

# Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA  
God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.* (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)

## Insight

*What are the key relationships in our lives? How do those relationships become significant?*

There were three messages on Cindy's voicemail when she returned home. Playing the first, Cindy heard, "Hello Cindy, this is your father speaking . . ." That's when she smiled and started laughing.

It didn't matter how many times she reminded her father. His messages always began the same way, "Hello, Cindy, this is your father speaking." Cindy kept telling her father that he didn't need to identify himself every time he called because she could easily recognize his voice.

From the earliest times—perhaps even as far back as the crib—Cindy knew the voice of her father.

## For Reflection . . .

There are certain signs—tone of voice, smile, specific gestures, and so on—that we spontaneously associate with the significant people in our lives. Many of these signs help us identify key characteristics and reflect the deepest bonds that unite us with people we love.

*When and how have you been given an insight, a "window," into another person's identity?*

*Where do you place the priorities of work, school, neighbors, and so on in regard to the significant relationships in your life?*

## Additional Background

**Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 198–267, 357

**United States Catholic Catechism for Adults:** pages 50–62

**Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 36, 44, 46–49, 57–58, 66

## Church Teaching

### The Mystery of God

God is a mystery. Out of love God has revealed himself to us. This Revelation is full of signs that make God known to us and connect us with him. God—the almighty Lord and Creator—revealed himself to us through creation and through Israel, his Chosen People. In the fullness of time, God most fully revealed himself to us in Jesus Christ.

Through his self-Revelation, God has revealed himself to be One God in Three Divine Persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We call this the mystery of the Holy, or Blessed, Trinity.

Even though each of the Three Persons of the Trinity are distinctly identifiable, they share in one and the same nature and are understood in relation to each other. The Father cannot be the Father without the Son. The Son cannot be the Son without the Father. The Holy Spirit is related to the Father and the Son, who both send him forth.

### Appreciating Mystery

Human beings are limited. We do not have the capacity to know God completely or fully. Though we are limited creatures, we human beings are created in God's image and likeness. By taking as our starting point the perfections of humanity, we can speak about God. In other words, the inherent truth, goodness, and beauty of creation can lead us into an understanding and appreciation of the ultimate truth, goodness, and beauty of God.

For faithful believers, every aspect of our lives is touched by God and revolves around the power, mercy, and love of the one in whose image we are made. Though this world—disfigured by sin and shaken by evil—presents many challenges to faith, we see in the suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus the answer by God to those many challenges.