



UNITY
IN THREE PARTS

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Mind, Body, Life, A Trinitarian
Perspective

Cover : Dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem
2009: Photo by Frank Arundell III

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The great proofs of modern science have vastly improved human existence for practically every individual on the planet. Notwithstanding the fact that science has also brought us to the brink of human extinction as well, with the most powerful nuclear weapons the world has ever known or even imagined. The staggering violent death tolls brought about by the scientific discoveries of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, one would think, might have been the impetus for reasonable people to return to the comforts of religion, but exactly the opposite has been the case. Judaism and Christianity have been loosing “believers” in droves. Only Islam has been increasing its membership, and that, according to the experts, is due to the Muslim birthrate. Surely three or four wives will do the trick. Looking back though, one is also reminded of the great wars of religion during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth centuries which also took human lives in the millions. Even today much animosity still remains between varying faiths. A brotherhood of terror appears to be gaining on that vague old concept of the “brotherhood of man,” generically speaking. The first place we saw this phrase was in Schiller’s poem Ode to Joy, which Beethoven gloriously set to music with his Ninth Symphony.

Joy!

A spark of fire from heaven,

Daughter from Elysium,

Drunk with fire we dare to enter,

Holy One, inside your shrine.
Your magic power binds together,
What we by custom wrench apart,
All men will emerge as brothers,
Where you rest your gentle wings.

Elysium, in Greek mythology was originally the paradise to which heroes on whom the gods conferred immortality were sent. It probably was retained from Minoan religion. In Homer's writings the Elysian Plain was a land of perfect happiness at the end of the Earth, on the banks of the Oceanus. A similar description was given by Hesiod of the Isles of the Blessed. In the earlier authors, only those specially favored by the gods entered Elysium and were made immortal. By the time of Hesiod, however, Elysium was a place for the blessed dead, and, from Pindar on, entrance was gained by a righteous life. Later writers made it a particular part of Hades, as in Virgil's, *Aeneid*, Book VI. (Encyclopedia Britannica)

Many Neopagans today, particularly Hellenic neopagans in the United States, have what most would consider a new-age view of Elysium. Elysium is seen as a multi-layered paradise, or Heaven, to many modern neopagans. Some believe that the outer layer of Elysium is composed of great and beautiful fields, often envisioned in imaginative descriptions as having green glowing blades of grass and bubbling springs of glowing water and wine, often made from the nectar of Ambrosia. Beyond the fields of Elysium, reserved only for the most righteous and virtuous, is the Golden City where spirits exist in a state of

constant euphoria. Whether or not such beliefs are based in actual mythology often seems rather unimportant to many neopagans. Most claim that old myths are simply mortal accounts and interpretations of the divine, but the same could be argued about any current beliefs regarding Elysium. Much of what many modern neopagans believe today regarding Elysium seems to be borrowed from popular Christian imagery of Heaven. (Crystalinks Online)

Today, Neo-Paganism may be any of several spiritual movements that attempt to revive the ancient polytheistic religions of Europe and the Middle East. These movements have a close relationship to ritual magic and modern witchcraft. (Encyclopedia Britannica).

This may very well be where many of our “snowflakes” will wind up after global warming kills us all, having felt too restricted by traditional orthodox or even reformed religion once they moved out of Mom’s basement. In fact this adventuresome move may have even been suggested by one of their favorite college professors while being educated at about 30K per year. It is possible that some of that childhood Christian or Jewish imagery they may have once been taught and rejected has some relationship to those Elysian Fields upon which one may recline and smoke weed all day. Now, for many, not all, that would surely be paradise.

How could anyone with a contemporary college degree from most of our higher institutions believe in God— a Father Almighty, Creator of everything that is seen and

unseen have a Son, conceived by a Holy Spirit and born of a virgin be able to converse with their mostly secular friends in a commonsense way without being embarrassed by the outlandish and incomprehensible understandings of a presumed long dead faith?

When we learned from Bishop Barron, creator of the popular Word on Fire blog, that as many as 35% of Catholics, mostly young people, have abandoned their Church because of the Sex Abuse Scandal brought on by about four percent of the clergy over the last 60 years; we thought it might be time to add to the Viewpoint Library explaining in un-ecclesial language what they may be missing. Hopefully, without being heretical.

Of course one wonders how deep their faith may have been to cause such an exit from the Apostolic Institution founded by the Son of God because of the sins of many of her ordained clerics and leaders. How the grievous and lawless sins of anointed but mortal-men can produce anything other than prayers for their salvation is puzzling.

Feast of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

UNITY IN THREE PARTS

Numerology

$1 + 1 + 1 = 3$, Ultra simple when your dealing with whole numbers. Each 1 of itself is a whole entity, entirely a 1. A 3 is not a 1, and can never be a 1. Whole numbers are positive numbers, including zero, without any decimal or fractional parts. They are numbers that represent whole things without pieces. The set of whole numbers is represented mathematically by the set: $\{0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, \dots\}$ (Webster). If your wondering how zero (0) can be considered a whole number, we found a thread from (reddit r/math) which explains it very well, though it is not exactly relevant to our major premise it is interesting enough to include here:

“In the regions of the U.S. where I've lived, "whole numbers" usually denotes the integers. A nice way to define the integers is to say that 1 is an integer, and the other integers are the numbers you can get by starting with 1 and then adding or subtracting a finite amount of 1s.”

“Intuitively, we think of 1 as the unit or whole, because things like apples and people usually come in batches of 1s (you can argue that 1 is just our name for this concept of unit if you like). If you cut an apple into to pieces, each of those pieces is less than the whole apple, but is still more than 0, so we need a new number like $1/2$ or $2/3$ to represent that quantity. Each of these pieces is also part of the whole apple which we said was 1. So it is natural to say the numbers like $1/2$ or $2/3$ are partial numbers, as opposed to numbers that come in batches of 1s, which we can call whole numbers. So you can see how the

abstract definition maps on to our intuitive understanding of numbers. Zero hasn't always been considered to be a full-fledged number. The [Wikipedia page on zero]([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/0_\(number\)#Classical_Antiquity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/0_(number)#Classical_Antiquity)) says: ‘Records show that the ancient Greeks seemed unsure about the status of zero as a number. They asked themselves, ‘How can nothing be something?’, leading to philosophical and, by the Medieval period, religious arguments about the nature and existence of zero and the vacuum. An article in Scientific American says that: Initially, zero functioned as a mere placeholder—a way to tell 1 from 10 from 100, to give an example using Arabic numerals. ‘That's not a full zero,’ Seife says. ‘A full zero is a number on its own; it's the average of -1 and 1 .’ It began to take shape as a number, rather than a punctuation mark between numbers, in India in the fifth century A.D., says Robert Kaplan, author of ‘The Nothing That Is: A Natural History of Zero’ (Oxford University Press, 2000). ‘It isn't until then, and not even fully then, that zero gets full citizenship in the republic of numbers,’ Kaplan says. Some cultures were slow to accept the idea of zero, which for many carried darkly magical connotations.’”

“I think that the bottom line here is that considering zero to be a number is convenient, because it simplifies our discourse about arithmetic operations. So it's not a matter of whether zero is really a number or not, but how we choose to formulate our concepts.”

“Personally when I was first taught about 'whole numbers' that meant 1,2,3,... etc. Then at some point I was taught about the various number sets: natural numbers, integers, rational numbers and so on. I was taught that the 'natural' numbers included zero. So in my head they're distinct from the whole numbers... As to whether the distinction is important, that can

only depend on the problem your tackling. In most cases it's clear whether zero should be considered or not. If it's not clear, you should do one of two things: clarify with whomever's stating the problem otherwise think for themselves whether including zero or not makes a difference. As an aside, I think the only reason zero is considered separate is for historical reasons. It wasn't obvious to ancient cultures that there should even be a concept of zero. The sub-continent Indians started using it much earlier than in the west, and even they struggled with certain aspects of zero". (reddit r/math/various participants) modified.

Referencing the Trinity

According to our little numerical exploratory both grapes and people come in bunches of 1s, so let's have a look at the possibility that a human-being may be considered an inseparable three-in-one unified phenomenon since we are made in the "Image of God." Whether you believe scripture is legitimate revelation or strictly myth, it may be said that it is what the ancients substantiated their belief in God on through the Prophet Moses. Genesis gives us our first clue to this "image-related" statement:

*"Then God said, Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* (Gen. 1:26 NJB)

Genesis 3:22_states, "And the LORD God said, *'The man has now become **like one of us.**'*" There are other passages in the Old Testament in which God refers to Himself using plural constructions. It is also interesting to note that *Elohim*, one of

the primary titles of God in the Old Testament (occurring over 2,500 times), is in the plural form.”

“Some people have used these verses to hypothesize that there is more than one God. However, we can rule out polytheism (belief in multiple gods), because that would contradict countless other Scriptures that tell us that God is one and that there is only one God. Three times in Isaiah 45 alone, God states, *‘I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me’*” (vv. 5, 6, 18).

“A second possible explanation for God’s referring to Himself in the plural is that God was including the angels in His statement. In saying ‘us’ and ‘our,’ God was speaking of all the heavenly host, Himself included. However, the Bible nowhere states that angels have the same ‘image’ or ‘likeness’ as God. That description is given to humanity alone.”

“Since the Bible, especially the New Testament, presents God as *Trinity* (three Persons but only one God), Genesis 1:26 and 3:22 can only represent a conversation within the Trinity. God the Father with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament hints at the plurality of God, and the New Testament (and the Church) clarifies it with the Doctrine of the Trinity. Obviously, there is no way we can fully comprehend how this exactly works, but God has given us enough revealed information to know that He *does* exist in three Persons—Father, Son, and Spirit” (Got Questions Blog) and so it is believed through grace on faith. For many this explanation may never be satisfactory;. not for the lack of proof points in the sacred texts, but simply for a lack of the capacity to respond to or recognize grace from the living God, through Jesus in the Spirit, necessary for belief. No good Christian can ever

condemn an atheist, an agnostic, or a person of another like persuasion, for not accepting the Trinitarian concept. Christians believe the “Gospel Truth” and Christian faith with good-works provide a certain satisfaction.

An analogy of sorts

Over the centuries many of our saints and sages have tried to explain the Trinity by the use of analogical imagination. The famous one we’ve all gotten to know is the one expressed by St. Patrick. He used the simple clover leaf with its three extended parts connected to the one stem. A gentle and beautiful idea. We would like to try one here. So long as we are made in God’s image and God is Trinitarian by his nature maybe we should try to make an analogy using man himself as unity of three in one.

Since all creation is born freely of the mind of God we too have a mind after the brain to mind transition and a free-will to “create;”not from nothing of course, but within our finite limitations as creatures of the uncreated One.

With the incarnation, God lowered himself and became a part of humanity in Christ. This is why Jesus could say “the Father is greater than I am.” (John 14:28). Our materiality and Jesus’, save sin, is the same. Jesus though— through a virgin called Mary is how God became man according to scripture

Now since mind and body are not functional without life; it is our spirit, our life, infused by the love of God with the Holy Spirit as sperm meets egg out of love, (not expressly a chemical reaction) where all three; mind- body- spirit are indeed ONE in one human being, immediately created by God in his

Trinitarian nature. Isn't this how we are made in God's image?
Father Son and Spirit—mind, body and spirit (life)?

Grace, Justification

“In order to understand Grace we first need to better understand the concept of “Justification.” “In Christian theology, justification is God's act of removing the guilt and penalty of sin while at the same time making a sinner righteous through Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross.(Wikipedia) It would seem to us that any justification is intimately connected to The Lamb of God; Christ on the cross; his glorious resurrection, and the institution of his Church and his Sacraments. We are “redeemed” by the sacrifice of Calvary, participating in the saving grace of God through Christ in the Spirit. Faith alone does not simply justify us i.e. make us “holy.” We are made holy by faith *and* good works.This is *grace* participating. in the life of God. Many have believed– but “*by their fruits you shall know them.*” (Matt. 7:20)

*“It is not anyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” who will enter the kingdom of Heaven, **but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven.** When the day comes many will say to me, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, work many miracles in your name?” Then I shall tell them to their faces: I have never known you; away from me, all evil doers!”* (Matt.7:21-23)

*“Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. **But everyone who listens to these words of***

mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!"
(Matt. 7:24-27)

The Catechetical explanation of Grace

1996 Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is favor, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.

1997 Grace is a participation in the life of God. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body. As an "adopted son" he can henceforth call God "Father," in union with the only Son. He receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church.

1998 This vocation to eternal life is supernatural. It depends entirely on God's gratuitous initiative, for he alone can reveal and give himself. It surpasses the power of human intellect and will, as that of every other creature.

1999 The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. It is the sanctifying or deifying grace received in Baptism. It is in us the source of the work of sanctification:

Therefore if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from

God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself.
(Source:Catechism of the Catholic Church)

Saint Thomas Aquinas, Article 13: On Grace

Those of us who enjoy cherry picking the Summa are always amazed at the clarity of the Saint's thoughts. His intimate knowledge of the golden age Greeks particularly Aristotle, and of the saints and theologians before him, has provided us with his timeless writings for the glory of God and the beneficence of Christian thinkers over the centuries, in every corner of the world. Very few who are somewhat engaged in philosophy science and theology on a need to know basis, can afford to overlook Saint Thomas in their efforts. We will include directly below his thoughts on grace, to clarify our own thoughts with regard to faith and reason.

Article 13. Whether by grace a higher knowledge of God can be obtained than by natural reason?

Objection 1. It seems that by grace a higher knowledge of God is not obtained than by natural reason. For Dionysius says (*De Mystica Theol.* i) that whoever is the more united to God in this life, is united to Him as to one entirely unknown. He says the same of Moses, who nevertheless obtained a certain excellence by the knowledge conferred by grace. But to be united to God while ignoring of Him "what He is," comes about also by natural reason. Therefore God is not more known to us by grace than by natural reason.

Objection 2. Further, we can acquire the knowledge of divine things by natural reason only through the imagination; and the same applies to the knowledge given by grace. For Dionysius says (Coel. Hier. i) that "it is impossible for the divine ray to shine upon us except as screened round about by the many colored sacred veils." Therefore we cannot know God more fully by grace than by natural reason.

Objection 3. Further, our intellect adheres to God by grace of faith. But faith does not seem to be knowledge; for Gregory says (Hom. xxvi in Ev.) that "things not seen are the objects of faith, and not of knowledge." Therefore there is not given to us a more excellent knowledge of God by grace.

On the contrary, The Apostle says that "God hath revealed to us His spirit," what "none of the princes of this world knew" (1 Corinthians 2:10), namely, the philosophers, as the gloss expounds.

I answer that, We have a more perfect knowledge of God by grace than by natural reason. Which is proved thus. The knowledge which we have by natural reason contains two things: images derived from the sensible objects; and the natural intelligible light, enabling us to abstract from them intelligible conceptions.

Now in both of these, human knowledge is assisted by the revelation of grace. For the intellect's natural light is strengthened by the infusion of gratuitous light; and sometimes also the images in the human imagination are divinely formed, so as to express divine things better than those do which we receive from sensible objects, as appears in prophetic visions; while sometimes sensible things, or even voices, are divinely formed to express some divine meaning; as in the Baptism, the

Holy Spirit was seen in the shape of a dove, and the voice of the Father was heard, "This is My beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17).

Reply to Objection 1. Although by the revelation of grace in this life we cannot know of God "what He is," and thus are united to Him as to one unknown; still we know Him more fully according as many and more excellent of His effects are demonstrated to us, and according as we attribute to Him some things known by divine revelation, to which natural reason cannot reach, as, for instance, that God is Three and One.

Reply to Objection 2. From the images either received from sense in the natural order, or divinely formed in the imagination, we have so much the more excellent intellectual knowledge, the stronger the intelligible light is in man; and thus through the revelation given by the images a fuller knowledge is received by the infusion of the divine light.

Reply to Objection 3. Faith is a kind of knowledge, inasmuch as the intellect is determined by faith to some knowable object. But this determination to one object does not proceed from the vision of the believer, but from the vision of Him who is believed. Thus as far as faith falls short of vision, it falls short of the knowledge which belongs to science, for science determines the intellect to one object by the vision and understanding of first principles.

BELOW IS THE PRAYER WHICH ST. THOMAS AQUINAS HIMSELF FREQUENTLY RECITED. IT GAINED PROMINENCE AFTER POPE PIUS XI PUBLISHED IT AT THE END OF HIS ENCYCLICAL LETTER,

"STUDIORUM DUCEM" (29 JUNE, 1923), AND EXHORTED THAT IT BE WIDELY PUBLISHED AND PRAYED.

O Creator ineffable, who of the riches of Your wisdom appointed three hierarchies of Angels and set them in wondrous order over the highest heavens, and who apportioned the elements of the world most wisely: do You, who are in truth the fountain of light and wisdom, deign to shed upon the darkness of my understanding the rays of Your infinite brightness, and remove far from me the twofold darkness in which I was born, namely, sin and ignorance. Do You, who gives speech to the tongues of little children, instruct my tongue and pour into my lips the grace of Your benediction. Give me keenness of apprehension, capacity for remembering, method and ease in learning, insight in interpretation, and copious eloquence in speech. Instruct my beginning, direct my progress, and set Your seal upon the finished work, You, who are true God and true Man, who lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

Source: Theological Institute of Saint Thomas Aquinas:
For inquiries, Email: asteele@thomisticum.com

Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles—Gospel acclamation:
(Matthew 16:18)

Alleluia, alleluia.

*You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church,
and the gates of the underworld shall never overpower it.*

Alleluia, alleluia. (NJB)