

The iPhone's main hardware system processor is made up of 2,000,000 (two million) transistors. The number of lines of computer code in the iOS operating system is 80,000,000 (eighty million) - not including apps.

Compare that to one of the first transistor radios that boasted all of 4 transistors. And there was no operating system, no apps, no software.

Or consider the Space Shuttle, whose primary flight software consisted of 400,000 lines of code. Or the first vehicle engine controllers that had around 5,000 transistors.

Regardless of how incomprehensibly complicated that little thing in your pocket or purse may be ... that device that most of use every day – and for many – so it seems – every waking moment of every day – despite it's complexity ... that doesn't stop it from being part of our lives, and hopefully a useful part of our day.

Today is Trinity Sunday. Since the ninth century, the Sunday after Pentecost has carried a particular devotion to the Most Holy Trinity in many areas of the world, and in the 14th century, Pope John XXII (the twenty-second) extended the feast to the entire Church.

The Trinity can be construed as something that is both simple, and complicated: One Godhead, Three Divine Persons, Co-Eternal, Con-substantial. Yet after those basics, trying to expound on the Trinity can either leave you speechless ... or else on the threshold of heresy.

In fact, most heresies arise from a poor – yet stubborn – understanding of just What the Trinity is; and Who the Persons of the Trinity are.

Some theologians approach the Trinity by what is called the *via negativa* – that is, the “negative way.” Meaning that they would describe what the Trinity is not. Thus we get such descriptive adjectives as “immortal,” “invisible,” “indivisible,” “immutable,” and so on. And the Trinity is, indeed, not subject to death, not able to be seen, not capable of being broken up, and not subject to change.

But in all of that, we haven't achieved much depth of understanding.

Others would describe the Trinity as being a transcendent fullness of being: “omnipotent,” “omniscient,” “omnipresent,” “omnifigent,” ... meaning all powerful, all knowing, all present, creator of all things.

Yet again, we may have gained an upper hand in our Scrabble vocabulary ... but we’re still struggling to explain things.

Perhaps the best theological explanation of the Trinity comes from St. Augustine who wrote in the fifth century. His same ideas and explanations are encapsulated in the Athanasian Creed, a profession of faith which is about three times as long as the Creed we recite at Mass.

A graphical representation of the Trinity, called the Shield of the Trinity, is a triangle with the words “Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit” at the vertices, and in the center is the word “God.” Lines going to the center say “Is” and lines connecting the vertices saying “Is not.” Thus, once can break out that:

*The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Spirit is God.*

*The Father is not the Son. The Father is not the Holy Spirit.*

*The Son is not the Father. The Son is not the Holy Spirit.*

*The Holy Spirit is not the Father. The Holy Spirit is not the Son.*

Visually one sees the word “God” at the center – meaning one God; and the names of the Three Divine Persons at the corners – three Persons.

The simplest Creedal formulae professing our belief in the Trinity can be found in the Sign of the Cross, and the Glory Be prayers.

Nonetheless, however complex this may all appear, what we do know, profess, and believe is that through Baptism we are incorporated into the Life of the Trinity as members of the Christ. And whatever that may mean technically or theologically ... through the Holy Spirit we are given God’s grace to live out our call as children of the God.

As we continue our Liturgy – in praise and worship of the Father ... and as we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ – the Son of God – may we be filled with the Power of the Holy Spirit so that we may be transformed into true disciples and bring to the world the Good News of Salvation.