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## Mystery of Mysteries (The Solemnity of The Most Holy Trinity)

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By Rev. Msgr. Kevin T. Hart

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.” These are the words with which we begin and end every prayer we say, and which open and close the celebration of the Eucharist. They fall so easily from our lips that we usually don’t even pause to think about what we are saying. This Solemnity of the Holy Trinity forces us to ponder this mystery of mysteries: one God, yet three distinct persons. How can that possibly be? St. Patrick used the shamrock to approach the mystery of the Holy Trinity: one shamrock, yet three distinct leaves.

Perhaps a better image would be our own experience of love. There can be no such thing as love unless there were at least one other person to receive that love. There could be no such thing as love unless the love we feel for that person is returned to us. And we know that the love we experience with that person is not just something between us, but it spills out and affects all the relationships we treasure. The marital love of a husband and wife gives birth to an entirely new person, unique and distinct, and yet reflecting the traits and characteristics of his parents.

As St. John puts it so succinctly, God is love. He doesn’t merely say that God is loving, or that God loves us (which of course, He does). God is the essence of love, even before all creation, before the first atom was created, even before time began. That Divine Love screams out for another person to accept and return that love. That person is the Word of God, Our Lord Jesus Christ. And yet it takes more than two persons to plumb the depths of love. That third person is the Holy Spirit, “created” by the love of the Father and the Son, not as a consequence of that love between the Father and the Son but as the eternal expression of it. While we cannot begin to fathom such a mystery in rational terms, if God is love, then there has to be an object and an expression of that love. The Holy Trinity is a dynamo, a whirlpool of love that is given and returned. And since God created the world, then He has imprinted the “threeness” of love in every aspect of creation. Did you ever pause to think that every atom of creation is a “three in one: a proton, an electron and a neutron?” Did you wonder why every color we see is some combination of red, yellow and blue, the three primary colors? Did you ever realize the significance of why we divide time into three distinct sections: past, present and future? The Trinity is not just some religious mystery for theologians to reflect on, and sometimes argue about. It’s a

mystery that has imprinted itself on all of creation, and particularly in God's highest and most perfect creation--human beings.

We are made in the image and likeness of God. We can think, we can speak, we can remember, we can dream about the future, as no other animal can do. But to be made in the image and likeness of God means, above all else, that we can love. And in loving, we not only reveal but also participate in that eternal love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God is love; and so wherever there is love, there is God. There can be no such love in which God is not present. When we experience love, we experience God Himself in that unbreakable union of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That means that all our relationships are very holy. The love of colleagues, the love of friends, the love of parents for their children and children for their parents above all the love of spouses--are expressions of God's eternal love, that goes far beyond the love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit to embrace all of creation, and especially us, made in the image and likeness of God.

Love is eternal, and that is why God calls us to eternal life. The love we experience from Him, for Him, and through Him is our ticket to eternal life, for true love, as they say, can never die. May this Solemnity of the Holy Trinity cause us to be grateful for those we love and who love us. Let us pray that we can strengthen those relationships and perfect them, so that they can be a true reflection of God who is love.

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