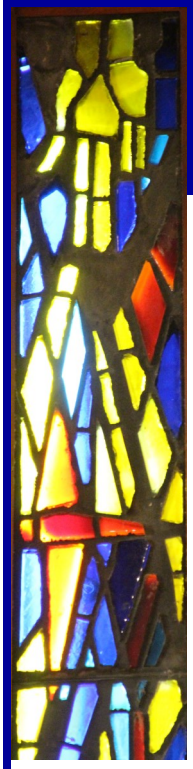
Representation of The Holy Trinity at St. John Neumann Church







We are fortunate to be able to see a representation of the Holy Trinity in church and throughout our celebration of Mass. In the upper left stained glass windows of the sanctuary we see the Hand of God. Central, behind the Altar, we see the Son Crucified, and in the stained glass to the right, the Holy Spirit. Our trinitarian God is represented in these images and can be very helpful in meditation and prayer.

The Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian Faith – Christians are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit [CCC 44]. "Trinity" comes from the Latin word *trinitas*, which means "three" or "triad." The Greek equivalent is *triados*. The first surviving use of the term, there may have been earlier uses that are now lost, was around A.D. 170 by Theophilus of Antioch.

We profess belief in one God, in whom there are three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three divine Persons are only one God because each of them equally possesses the fullness of the one and indivisible divine nature (essence/substance). They are distinct from each other through the relationship between them. The Son was begotten by love from the Father and, from an outpouring of love, the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son [CCC 48].

The dogma of the Trinity was defined in two stages, at the First Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) and the First Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381). First Nicaea defined the divinity of the Son and wrote the part of the Creed that deals with the Son. This council was called to address the heresy known as Arianism, which claimed that the Son was a supernatural being but not God. First Constantinople defined the divinity of the Holy Spirit and wrote the part of the Creed that deals with the Spirit. This council dealt with a heresy known as Macedonianism (because its advocates were from Macedonia) which denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit. This heresy was also called Pneumatomachianism (from a Greek phrase meaning "fighting the Spirit").

The fact that there is only one God was already made clear in the Old Testament. For example, the book of Isaiah proclaims: You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servants whom I have chosen, to know and believe me and understand that I am He. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me [Isaiah 43:10]. And... Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god" [Isaiah 44:6].

Adapted from: https://www.ncregister.com/blog/12-things-to-know-and-share-about-the-holy-trinity