

“Understand this today, therefore, and take it to heart: the Lord is God indeed, in heaven above as on earth beneath, He and no other.”

Dt 4:39

There are many reasons why people come to church on Sunday morning. Perhaps people come because it is their routine or their custom, or that of their parents or grandparents. There are those who would feel uncomfortable or guilty if they did not come, whilst there are others who simply find coming to church comforting or familiar. Others come because they are looking for something, and others come to meet friends and have a coffee and a chat afterwards. None of these reasons for coming to church is wrong, and anyone who comes to Mass on a Sunday morning with good will in his heart is welcome.

Yet the chief reason why Sunday is given to us as a holy day is so that we may worship the Lord our God and come to do homage to Him alone. Sunday is the Lord’s day, and we come to bow low and kneel before Him in adoration.

The single most important doctrine of the Catholic Church is that there is One God and that there are three Persons in that One God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Everything else that we believe as Catholics, and that we allow to shape how we live, is based on – and stems from – this doctrine: there is One God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Sadly, it is not at all certain that Catholics, especially Catholic children, are taught to believe this anymore. For example, a priest friend of mine recently pointed out that children in Catholic schools are taught that there is God and that there is Jesus.

The children – this priest was arguing – are not properly given to understand that Jesus *is* God. Even in His human form, the Son of God Incarnate is still God. He is God the Son, a full member of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. But by continually, and almost exclusively, referring to the Son of God as Jesus – instead of adopting the traditional manner of referring to Him as Our Lord, or as Our Lord Jesus Christ, or as the Son of God Incarnate – in other words, by failing to use His titles,

and by referring to Him only by name – as is common nowadays – we have begun to undermine belief in Our Lord’s divinity.

So, let us be quite clear.

There is One God.

There are three Persons in that One God.

The three Persons are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

They are all Divine (which means that each Person in the Trinity is fully God: none of them is more God or less God than the others).

They are co-eternal (which means that all three always existed and always will exist, and that there was never even the smallest fraction of a millisecond when one of them existed without the others).

They are co-equal (which means that all three Persons are equal in majesty, glory, power, goodness, truth, and beauty: there is no hierarchy within the Holy Trinity).

Whilst we often think of God the Father as the Creator, in fact all three Persons brought about the work of creation. Whilst we often think of God the Son as the Redeemer, in fact all three Persons accomplished our redemption. And whilst we often think of the Holy Spirit as the One who sanctifies us and makes us holy, in fact all three Persons bring about our sanctification and salvation. Whenever God acts upon His creatures, it is always all three Divine Persons who are acting on His creatures. No one Divine Person acts on His own, even if we have directed our prayers to one particular member of the Holy Trinity.

The only true distinction within the Godhead is that the Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit; the Son is not the Father or the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.

Now then, it is certainly true that God the Son became Incarnate. This is the second most important doctrine in the Catholic Church. And it is true that *in His humanity* – and that’s the key phrase, *in His humanity* – the Son of God accomplished certain things that the other Divine Persons

did not accomplish. Only the Son-of-God-Incarnate died on the Cross; only the Son-of-God-Incarnate rose again from the dead. Nevertheless, this was the work of our redemption which was, as we have said, accomplished, *as a whole work*, by all three Persons of the Holy Trinity.

I hope by now you are all suitably confused, and that if you understand the Trinity then you would be kind enough to explain it to me. No one in the history of the human race has understood it up till now!

Nonetheless, it is possible to grasp a couple of basic points, namely that there is definitively only One God, but that One God consists of three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are co-eternal and who are co-equal in all regards.

And *this* is why we come to Mass on a Sunday morning: to acknowledge that God is One and God is Three, and to bow down in humble adoration and to worship this Most Holy and Undivided Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *This* is what we are called upon in today's First Reading to take to heart: that the Lord is God indeed, in heaven above as on earth beneath: He and no other.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.