Today is Trinity Sunday when we contemplate one of the greatest mysteries of our faith. Though impossible to fully understand, the Holy Trinity is something we all know through our baptism and intimately in our very being. You may have never thought about it but I’m sure you have experienced it in one way or another because the Holy Trinity is the essence and at the heart of our being.

I’m sure most if not all of you have either had or at least heard of etouffée, gumbo and jambalaya sometime in your lives. They are three of the most famous and identifiable dishes in Cajun and Creole cuisines. These and other dishes made in the Creole and Cajun traditions have something very fundamental in common. They all have onions, bell peppers (usually green) and celery in them as the backbone or foundation of the rest of the dish. In fact, these three ingredients are at the core of almost every dish that epitomizes “Louisiana cooking”, so much so that they are referred to as the “holy trinity” in recipes and cookbooks and by Cajun and Creole chefs and aficionados. Many other cuisines also have what they consider to be their indispensable combinations of three ingredients or “holy trinities” as well. The most famous is probably carrots, onions and celery, also known as mirepoix; the various regional cuisines of China use ginger, garlic and scallions; lemon, olive oil and oregano in Greek cuisine and garlic, chili peppers and shallot in Indonesian food to name just a few. It was chef Paul Prudhomme who is often considered one of the most important champions of “Louisiana cooking,” as he called it, and who was Catholic, who is often credited with giving these ingredients the name “trinity”. The name was meant to convey that these ingredients like the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were as significant to the essence of Creole-Cajun creations as the Holy Trinity is to the essence of humanity. Now, I’m not suggesting that any of these examples are analogies for understanding the nature and relationship of the
Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, however, the use of these so called “trinity” of ingredients is what gives life and identity to their respective cuisines. In this way, they do give us a sense of what the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, means to us as humans, as Christians and as Catholics in particular. Whether we understand the nature of the Holy Trinity is not as important as understanding the impact, influence and importance that the Trinity has on each of us. The Holy Trinity is essential to our identity and is the fundamental essence of our being. Each of us is a unique expression of the Divine that dwells within mankind and therefore each of us are challenged to let the Divine show forth in who WE ARE as GOD’S creation.

We see this in our readings today. In the first reading, the personified image of the Wisdom of God witnesses all of the creation of God as it happened but “found delight in the human race” above all else. Likewise, in our responsorial Psalm we hear how humanity has a special and supreme place in the heart of God. And in the second reading from the Letter to the Romans, Paul is telling us that through the Holy Spirit we have received the Peace and Hope of God by the sacrifice of Christ the Son. “The love of God has been poured out into our hearts,” it says. We, human beings, sinful and disobedient as we may be, are the pinnacle and favorite of God’s creation. WHY? The answer may be as much of a mystery as the relationship of the persons of the Trinity itself but the answer may also be as simple as the mutual exchange of Love that unifies the Trinity. It is the same mutual exchange of Love that God, in the Trinity, wishes to share with us: not because we deserve it or have earned it but because God desired it to be so; the ultimate act of Love. In other words, God’s love for us is so great that, as our Catechism puts it, “The complete Trinity dwells in us.” (CCC #221) We are temples of the Holy Trinity and the challenge before us is: how do we allow that indwelling Trinity to affect us, shape us, strengthen us and work within us in order to shine forth to others?

Let’s face it though; there are times in our lives when we struggle with hardships, loneliness, despair, confusion, lack of faith, sorrow and suffering in our lives. Times when we just don’t sense the presence of the Holy Trinity within us let alone enough so to shine forth. What do we do then? This is what Jesus addresses to his disciples in our Gospel on the eve of his Passion and Death. He knows that they will face uncertainty,
loneliness, despair, lack of faith and sorrow in the days, weeks, months and years to come but He assures them that the Spirit of Truth, given by the Father through the Son will always be there to guide them to all truth. This is the promise of Christ that comes to us in the spirit of all of the other readings today. The Love of God is so great that even in our worst of times, when we struggle to find God in our lives, the Trinity is still and always with us whether we perceive it or not. With prayer, persistence and sometimes patience, the Trinity within makes its presence known and we are able to once again experience the Love of God in order to help others do the same.

On this Trinity Sunday, we have an opportunity to reflect on the Love of God in the Holy Trinity that chose US above all His creation within which to make a home and dwell. In doing so, we can hopefully see how, like the analogy of the trinity of ingredients in cooking, the Holy Trinity is the backbone and foundation of our humanity. To this foundation God adds, with the Love that all cookin’ should have, a little of this and a little of that to create the unique dish that is each of us. He creates beings who, though unique, still epitomize the image of the Divine; the Trinity within at the heart of each and every one of us!