

# We Worship the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit

**Objective:** The students will be able to state two ways in which we worship the Trinity.

## **For the Catechist**

The students were introduced to God as Trinity in Lesson 3 with the Trinity icon. They learned that the Trinity was made manifest at the River Jordan with Lesson 24 on Theophany. The present lesson seeks to present our worship as directed to the Trinity.

Eastern Christian worship is noteworthy for its attention to the Trinity. The many times we make the sign of the cross, the many times we say the doxology, the many times we hear the "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" mentioned all contribute to the emphasis on the Trinity in our worship.

**Eastern Christian Emphasis on Trinity.** For Eastern Christians the worship of the Trinity corresponds to our conciliar approach to matters in the Church. Our model for Church is "family." Our worship of the Trinity informs our actions in regard to one another: we are to love one another as the three persons of the Trinity love one another.

## **Background Reading**

*(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)*

### **Love One Another**

"God invites us into a relationship with Himself, but He reveals Himself as a community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are invited into this primary community. The famous icon of the Holy Trinity under the form of the hospitality of Abraham (cf Gn 18:1-15) portrays three angels seated around a table. By the harmony and blending of the lines of their bodies they form a circle, a unity around the bread which suggests the Eucharist. The circle remains open, inviting us to join this community of life and love. By our hospitality to one another we become god-like. The psalmist exclaimed, 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is, when brethren dwell as one!' (Ps 132/133:1). The distinguishing mark of the Christian faith remains love for one another (cf Jn 15:17; 1 Jn4:7-13) in the image of the Trinity" (LLI 6).

## **Lesson Plan Overview**

**Opening:** Beginning prayers from "Holy God" to "All Holy Trinity," and/or Paschal Troparion.

**Introduction:** Review of Trinity concept; introduction of Holy Spirit using idea of unseen force like air **Need:** Balloon

**Read Text Aloud:** Ask questions noted on following pages as text is being read

### **Activity Tracks:**

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- Basic 1:* The All-Holy Trinity
- Basic 2:* "Trinity" Crossword
- Group:* "Glory" Game
- Craft:* "Glory" Centerpiece

**Closing:** Beginning Prayers and/or Paschal Troparion

## **Come Bless the Lord Icon:**

Packet I: The Holy Trinity  
Packet II:

## **Teaching Pics**

### **One, and Yet Three**

"And so God the Unknowable has reached out to us in love, revealing Himself in the process as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus mankind's deepest experience of God has shown us something of the Living Reality of God which we could never have discovered on our own. We see that God is One, and yet at the same time Three. He is one in essence and being, one in activity and power, but three in person. The Fathers of the Church described this mystery as the Holy Trinity, the sacred Community calling us to share the riches of God-life. They recognized that, by God revealing Himself in this way, we have been given a glance at the very nature of the Unknowable One, so that we might desire fellowship with Him" (*DC 10*).

### **The Trinity Icon**

"The dogma of the Trinity is the fundamental Christian experience. Unable to make an image of God, iconography frequently represents the Holy Trinity in the form of the Three Angels who visited Abraham by the Oak of Mamre. 'The Lord appeared to Abraham by the terebinth of Mamre, as he sat in the entrance of his tent, while the day was growing hot. Looking up, he saw three men standing nearby' (Gen. 18:1 -2). To show that they belong to the heavenly world, they are depicted as winged Angels" (*CBL 29*).

# The Lesson Plan

## Opening

*We have been saying the first part of the Beginning or Trisagion Prayers for this unit. After "All Holy Trinity," we'll say "Lord, have mercy" three times and then the Doxology. The Doxology is the "Glory be" prayer. Let's come to the icon corner and begin with the sign of the cross. [Say complete Beginning Prayers.]*

[If Pascha has occurred, as the children enter the room, greet them with "Christ is risen!" Help them to respond, "Indeed He is risen!"] *Our prayer for this time of year is the Paschal hymn, "Christ is risen." Let's go to the icon corner and get ready to pray. [Sing or say the version of the Paschal troparion used in your parish.]*

## Introduction

*We've been learning about our worship. Last week we learned about the word "Lord." When do we hear the word "Lord" in our worship? ("Lord, have mercy.") Who are we asking to have mercy on us? (Jesus) Do you remember what the word "Lord" meant at the time when Jesus was alive? (God) What miracle did Jesus perform that made the disciples realize He was God? (He walked on water and rescued Peter.)*

*This week we'll learn more about God. We worship God as Trinity. Trinity means "three persons." Who are the three persons in God? (The Father, Son and Holy Spirit) We learned about the Trinity in one of our first lessons. Today we'll learn some more about the Trinity*

*I want you to think about one person of the Trinity in particular right now, the Holy Spirit. We believe it is the Holy Spirit that helps us come together to be Church. It is the Holy Spirit who helps us love one another and forgive others when we are hurt. We believe it is the Holy Spirit who helps us worship God.*

*I brought something with me to teach you about the Holy Spirit. [Blow up balloon.] What is happening to this little balloon? (It is getting bigger.) What force is making it get bigger? (Air is being blown in it.). Can you see air? (No) How do you know it really exists? (It can change things like the balloon.) What else can air or wind do? (Sail a sailboat, blow trees) Even though we can't see it, it is real; it changes things. We can't see the Holy Spirit. Spirit means something you cannot see. Yet Christians have come to know that the Holy Spirit exists. The Holy Spirit leads our worship.*

*Let's see how we worship the Trinity. Any ideas? We worshiped the Trinity two times in our opening prayers. (Sign of Cross and Doxology)*

20

## We Worship the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit

God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the three persons of  
the Trinity.



We worship God.  
We worship the Trinity.

### *Reading of Text*

*As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type). See "Reading of Text" in Lesson 1 for use of the Vocabulary Visual Aid.*

**The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the three persons of the Trinity.**

*Who are the three persons of the Trinity? (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) We do not worship three gods but three persons in one God.*



How do we worship the Trinity?  
We worship when we make the  
sign of the cross.  
What are the words we say?



Any time we say  
"Father, Son and Holy  
Spirit," we are worship-  
ing the Trinity.



### **What are the words we say?**

*What are the words we say when we make the sign of the cross? (In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.)*

[Before suggesting the following, determine if you will be able to do what you are asking the children, so they can see if they are right.]

*How many times do we hear "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" in the Divine Liturgy? This would be a good exercise. How about we try to find out how many times and report back next week? Shall we offer a few guesses? [Allow and record guesses. See who comes the closest.]*

**Do you know what the next words are?**

*Do any of you know what the next words are?*

[Allow guesses. Pass out Divine Liturgy books to a few students and give them a hint as to the page. Let them verify what the words are.]

**We love one another like the three persons of the Trinity love each other.**

*This is the most important way we worship the Trinity. We worship when we love one another as they love each other.*

*Look back to the last paragraph we read. It says "Let us love one another so that with one mind we may profess . . . the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." When Father says that, he is saying, let us not say the name of the Trinity unless we love one another as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit love one another. What are some ways we show we love one another? [Allow responses.]*

**Let's review:** *Today we learned that we worship the Trinity. Name the ways we worship the Trinity. (By loving one another; by making the sign of the cross when we worship and say or hear the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; by saying the Doxology: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. . .)*

**Activity Tracks**

**Basic 1:** The All-Holy Trinity

*Today we learned about how we worship the three persons of the Trinity. Let's see if you can fill in the blanks without my help. You may also color the icon. [You may need to have students work in pairs.]*

We worship the Trinity when we hear our priest say,  
*"Let us love one another so that with one mind we may profess . . ."*  
 Do you know what the next words are?

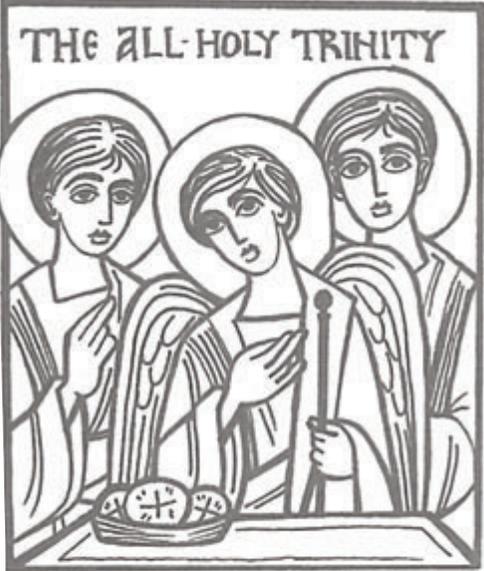
We also worship the Trinity by loving one another.

We love one another like the three persons of the Trinity love each other.



We worship God as Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

THE ALL-HOLY TRINITY



We worship God as Trinity

F a t h e r , S o n , and  
 H o l y S p i r i t

**Basic 2:** Trinity Crossword

Let's see if you can fill in the puzzle without my help. Let's read the directions at the bottom. [If students need help, list one word at a time: Trinity, Father, Son, Holy Spirit]

**Group:** "Glory" Game

[Divide class into three teams.] Today we'll practice memorizing the Doxology or "Glory..." prayer. Each team will take turns saying in order a word of the prayer. You'll get a point if your team is correct. For example, team 1 says "Glory," team two says "to," team 3 "the," and we come back to team 1 again. Do you think we can say the whole Doxology? Let's try.

**Craft:** "Glory" Centerpiece

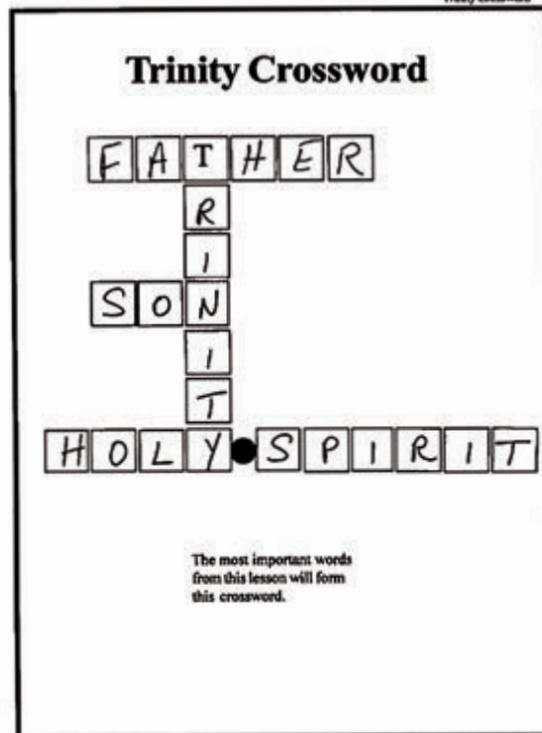
**Materials:** "Glory" Centerpiece worksheet, 3 dessert paper plates/student, stapler, glitter, sequins, glue, scissors

Today we learned that we worship God as Trinity. We say a beautiful prayer to the Trinity when we make our sign of the cross. It goes: "Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit." Today we'll make a centerpiece to give glory to the Trinity. [Show example.] It has the "Glory" prayer on it, and you can decorate the edges of the plates with beautiful sequins and glitter. Then you can take it to your family's dinner table.

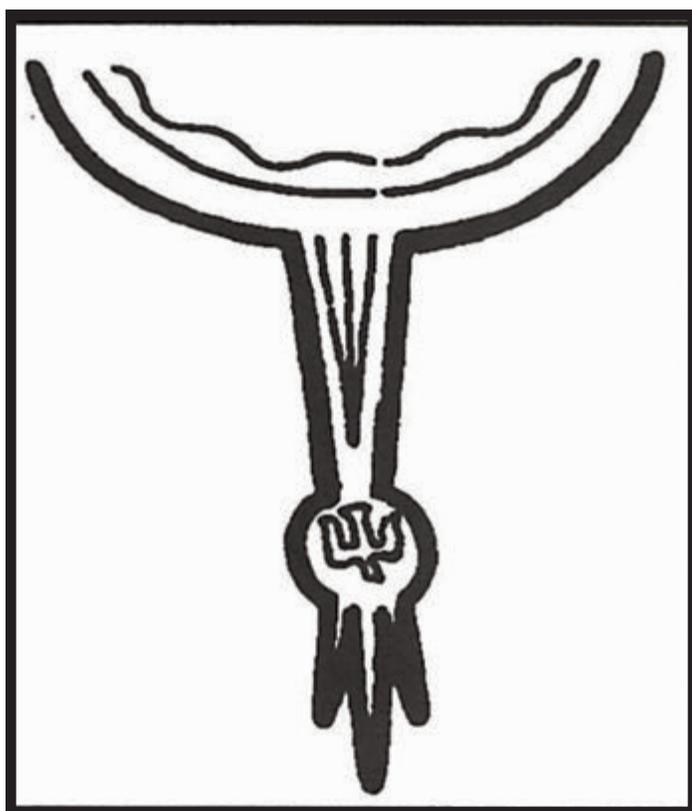
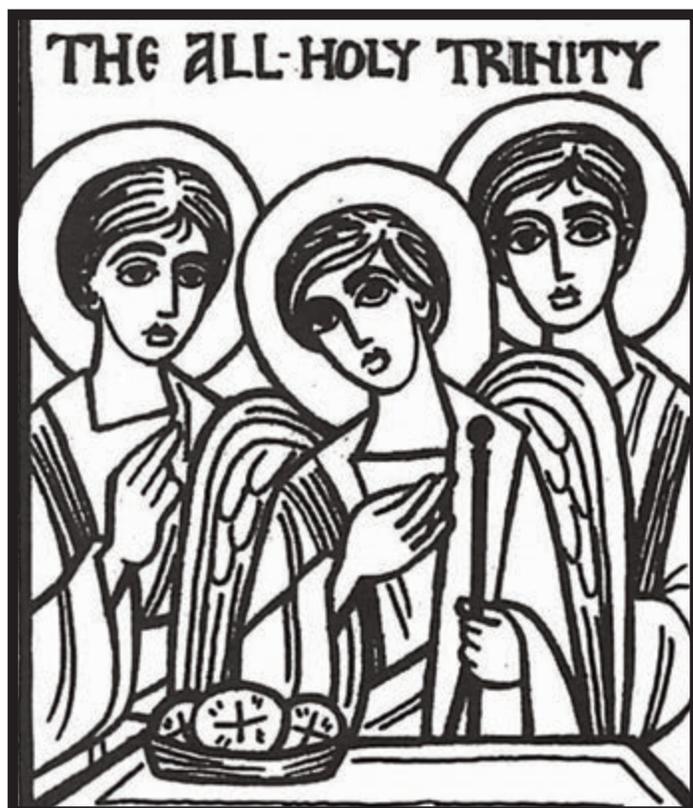
**Closing**

The Trinity is a community of love—God is love. The Holy Spirit helps us to love one another. Jesus Christ opened the gates of heaven for all who love God and each other. Let's stand quietly and think about how you love God and others. [Stand quietly in prayer position for 20 seconds; then begin the Beginning Prayers from "All-Holy Trinity" to Doxology, and/or Paschal troparion.]

God bless you; have a good week!

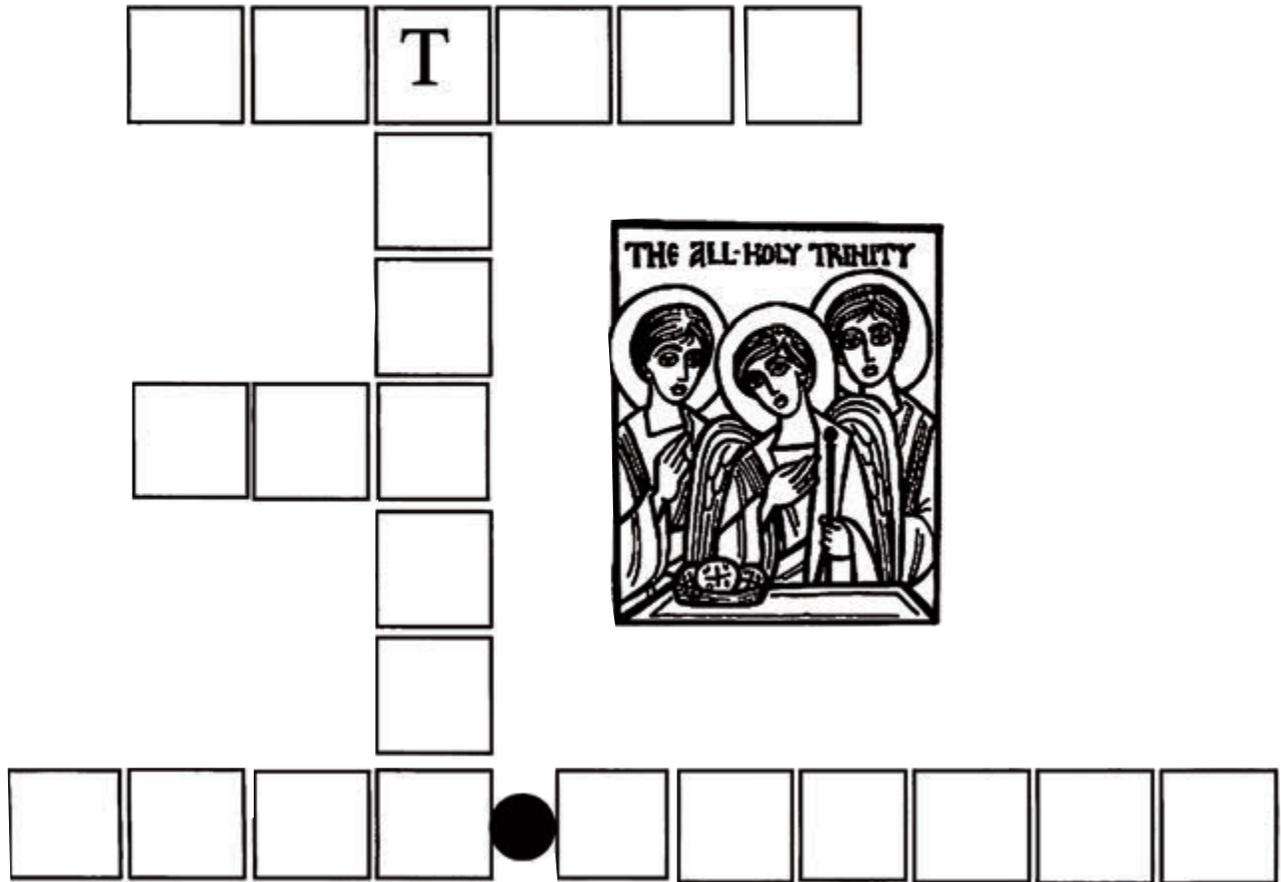


# Trinity



**Holy  
Spirit in  
the form  
of a dove**

# Trinity Crossword



The most important words  
from this lesson will form  
this crossword.

*Glory be to the*  
**Father**

Melkite

and to the  
**Holy**  
**Spirit**

Now and always and  
forever and ever. Amen.

*and to the*  
**Son**



Ukrainian

and to the  
**Holy**  
**Spirit**

Now and forever and  
ever. Amen.

Ruthenian

and to the  
**Holy**  
**Spirit**

Now and ever and  
forever . Amen.