

- At the very heart of Christianity is the understanding that God exists as a Trinity of Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This belief in the Most Holy Trinity is a belief shared by all Christians: Catholics, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelicals alike.
- Indeed, this belief about the nature of God is what sets us apart from every other religion and conception of God. No one but Christians understands God in this way. To be a Christian absolutely requires that one hold this Trinitarian understanding of the Almighty.
- Perhaps most of us take it for granted that God exists as a Trinity of Persons, having accepted this truth as young children when we first learned to pray. But for those who approach Christianity from another faith, the Trinity is a difficult concept to grasp.
- Truly, how can we understand that God is both Three and One? It is a mystery as high as the skies and as deep as the oceans, a truth too profound for the human intellect to fully comprehend in this life.
- And therefore it is a truth simply to be accepted with love and obedience, yet not blindly – for our knowledge of the Trinity comes from Christ Himself.
- Jesus revealed the nature of the Trinity to His apostles during His time on earth, and thus we can have full confidence in our belief that our One God exists as Three Persons.
- Yet merely believing in the Trinity is not enough. We cannot simply acknowledge the truth of the Holy Trinity without also worshipping the Holy Trinity. For the nature of God compels man to worship Him.
- In a sense man is “hard-wired” to worship; it’s part of our human nature to worship, to give ourselves to something that we perceive is greater than ourselves. And whether we recognize it or not, all of us worship something – regardless of whether we go to church.
- In the brokenness and blindness caused by his sin, man often worships created things. Turning his back on God, sinful man is often in search of a golden calf.
- The problem with worshipping created things is that it strips man of his human dignity. Love effects a likeness with the beloved. In other words, we become like that which we love.
- If we love something less than ourselves, or even if we worship another human, we are degraded; we become less than who God has created and called us to be.
- It is only in worshipping God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in giving ourselves fully to Him that our human dignity is fulfilled. In the process of worshipping our One Lord in Three Divine Persons, we become like Him in Whose image we have been created.
- Truly, my dear brothers and sisters, we must fix it in our minds and hearts that God alone is to be worshiped and adored, and that our entire lives – even the smallest details of them – must be ordered to worshipping Him. Everything we do should in some way glorify Him.
- As members of His Body, we must be wholly convinced that God alone is worthy of all praise and honor, and we must order our lives toward whatever is most pleasing to Him.
- Simply put, we must live for Him rather than for ourselves. We must seek His will in all things rather than our own. We must seek His honor and glory rather than our own. And this begins by choosing to worship Him rather than ourselves and our own comfort.
- Our primary way to worship our Lord is through our prayer, especially liturgical prayer, and most especially the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
- At the beginning of Mass we beg pardon for our sins in the *Kyrie eleison*. We then open ourselves up to listening to God’s word through the readings and homily, hopefully allowing ourselves to be shaped and formed by Him in this way.

- By seeking His mercy and allowing ourselves to be instructed by Him, our Lord prepares us for union with Himself, and so it is that we profess our faith in Him in the *Credo*.
- And as the bread and wine are raised up at the Offertory, we offer ourselves to Him as a sacrifice – willing to join Him on the cross in an act of self-oblation and surrender.
- Once we have done this, He draws us to Himself in the sweetness of Holy Communion, where – kneeling suppliant in His presence – we receive Him as a bride receives her bridegroom and become one flesh with Him.
- As we consider the great solemnity of this act of worship and the great gratuity by which our Lord receives our humble homage and gives Himself to us in return, it is imperative that we undertake the Mass with the utmost decorum and reverence.
- For the Mass is not a personal or private action; it is not even a public expression of a given community's beliefs and customs. Therefore, we should not feel free to change the Mass to reflect our tastes or to make the Mass a platform for cultural expression.
- To do so is to focus the attention of the Mass on ourselves, and not on God.
- While the celebration of Mass admits of some cultural expression and allows some choice of options, we must remember that the Mass is about God. Whenever we focus on ourselves in any way at Mass, we sort of miss the point of it all. We become a golden calf!
- You see, because the Mass is holy, is sacred, and absolutely vital to the salvation of all mankind, only the Church is in the position to legislate how it should be offered. It is Holy Mother Church who teaches us how to worship properly... how to love God properly.
- Over the centuries she has developed and refined all that goes into the offering of Mass, viz., the prayers, the symbols, the gestures, the music.
- So when we enter into the Mass, we necessarily step into the great and mighty river of Tradition. That's why the use of things like Latin, Gregorian chant, polyphony, and even proper architecture is not unimportant, unnecessary, or arbitrary. They are our tradition!
- And they are worth fighting for!
- Of course drawing from the rich river of Tradition and in general making the Mass more formal and rich requires some effort from all of us.
- But isn't it the nature of love to go out of one's way for the beloved? Do we not want to give to those whom we love the very best that we have to offer? How much more so, then, should we make an extra effort for God so that we may love and worship Him as He desires!
- Truly, the more faithfully we celebrate the Mass in accord with the Church's traditions and laws, the better and more pleasing our worship is to God – and the more beneficial it is to us.
- Yet, if we are not approaching the Mass with true love in our hearts, then it's effect on us is practically worthless. If we do not come to worship with love in our hearts, then our worship will not lead us to love. So we must avoid two extremes.
- On the one hand, we must avoid continually stripping down the Mass to its barest elements for the sake of our convenience, as well as introducing any man-centric novelties to the Mass. Remember: the Church's Tradition shows us how to worship.
- Yet we must also avoid holding to the Church's traditions so rigidly that we become like the Pharisees, who were more concerned with their laws and rituals rather than truly loving God. Our rich rituals must be an expression of our deep love for God!
- My brothers and sisters, "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life."

- May we return our Lord's love by worshiping Him "in spirit and in truth." May our faithful worship of our Lord lead us to loving Him and each other more authentically. And may each of us be transformed by our worship of our triune Lord!