

**The Mystery of the Trinity
(Solemnity, Year C)**

Proverbs 8:22-31—The Wisdom of God

1. Wisdom: “Wisdom” (Hebrew *hochmah*; Greek *sōphia*) (8:22; cf. 1 Cor 1:24)
 - a. The LORD “created me” (RSV, Hebrew *qanah*; Greek *ktizō*)
 - b. The LORD “possessed me” (NAB, Hebrew *qanah*)
 - c. The LORD “got me/begot me” (cf. Gen 4:1, Cain; Greek *ptaomai*)
2. Creation: “Wisdom” is “beside” the LORD “like a master workman” (8:30)
3. Arian Heresy: argued from this verse that Christ was a “creature” (≠ not eternal God)

Psalms 8—The Dominion of the Son of Man

1. Son of Man: what is “the son of man” that God cares for him? (v. 4)
2. King of Creation: “dominion”; put “all things under his feet” (v. 6)

Romans 5:1-5—The Holy Spirit has been given to Us

1. Holy Spirit: God’s “love” (Greek *agapē*) has been “poured into our hearts” (5:5)

John 16:12-15—The Coming of the Holy Spirit

1. Mysteries: “I have yet many things to say to you, *but you cannot bear them now...*”
2. Spirit of Truth: “he will guide you into all the truth” (16:13)
3. Revelation: the Holy Spirit will prophesy (16:13) and interpret Christ (16:14)
4. Equality: “all that the Father has is mine” (16:15)

The Living Tradition

Gregory of Nazianzus: Our Savior had some things that, he said, could not be borne at that time by his disciples... And again he said that all things should be taught by the Spirit when he would come to dwell among us. Of these things, one, I take it, was *the deity of the Spirit himself*, made clear later on when such knowledge should be seasonable and capable of being received after our Savior’s restoration... For what greater thing than this did either he promise, or the Spirit teach?” (Gregory Nazianzus, *Theological Oration 5*(31).27; trans. NPNF 27:326).

Thomas Aquinas: So our Lord presented all matters of faith to his disciples, but not in the way he later revealed them, and especially not in the way they will be presented in eternal life. Accordingly, *what they could not bear then was the full knowledge of divine things, such as the knowledge of the equality of the Son and the Father* and other things of that sort which they did not then know. (Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, no. 2101; trans. F. Larcher, O.P.).

Catechism: *The Trinity is a mystery of faith in the strict sense*, one of the “mysteries that are hidden in God, which can never be known *unless they are revealed by God.*” To be

sure, God has left traces of his Trinitarian being in his work of creation and in his Revelation throughout the Old Testament. *But his inmost Being as Holy Trinity is a mystery that is inaccessible to reason alone or even to Israel's faith before the Incarnation of God's Son and the sending of the Holy Spirit.* (CCC 237)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (Most Holy Trinity, Year C)

1. How was Proverbs 8 interpreted by the Arian heretics in the 4th century? How does St. Hilary of Poitiers respond to this interpretation?

2. According to Jesus, what two things will “the Spirit of truth” do when he comes?

3. According to Thomas Aquinas, what are the “many things” that Jesus said the disciples were “unable” to bear before the Resurrection? (John 16:12)

For Further Study

1. John Paul II, *The Trinity's Embrace: God's Saving Plan* (Boston: Pauline Books, 2002). A beautiful collection of profound general audiences on the mystery of the Trinity.
2. Joseph Ratzinger [Benedict XVI], *The God of Jesus Christ: Meditations on the Triune God* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2008). A beautiful collection of writings about the Trinity from Father Joseph Ratzinger in the 1970s, who later became Pope Benedict XVI.