

The Most Holy Trinity

June 12, 2022

Science is teaching us more and more about the wonders of our universe. As scientists study the physics of the world around us, they discover just how fragile life is and just how differently the universe could have ended up. As it turns out, the universe is fine-tuned from its first moments to support life.

Most scientists agree that our universe began with an event called "The Big Bang" which happened about 13 billion years ago. All the matter and energy that make up the universe was densely packed in a small area that exploded, sending that matter and energy flying in all directions. The universe has been expanding at a rapid rate ever since.

Now, at the moment of The Big Bang, some twenty universal constants came to be. These universal constants are the laws that govern physics. If any of these constants had been just a few percentages different, the universe would not exist as we know it, and it would certainly not be able to support life.

For instance, if what scientists call the "gravitational constant" had been just a few percentage points different, the universe would have collapsed in on itself. On the other hand, if another constant called the "weak force constant" had been just a few percentage points different, the universe would have been unstable with matter continually exploding.

This is what the famous physicist, Stephen Hawking, wrote in his book, *A Brief History of Time*: "The remarkable fact is that the values of these numbers [the constants of physics] seem to have been finely adjusted to make possible the development of life" (page 125).

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How can we explain this fine tuning of the universe? It is highly unlikely that it could have happened by chance. The fact that the universe exists at all and that it follows certain rules points to an intelligence that created and designed it. The existence of the universe, in fact, points us to God.

Today's first reading speaks of this. There is a wisdom through which God ordered the universe. It is seen in how majestic and beautiful the world around us is. It can be glimpsed in the harmony of planets as they follow their orbits. We see it in a sun that gives us light and an earth that brings forth plants and supports an incredible variety of living beings. All this points to a wise Creator. All this points to God.

And if the vastness and order of the universe do not convince us of God's existence and if we fail to be impressed by the fact that our planet alone is the only one that we know of that can support life, there is another reason for us to consider that the world was designed by a wise Creator. You are that reason. How different you and I are from the other animals of our planet. None of them come close to matching our intelligence. None of them come close to being able to speak or to being able to build things as complex as the things we build. Even the most intelligent of animals like chimpanzees and dolphins are guided by nothing else than their instincts for survival and to reproduce. Human beings, on the other hand, have free will. We're not only concerned with having enough to eat but with having meaning in our lives. Though we have the same instincts for survival and reproduction that other animals have, we can control those impulses through the use of our reason. Unlike any other animal on the planet, we seek beauty, truth, and goodness.

The Most Holy Trinity

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Today's responsorial psalm invites us to celebrate this wonderful truth. Unlike any other animal, we are made in the image and likeness of God. We are made "little less than the angels". All the other animals on the planet have been put under our feet. God has given us the highest place of honor in the universe, even over the moon and the stars.

If the universe is a great and vast place and if we human beings are "fearfully and wonderfully made", how great must the God who created us be?

Today we celebrate the feast of the Most Holy Trinity. We recognize that the God who created us is not just some distant, impersonal force. Rather, He is a family of persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who together form one God. Together, they are the Creator of the universe. Without beginning or end, they exist together as one God in a relationship of profound love. God the Father pours out His being into the Son who receives it and gives it back again in the Holy Spirit.

The incredible reality is that this God who is Three Persons wants to share His life with us. We are made in His image and likeness so that we can be part of the family of love that He is. That is why the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity became a man and came into the world - to reveal to us God's loving plan to unite us with Himself. All this is accomplished through God the Holy Spirit who is the very love of God "poured out into our hearts", as Saint Paul tells us in today's second reading.

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How should we respond then, to this God who created the universe with all its wonder? What should we say to a God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and who made us in His image and likeness? What should our attitude be to this God who is so far beyond our understanding but who, nonetheless, wants to share His very life with us? We should stand before Him in awe. We should raise our hands in praise. We should offer Him our very lives in return.

It is impossible to fully understand the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. But it is all summed up in the fact that we worship One God who is Three Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are all God while remaining distinct Persons. The Father is God, but He is not the Son. The Son is God, but He is not the Father. The Holy Spirit is God, but He is not the Son or the Father. It is that simple, and also that complex. But how could it not be when we consider how great and mysterious the universe He created is and how glorious you and I are created to be?