

TRINITY SUNDAY, 2026

With the First Sunday of Advent, we began the series of Church services that take us through the history of Salvation, from the first promise of Salvation at the start of Advent, to the final and eternal fulfillment of Salvation, life with the Blessed and All Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, One Almighty God, today's Feast of Trinity Sunday. The Church services of the first half of the year, Advent to Holy Trinity, take us through the mysteries of Salvation. The Church services of the second half of the year, until Advent comes again, help us to live and work faithfully in this world as we await the perfection of Faith's goal, our Salvation.

In the coming weeks we will celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi on Sunday the 7th of June, and the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on Friday, the 12th of June. On Corpus Christi, we will process with and solemnly adore the Lord Jesus Christ present, mystically but really, in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. On Sacred Heart we will join with the Catholic bishops of the United States in consecrating our Republic to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ. Corpus Christi and Sacred Heart are both celebrations of the true humanity, and indeed physicality, of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is all about Jesus, risen and ascended into Heaven, being forever true Man as well as true God, always making intercession for us. Corpus Christi is all about the way in which, until His true glory is manifested at the end of the ages, the Lord Jesus is present to us physically, in the Eucharistic Forms of Bread and Wine.

On those feasts we declare the true humanity of Jesus Christ, which He shares with us. On this feast we declare the true divinity of Jesus Christ, which He shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit. God, in his true nature, is utterly beyond physical form. Being utterly beyond physical form, He is equally and fully present in all times and places, and mysterious to physical beings in all times and places. He cannot be accessed physically, except through the Eternal Son, second Person of the All Holy Trinity, Who truly assumed human nature, and therefore truly assumed physicality. Through the physicality of Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, we physical beings have access to the Eternal and Infinite God. Our Salvation is a physical thing, won by the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ's Historical Body, and confirmed by the liturgical offering and receiving of His Sacramental Body. God designed a physical Salvation to suit the needs of physical human beings. Accordingly, one common thread of the homilies of Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi, and Sacred Heart, will be the necessity of accepting, taking proper care of, and rejoicing in our human physicality, which the Eternal Son chose to share with us.

Another theme of the homilies for Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi, and Sacred Heart, is that, just as God designed a Salvation perfectly suited to physical human beings, He also gave to them a way of life that is perfectly suited to living and working in this world. Far from being unrealistic, the authentically Christian way of life enables people to live successfully and happily in this world.

Ideas are important, since human beings are intellectual as well as physical beings. To live without ideas is to be more a cow than a human being. Yet, to live only in ideas is also inhuman, and a road to genuine evil. Healthy ideas are rooted in physicality. My parents, not perfect but really quite good, noticed in my pre-teen years that I was getting too exclusively bookish. They liked my being bookish, but all those ideas I was soaking in needed physical

ballast to keep them, and me, real; hence swimming, wrestling, yardwork (not very successfully) and weightlifting (much more successfully) There are people who go astray by trying to avoid ideas altogether, a deliberate embrace of stupidity that is deeply tragic. The more sinister way to go astray, however, is by trying to escape human physicality altogether, and live only in math or in words, or only digitally. I will eventually find time to read the Pope's encyclical on so-called "artificial intelligence." What I am deeply convinced of now is that physical intelligence and digital intelligence are radically, qualitatively different things. An intelligence that doesn't sweat, bleed, and cry, may be used, I suppose, but it is rather less than human, and not to be trusted.

The supreme Intelligence that is the origin of all things is infinitely greater than human but, as we read in the first Letter of John, this supreme Intelligence is also Love, a communion of three spiritual Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In Love that Three-Personed Intelligence chose to create a physical cosmos, and to be involved with that physical cosmos. In Love that Three-Personed Intelligence ultimately chose to share in physicality, the Son becoming true man in the Person of Jesus Christ.

The loving God-Man, Jesus Christ, has given us a way of life that really does work in this physical world of ours. Ideals that ignore human realities are not truly from the Gospel. A nutty Franciscan Friar once made a nuisance of himself in New York by deciding that purity meant full poverty, and that full poverty meant never touching money. He not only begged for subway money, he also begged people to put the money in the turnstile for him. This was silliness, not holiness. The Quakers of early Philadelphia made themselves ridiculous by deciding that purity meant non-violence, and that non-violence meant never taking forceful action yourself even against dangerous criminals. When a group of pirates set up shop in the mouth of the Delaware River, making life in the neighborhood unbearable, the Quakers hired some other folks to take care of the pirate problem for them, so that they could remain pure. This was absurdity, not holiness. To be human is to be physical, and the Gospel way of life, designed for human beings, does not have mere contempt for anything physical, including money and even violence.

On the other hand, made in the image and likeness of Triune God, to be human is to be intellectual and spiritual as well. As physical beings we have sexuality, but human sexuality is not the same as that of cattle, birds, or fish. Our sexuality is to be guided by thought and lifted up by spirit to serve Love, and the Gospel and the Church show us how to do so. Because of our physicality, there is a place in our lives for some kinds of violence, but, as human beings, we are never to sink to being merely "red in tooth and claw." That aspect of our physicality also is to be guided by thought and raised up by spirit to serve Love, and the Gospel and the Church show us how to do so.

God is different from us, but created us and loves us, and, in the Person of the Son, became one of us. We are to accept being human beings, physical and limited. We are also to accept the great good news of the non-physical and unlimited God's love for us, revealed in Jesus Christ. The God revealed in Jesus Christ is not an impersonal monad, but a community of Three Persons, united in perfect Love.

The dogma of the Holy Trinity is the foundation of the Catholic Religion and the source of Catholic Wisdom. All around us there is stupidity, but we are privileged to have received this starting point of wisdom from the Saints who have gone before us. May we accept this wisdom gratefully, live in it perseveringly, and pass it on faithfully.

