

THOUGHTS ON THE TRINITY



(Image from Presbyterian Mission Agency, PC(USA) Website)

A Hymn based on the
“Te Deum”



Holy God, we praise Your Name,
Lord of all, we bow before You,
All on earth Your scepter claim,
All in heaven above adore You,
Infinite Your vast domain,
Everlasting is Your reign.

4th Century, attributed to Ambrose

Thoughts on the Trinity



1. The Mystery of Mysteries
2. Enigmas and Issues: The Oneness of the Three
3. “Specialties”: The Threeness of the One
4. The Trinity in our Lives and Our Faith

Four Points Re Nicaea

4. God's Oneness exists in an eternal inter-penetrating communion of the three in each other.



Perichoresis! (“circulate,” “rotate”)

Perichoresis as Dance



“Choreography suggests the partnership of movement, symmetrical but not redundant, as each dancer expresses and at the same time fulfills him/herself towards the other... [in] one fluid motion of encircling, encompassing, permeating, enveloping, and outstretching.”

Catherine Mowry LaCugna

The Divine Relationship:
LOVE!



So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. **God is love**, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

1 John 4:16

Augustine on Divine Love



Father: *Lover*

Son: *Beloved*

Spirit: *The Love between Them*

“Appropriations”
(or “Specialties”)



Father: *Creator*

Son: *Redeemer*

Spirit: *Sanctifier*

God the Father, Creator



- **Transcendent Mystery**
- **Creation as an Act of Love**
- **“Abba” – the Nature of God**

God the Father, Creator



- **Transcendent Mystery**

[God] “who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see.”

1 Timothy 6:15-16

God the Father, Creator



- **Transcendent Mystery**
- **Creation as an Act of Love**

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.”

Genesis 1:1-2

God the Father, Creator



- **Transcendent Mystery**
- **Creation as an Act of Love**

“The Trinity does not wish to live alone in its splendid Trinitarian communion; the three divine Persons do not love just one another, but seek companions in communion and love. Creation arose from this wish of the three divine Persons to meet others (created by them) so as to include them in their eternal communion.”

Leonardo Boff

God the Father, Creator



- **Transcendent Mystery**
- **Creation as an Act of Love**
- **“Abba” – the Nature of the Father**

“When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

Romans, 8:15-16

God the Son, Redeemer



- **God's "Face" for Us**
- **God's Sacrificial Love**

God the Son, Redeemer



- **God's "Face" for Us**

“No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.”

John 1:18

God the Son, Redeemer



- **God's "Face" for Us**

“He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.”

Colossians 1:15-16

God the Son, Redeemer



- **God's "Face" for Us**
- **God's Sacrificial Love**

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.”

Philippians 2:5-8

God the Son, Redeemer



- **God's "Face" for Us**
- **God's Sacrificial Love**

“The suffering of God *with* the world, the suffering of God *from* the world, and the suffering of God for the world are the highest forms of his creative love, which desires free fellowship with the world and free response in the world.”

Jürgen Moltmann