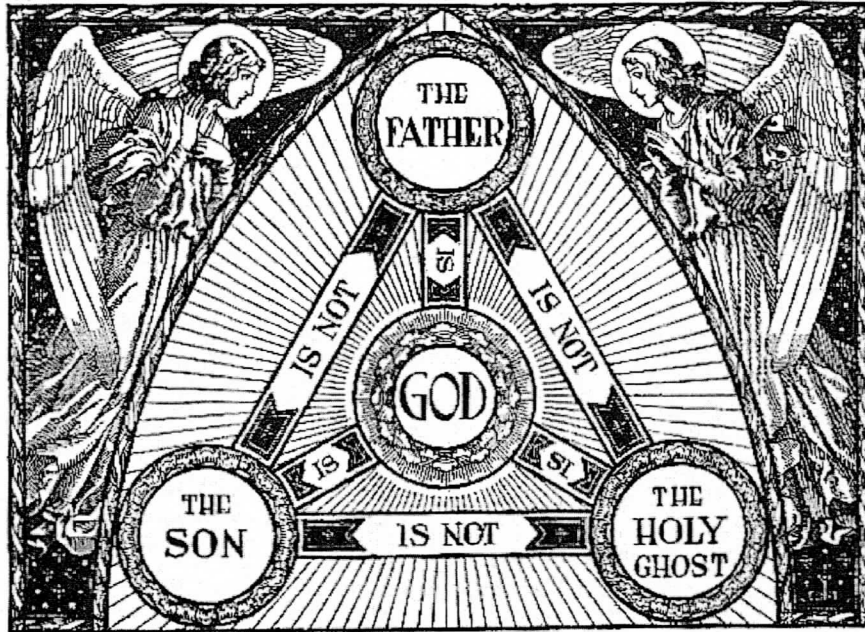


CATHOLIC DOCTRINE ON THE HOLY TRINITY

THE CENTRAL MYSTERY OF OUR FAITH

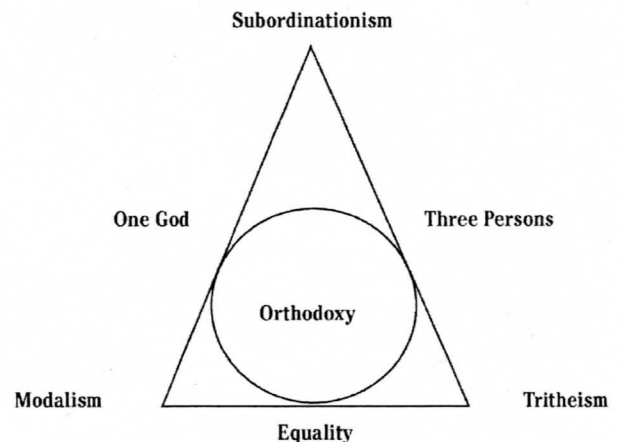


A good concrete illustration of the Blessed Trinity is an equilateral triangle. Such a triangle has three sides equal in every way, and yet distinct from each other. There are three sides, but only one triangle. As we see in this illustration, each Divine

Person is different from the other two, but all three are God. Each one is God, distinct from the two others, and yet one with them. The three Persons are equal in every way, with one nature and one substance: three Divine Persons, but only one God.

TRINITARIAN HERESIES

- If one emphasizes that God is one and three persons, but fails to acknowledge God's equality, the heresy is **subordinationism**.
(Modern day sects still espouse Arianism e.g. the Jehovah's Witnesses who are willing to believe that Jesus was a lesser god, but not the Almighty.)
- If one emphasizes that God is one and equal, but fails to acknowledge God is three persons, the heresy is **modalism**.
(E.g. Oneness Pentecostalism, confuses the persons of the Trinity by reducing them to "modes" or "manifestations" of a single, unitary Deity.)
- If one emphasizes that God is equal and three persons, but fails to acknowledge that God is one, the heresy is **tritheism**. (E.g. The Church of Latter-Day Saints, aka Mormons, seem to believe that God the Father (Heavenly Father), Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are three separate and distinct beings who together constitute the Godhead.)



- † If one is able to balance all three basic concepts — that God is one, equal, and three persons — this is **orthodox Catholic belief**.