us, too. In the Sacrament of Baptism, we become members of God's family, the Church, and receive the gift of faith. Through **faith**, we can believe in and rely on God, even though we don't completely understand.

So help from Heaven does not stop with Jesus' time on Earth, his public ministry, and his Ascension. Through the Apostles, Christ established the Church. He sent the Holy Spirit as a guide and counselor to the Church.

Since the time of Jesus and the Apostles, believers have proclaimed God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Catholic Faith Words

faith the Theological Virtue that makes it possible for us to believe in God and the things he has revealed to us. Faith leads us to obey God. It is both a gift from God and a free, human choice.

SHARE

Think about the following questions and share your thoughts with a classmate.

Who or what helps you maintain your relationship with God?

When have you felt closest to God in the last six months?



Three Divine Persons in One God

How can we understand a mystery?

At the beginning of every Mass, we make the Sign of the Cross and say, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Our belief in three Divine Persons in one God is the center of our celebration. When we pray at Mass, we pray in the name of our Trinitarian God. We base our faith on this central belief.

We speak of God as the **Holy Trinity**, which means that there is only one God in three Divine Persons.

- The Father is God, the First Divine Person of the Trinity, who brings everything into existence by the Son through the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ the Son is God, the Second Divine Person of the Trinity, who was sent by the Father and became man.
- The Holy Spirit is also God, the Third Divine Person of the Trinity, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.



Catholic Faith Words

Holy Trinity the mystery of one God in three Divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are distinct from one another, so we can talk about them as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. But they are inseparable in what they do. Each Person of the Trinity is fully God and has the same Divine nature. There is only one God in three Divine Persons.

The Holy Trinity

We are never going to understand this mystery—until we meet God face to face in Heaven. Meanwhile, the gift of faith assures us that what we know about the Holy Trinity is true.

Being human, we still ask questions and search for answers. As people of faith, we are often guided in our relationships not only by our head, but also by our heart. For example, the love someone feels for family members can grow and spread throughout the family. This love makes families stronger than each person could be individually.

Our relationship with God is something like this, too. God’s love is always there. Sometimes we just need to become more aware of it. When we sense God’s presence and respond to him in our lives, our

Go to the Source

Read *John 10:31–38* to find out how some people could not understand the relationship between Jesus and God the Father. If you had been there, what questions would you have asked Jesus about the mystery of the Trinity?

relationship with him and our faith grow stronger. When we place our trust in his love, we feel it in our heart, and we come to believe in it and know it with our mind.

Love is the answer to the mystery of the Trinity. The truth is that the Son loves the Father and the Father loves the Son. The Holy Spirit shares his exact same love with both the Father and the Son.

This love among the Trinity is a model for the connections, affection, and bonds we can make with one another. Families, schools, and groups of friends can mirror the unity of the Trinity.

- > When have you felt really loved by God?
- > When have you felt out of touch with his love?

We worship one God, the Trinity. Use the following words to fill in the blanks to complete the statements about God as Trinity: universe, creation, communion, distinct, united



Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share equally in glory, majesty, and in the work of _____.

The Trinity is a total _____ of Divine love.

The Trinity

God is the master of all the _____, whose plan we will fully understand only when we are with him forever in Heaven.

The three Divine Persons of the Trinity are _____ from each other and yet completely _____.

REFLECT

Think about your friendships with three different people, including how each friendship differs from the other two. Is your faith a part of any of these friendships? If so, how? If not, how can you share your beliefs with your friends?



God's Plan for Us

How does the Trinity work?

The three Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity work together through their relationship with each other something like the way a loving family works together for the same goals. The Father sent the Son on his mission of salvation. The Son acted in obedience to the Father to set humans free from sin. The Holy Spirit came to help us be part of a loving relationship as members of the Church.

The work of the Trinity is all about God's plan of loving goodness. God does have a plan for all his children. He wants us to know and share in his love, to bring his goodness and love to others. He desires us to become like him, and so he cares for us and guides us with his wisdom and love. The Father works through the Son, his Holy Spirit, the Church, and the actions of people to help us. God doesn't give up on us. He continues to show his care and act on our behalf.

The unity, love, and goodness within the Holy Trinity radiate outward toward all. Out

of this love and goodness the Trinity shares his own life and special help with us. We call this sharing of Divine life, **grace**. God offers us this free, loving gift of his own life and help so we can become his adopted children and do what he calls us to do. Sometimes we are not aware of God's love, even though it's there. Our own actions and stubbornness may block God out or make it difficult to feel his presence. But God's grace is still available to us if we trust in him and his hopes for us.

Home Is Where the Heart Is

The gift of faith is like a compass that points us in the right direction. When our path is directed by faith, our actions build up God's Kingdom. Our lives show Gospel values such as justice, peace, and love.

Catholic Faith Words

grace God's free, loving gift of his own life and help to do what he calls us to do. It is participation in the life of the Holy Trinity.

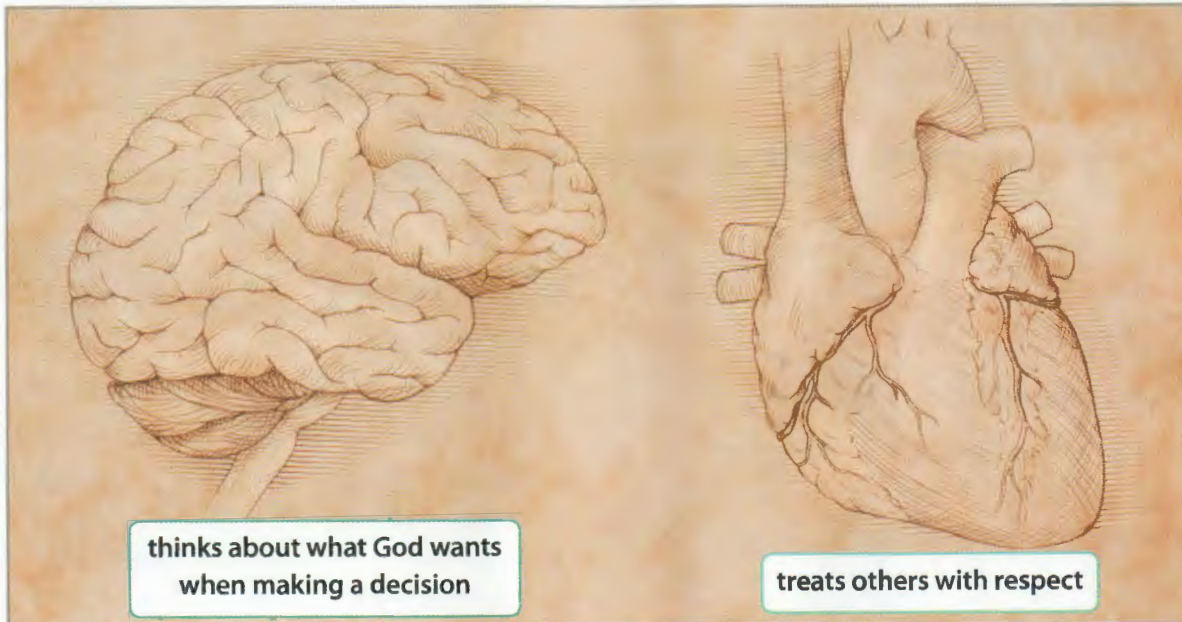
This is why it is so important to learn and practice what we believe. The teachings of our Catholic Church help us understand and strengthen our relationships with God and others. We are to give our minds, hearts, and lives to God in love and for love. As long as your life is moving in God's direction, you will be journeying into deeper truth,

wisdom, and love. You will be on your way home.

- > **Imagine that your life has been compiled in a book. How has your story followed God's love and the teachings of faith?**
- > **What would you like to change about the way you are living in order to follow the guidance of faith more closely?**

WRITE

What does it mean to give your mind and heart to God? Around the illustrations below, write five words or phrases that would describe the mind and the heart of a Catholic. Two examples have been completed for you.



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IN SUMMARY Catholics Believe

Believing in the Holy Trinity is central to our Catholic faith.

- The Holy Trinity is a mystery that can never be totally understood by the human mind, but can be approached through faith. The Father sent the Son and the Holy Spirit to help us know him and to guide us to him.
- The love that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have for each other shows us what our own relationships should be like.
- God has a plan of loving goodness for all his people and offers the gift of grace so that we can become more like him. This sharing in Divine life helps us trust in God, have faith in him, and work for his Kingdom.

Our Catholic Life

In the Catholic Church, we use many gestures with our prayers. Every time we make the **Sign of the Cross**, we are reminded of the Holy Trinity. We bless ourselves in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as we were baptized in the name of the Trinity. With the Sign of the Cross, we dedicate ourselves to God and call on him to strengthen us. The movements involve your hand, your head, and your heart. In this way you can be reminded that all blessings come from God, and to treat other people with kindness in what you do, what you think, and what you say. This reflects the love, interest, and care God shows you, and remembering these things helps you to show the same love, interest, and care to others.



> How would you explain the Sign of the Cross to someone who is not Catholic?

People of Faith

Saint Frances of Rome, 1384–1440


Frances was born in Rome to a wealthy family and married Lorenzo Ponziani, a nobleman. When flood brought disease and famine to Rome, Frances served in hospitals and sold her jewels and clothes to distribute money to the needy. When civil war came, she turned her home into a hospital and homeless shelter. After her husband's death, Frances entered a second vocation as a consecrated religious sister. Her last words were "The angel has finished his task—he beckons me to follow him." The Church celebrates her feast day on **March 9**.



For more, go to
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EXPLAIN

Think of a problem you faced recently and how you resolved it. In the space below, explain how you could see God's care for you in the solution to your problem.



 **Reflect on the Trinity**

Leader: We gather here this day in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Prepare yourselves to be in Jesus' presence.

Close your eyes and focus on opening your mind and heart to God.

Take a deep, relaxing breath, and enter into the reflection:

Read the following, slowly and in reflection:

Reader 1: O God, our Father, Creator, and maker of all creation, we praise you, and we bless you!

(pause)

We thank you for this good Earth, the air we breathe, the rain that cools our nights, the sun that warms our days, and the life you give to each and every one of us.

(pause)

Reader 2: O God the Son, our brother, teacher, and Savior, we praise you, and we bless you!

(pause)

We thank you for showing us the way to live, to trust in the Father and to love one another, to serve our sisters and brothers, and to take care of the poor and those in need.

(pause)

Reader 3: O God the Spirit, Our holy guide, and friend for the journey, we praise you, and we bless you! We thank you for walking with us, in our struggles, our choosing, our playing, and in our praying.

(pause)

Open your eyes and let us pray together the Lord's Prayer.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Amen.



Go to aliveinchrist.osv.com for an interactive review.

A Work with Words Complete each sentence with the correct term from the Word Bank.

Holy Trinity	counselor
disciples	Father
miracles	Gospel
Holy Spirit	Apostles

- Jesus gave his Apostles a command to go and make _____ of all nations.
- Christ established the Church through the _____.
- God the Father sends his Son to us; he also sends the _____.
- God the Father gave the Holy Spirit as a _____ for the Church.
- The love of the _____ is a model for the connections and love we can have with others.

B Check Understanding Circle the letter of the choice that best completes the sentence.

- _____ makes it possible for us to believe in God and the things he has revealed to us.
 - Faith
 - Life
 - Prayer
 - a and b

- The Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity are _____.
 - Matthew, Mark, and Luke
 - Jesus and the Holy Spirit
 - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
 - Paul, Silas, and Timothy

- _____ is God's free, loving gift of his own life and help to do what he calls us to do.
 - Faith
 - Grace
 - Hope
 - Baptism

- _____ is the Second Divine Person of the Trinity.
 - God, the Father
 - God, the Son
 - The Holy Spirit
 - all of the above

- Through the Sacrament of _____, we become members of God's Church.
 - the Eucharist
 - Confirmation
 - the Holy Spirit
 - Baptism

- C Make Connections** On a separate sheet of paper, write a one-paragraph response to the questions. What is God's plan of goodness and love? How does grace fit into God's plan of loving goodness?