



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Most Holy Trinity, Year C, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



To prepare for the session, read all the readings.

Proverbs 8:22-31

Psalm 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Was there a particular reading that appealed to you? Was there a word or image that engaged you?

Read the Word in Liturgy and Catholic Doctrine sections. These give you background on what you will be doing this session. Read over the session outline and make it your own. Check to see what materials you will need for the session.

## The Word In Liturgy

The Feast of the Holy Trinity was included in the universal calendar of the Church in 1334 by Pope John XXII. Before that, its origins can be traced to the middle of the fourth century, when the Preface of the Holy Trinity was composed, and to the start of the ninth century, when a votive Mass of the Trinity was first composed. The liturgy's celebration of the Trinity arose as a response to the fourth century heresy of Arianism, which denied the divinity of Christ, and gave rise to the formulation of the Creed we still recite at Mass every Sunday.

The Book of Wisdom, although it contains material that is much older, dates in its present form to the fifth century before Christ. The author seeks to reassure post-exilic Judaism of the abiding presence and desire of God to offer guidance to the people of the Covenant—a guidance that would be on a par with the “wisdom” available among the pagan nations. Previous generations had found in the Davidic dynasty such a guarantee, but the events of the exile had shaken the faith of many. Wisdom is offered here as a source of comfort for a nation still seeking to regain confidence in its own future. In this passage divine Wisdom is personified, a rather daring poetic license for the sacred author in the aggressively monotheistic milieu of Judaism. Wisdom describes herself as present with God before and during creation. The suggestion being made, of course, is that if she was there at creation she must surely know the “secrets” of the universe. Christian faith was quick to see in this passage a foreshadowing of Christ, whom Paul calls the very “wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 1:24).

John's Gospel today is a carefully constructed Last Supper discourse. The early community of believers had come to recognize the Spirit of Jesus as an abiding source of truth, comfort and

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guidance. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, his disciples came to a deeper and fuller understanding of all that he had revealed to them during his ministry (see John 15:15: "I revealed to you everything I heard from my Father"). The disciples came to understand that the promised Spirit was the source of that deeper understanding, the one who would guide them "to all truth." In the setting of the Last Supper, Jesus promises that the Spirit will come. By the time John's Gospel was written, the community had long since recognized in their own experience the fulfillment of Jesus' promise. Once again, we see how today's scriptures testify to the doctrine of the Trinity by revealing the lived experience of the Christian community, an experience that only later came to be formulated in more abstract fashion as a dogma of faith.

# **Catholic Doctrine**

## **The Holy Trinity**

One enters into the salvation offered by God being baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Our faith as followers of Jesus, as Christians, rests upon the foundation of the Trinity. It is important to note that at baptism we are baptized in the name, not the "names," for we hold that there is only one God, the Father, his beloved Son and the Holy Spirit: the Most Holy Trinity.

Catholic teaching describes the Trinity as the central mystery of our Christian faith and life because it is the mystery of God's very self. It is, therefore, the font of all the other mysteries of faith, the doctrine which underpins all the rest.

This mystery is reflected in the way in which the Church prays. All of the longer endings of the formal prayers in the Sacramentary, after being addressed to the Father, conclude with "We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever." We begin Mass in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.