

Geoffrey Plant's Homily For The Feast of the Holy Trinity <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5NoHJVw4M8>

Homily means "a religious address which is intended primarily for spiritual encouragement rather than doctrinal instruction".

This is a really helpful video to watch to help us get a sense of:

- a) some variations between the three major monotheistic, Abrahamic faiths.
- b) the difference between immanence and transcendence.
- c) some ways that immanence and transcendence work together within the Christian faith.
- d) how a Catholic priest teaches aspects of the doctrine of the Trinity.
- e) the experience of listening to a Christian sermon or homily.
- f) the beliefs of a particular person and how they might go about explaining those beliefs.

(The numbers in brackets and underlined are the relevant minute/second marks on the video for each question.)

List the three Abrahamic faiths (0:27):

Why are they called Abrahamic faiths?

When did Abraham live (0:39)?

Explain the link between Christianity and Judaism (0:43):

Define "messiah" (0:49)

Why did Judaism and Christianity go their separate ways in the 1st century AD? (1:05)

When did Islam appear? (1:19)

What is the link between Islam and Judaism? (1:27)

What does the central affirmation/prayer of Judaism say in English? (1:54)

How many years before the time of Jesus was this written (in the OT book of Deuteronomy)? (2:22)

What would this have meant to the people who said it back then? (polemic means “a strong verbal or written attack on someone or something”) (2:41)

How many years after the Christian NT was written did the Koran (the central Islamic scriptures) come to be written? (2:49)

Which Christian belief or doctrine does the Koran reject? What do they believe instead? (2:49)

(3:17) Judaism emphasizes:

Islam rejects Jesus as:

Christianity affirms that:

How would you put the idea of the Trinity in your own words? (3:30)

Ineffable means “too great or extreme to be expressed or described in words”. How is this concept relevant to God? (3:51)

Name some of the paradoxes described in trying to understand God (4:29):

Analogy means “a comparison between one thing and another, typically for the purpose of explanation or clarification”. What are some of the limitations of analogies and metaphors? (4:40)

Describe the tug-of-war the speaker refers to (5:25):

How does the speaker define (5:33):

- a) transcendence:
- b) immanence:

How did St Augustine and Thomas Aquinas describe or convey the idea of God being transcendent? (5:53)

What do you make of the story of the end of Thomas Aquinas’ life? How does that help you understand the concept of transcendence? (6:52)

What is the perennial human problem? (Perennial means “continually recurring”.) (8:28)

How does the Moses/Aaron incident in Exodus demonstrate this problem? (8:41)

How does Pope Benedict explain this incident? (9:22)

How do the Christian scriptures demonstrate that God is also immanent? (10:00)

The speaker describes Matthew's two immanence-focused bookends (10:17):

Matthew's gospel ends with: *And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*" Matt 28:16-20

Matthew's gospel begins with: ²³"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will **call him Immanuel**". (which means "God with us"). Matt 1:22

Matthew's gospel is the story of (11:23):

(11:40) Romans 8:14-17 ¹⁴*For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."*¹⁶*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

What does the word *Abba* mean or connote? (11:47)

How is this distinct from Judaism and Islam? (12:45)

Paraclete (Gr. παράκλητος/parakletos, Lat. paracletus) means advocate or helper. How does this metaphor help you understand the Holy Spirit? (13:17)

The homily concludes with thanksgiving for the God who is been revealed as Immanuel (God With Us), Abba (Our Dearest Father) and Parakletos (our advocate, helper, the one who helps in times of trouble). Is this conclusion focused on the transcendence or immanence of God? What conclusions do you draw from this in trying to understand the way transcendence and immanence function in a religious worldview? (14:02)