

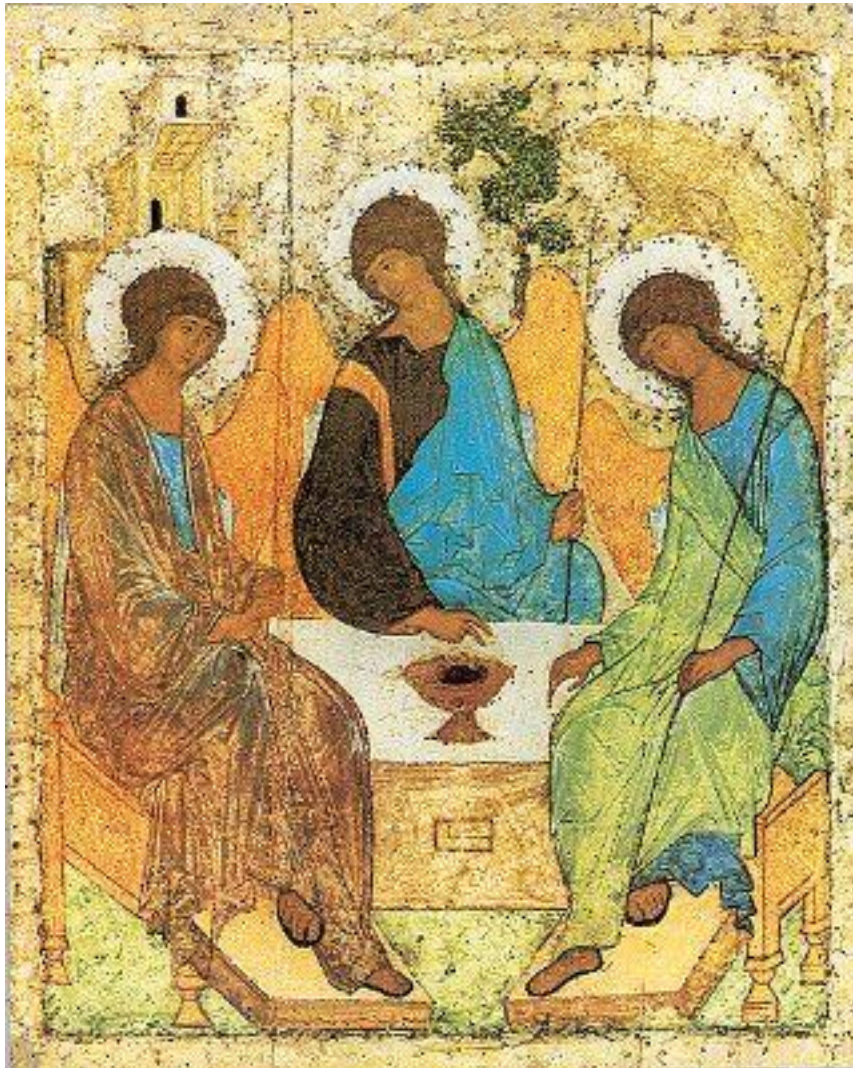
## Rublev's Icon of the Trinity

The icon of the Trinity was painted around 1410 by Andrei Rublev

It depicts the three angels who visited Abraham at the Oak of Mamre - but is often interpreted as an icon of the Trinity.

It is sometimes called the icon of the Old Testament Trinity.

The image is full of symbolism - designed to take the viewer into the Mystery of the Trinity.



## Introduction

Some general thoughts to get you started...

The three faces are identical...  
how might this help us to understand the nature of the Trinity?

The figures can be enclosed in a circle.



What might this tell us about the life of the Trinity?

All the figures wear a blue garment - the colour of the heavens...  
but each wears something that speaks of Their own identity.



## The Spirit

*A blue robe speaking of divinity  
A green robe representing new life*

If you can, spend time gazing at the newly unfurled leaves against a blue sky.  
(If the season is not appropriate - live on the memory!)

Reflect on the link between what you see and the figure in the icon.

The Spirit touches the table - earthing the divine life of God.

Reflect on that touch and the words of invocation:  
"Lord, You are holy indeed, the fountain of all holiness.  
Let Your Spirit come upon these gifts to make them holy...."

Reflect on that touch and its meaning for the life of the world...

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Behind the figure is a mountain.

Mountains are places where people often encountered God -  
places where heaven and earth seem to touch.

Moses met God on mountains.

Jesus was transfigured whilst in prayer on a mountain.

Reflect on your own "mountain top" experiences -  
times when you have felt very close to God -  
when you have felt transfigured and filled with the Spirit.  
(These need not necessarily have taken place on mountain tops!)

Elijah could not find God in the earthquake, in the wind or in the fire on the mountain -  
but in the gentle breeze  
which carried the voice of God  
deep into his being.

When have you been aware of the presence of the dynamic stillness  
which is the Spirit within you?



The Spirit inclines - drawing our gaze to the central figure - representing Christ.

### **The Christ**

*The figure wears the blue of divinity.  
The brown garment speaks of the earth - of His humanity.  
The gold stripe speaks of kingship.*

Reflect on the form of kingship being represented here...

The Christ figure rests two fingers on the table - laying onto it His divine and His human nature.

He points to a cup filled with wine...

What does this represent?

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Behind the figure is a tree.

This could be the oak tree at Mamre under which the three angelic visitors rested.

The hospitality of Abraham and Sarah was rewarded in the gift of a son.

What does this tell us of the importance of hospitality?

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The tree may also represent the Cross - the tree on which our Saviour died.

The tree of death which becomes the tree of eternal life - lost to humanity by the disobedience of Adam and Eve - restored to us by the obedience of Jesus.

Reflect on the paradox of the Cross -  
- the place where death and life confront each other -  
- where death gives way to resurrection -  
and eternal life.

It may also be the tree of life in Revelation bearing twelve kinds of fruit one for each month of the year

".... and the leaves of this tree are for the healing of the nations..."

What is the promise here - waiting to be fulfilled?



The Christ figure in turn inclines towards the figure on the left - and we are invited to gaze there too.

### **The Father**

*A figure at rest within Itself.  
The blue garment almost hidden by a shimmering - ethereal robe*

the One who is Creator who cannot be seen by His human creatures.

Both hands clasp the staff

All authority in heaven and on earth belong to the Father.

What kind of authority do you find in the figure in the icon?

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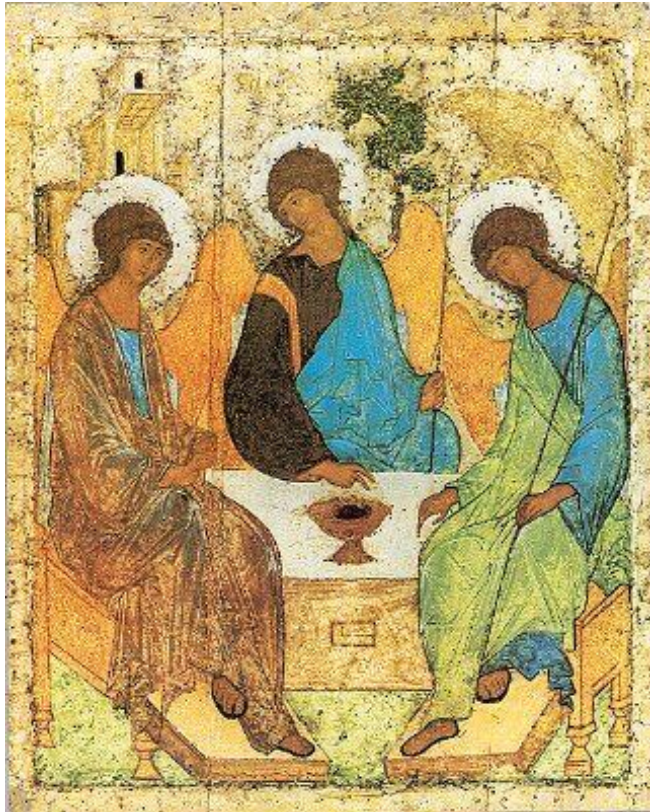
Behind the figure is a house  
the dwelling place of God.

"In my Father's House are many mansions -  
I go to prepare a place for you..."

What is the promise for you in these words of Jesus?

"Those who love Me will keep My word  
and My Father will love them -  
and we will come to them and make our home with them".

What is Jesus promising here?



### **Invitation to the Table**

Although, the three figures can be enclosed in a circle they are not closed in upon themselves.

There is an open-ness.

They are turned towards the one looking at the icon – toward you - drawing you into their relationship.

Imagine a new circle  
but this time a 3-dimensional one.

It travels around the back of the Spirit -  
behind the Christ  
behind the Father

and comes forward  
extends beyond the image  
beyond the screen

to go round behind you too...

What does this tell you of the love that God as Trinity has for you?

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