

**HOMILY TRINITY SUNDAY**  
**June 15, 2025**

Whom do you see standing before you today? Father Jim, right? You know that because I am up here celebrating Mass. Some of you know me better than others, but you all know me and relate to me as Father Jim. I am also Uncle Jimmy to my nieces and nephews. I babysat them when they were growing up. I went to their birthday parties and graduations. They know that I am a priest, but they see me and relate to me as Uncle Jimmy. And I am also just Jim to my friends. They know I am a priest and an uncle, but they see me and relate to me as a friend. Now when I stand before you today, you all see Father Jim, but Uncle Jimmy and just Jim are here as well.

Now I am talking about all of this in an attempt to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity, three persons, one God. And if you are praying to Jesus, God the Son, the Holy Spirit and the Father are there as well. You are just more aware of Jesus at that moment. God is relational by his very nature, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father and that overflowing of love becomes the Holy Spirit. Your image of God affects the way you relate to each person of the Trinity. You may not be conscious of it, but you all have an image of who God is, so let's talk about that.

Let's go back to Father Jim for a moment. You have an image of me and that is formed by what you know about me. Some of you may be seeing me for the first time. You have seen me for about 10 minutes, so you do not know a lot about me. So your image of me is probably mostly colored by the priests you have known in the past, what you have heard about priests, or maybe what someone said about me. You call me Father so you may see me as a father figure. If you had a good relationship with your father, that is a good image. If you did not have a very good relationship with your father, that will not be a very good image. Some of you have known me for the 14 years that I have been here or longer and have a relationship with me. You may have come to Mass regularly and heard my homilies, maybe arranged a wedding or funeral with me,

maybe made an appointment to talk to me, maybe volunteered as a member of one of the Councils or Commissions. Your image of me would be much more accurate than people who do not know me very well.

It is the same with your image of each person of the Trinity. We cannot know God completely. He is beyond our understanding, so possibly your image of each person of the Trinity is colored by your human relationships. If you see God the Father as a parent, you may see him as a rather distant, someone who punishes you when you do something wrong. Maybe you see Him as loving, supportive and helpful. Your image of God the Father is probably colored by your human relationships with father figures. If you are a father, you may see God the Son as your son, someone who needs to be loved, protected and defended. Or maybe you see Him as an adult son that you have a rocky relationship with and you do not totally trust Him. I have never been a parent so I see Jesus as a close friend who will love me even when I do stupid things, or when we disagree. I know He will always have my back. He will never abandon me. God the Holy Spirit is a more elusive image. He is represented as a bird, as the wind, as tongues of fire. I see God the Holy Spirit as the one who brings wisdom and creativity to my life.

You probably relate more to one person of the Trinity depending upon your image of God and what you are looking for from God. I connect very easily with Jesus, the best friend that loves me unconditionally and will always have my back. I am looking for that friend who will guide me when I need help and support me when I feel vulnerable or insecure. The accuracy of your image of God depends upon how well you know Him. You come to know God by coming to Mass regularly, reading the Bible, doing spiritual reading, spending time with Him in prayer and seeing how He works in your life. If you can see how He has taken care of you in the past, you have no reason to believe He will not take care of you in the future. The better you know God, the more you can trust Him to lead you to a life of fulfillment and meaning. The better you know Him the better you get at discerning His will. The better you know Him the more you know that you are loved unconditionally. Take some time today to look at your image of God. How accurate is it?