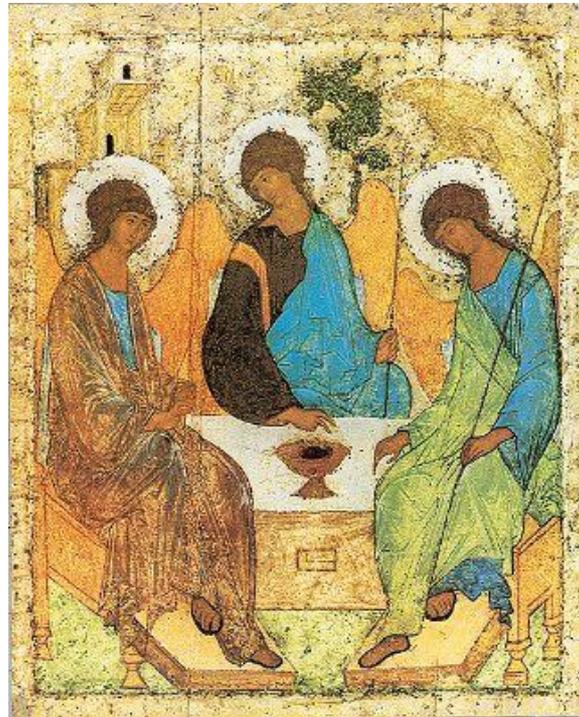


## Rublev: THE TRINITY

*The more we look at this holy image with the eyes of faith, the more we come to realise that it is...a holy place to enter and stay within. As we place ourselves in front of the icon in prayer, we come to experience a gentle invitation to participate in the intimate conversation that is taking place among the three divine angels and to join them around the table. The movement of the Father towards the Son and the movement of both the Son and the Spirit toward the Father, become a movement in which the one who prays is lifted up and held secure."*

*Henri Nouwen*



**ICONS** have been described as being "a window opening on to the divine." In other words they are something that you look *through*, rather than simply look *at*.

This particular icon is firstly a depiction of the **hospitality of Abraham** (Gen.18v1-16) and it will help to read that passage as you seek to "enter into" this icon. But it is more than that, for it is also a depiction of the **Trinity**.

**God the Holy Spirit** is the figure on the right. He is the One who points us to Christ and expresses the life of Christ within us. In the Orthodox Church, green (a "growing" colour), is the liturgical colour of Pentecost, whereas the blue of His tunic, speaks of the "living water" of John 7v37-39 and Isa.44v3. The mountain above Him may represent Mount Moriah (Gen.22) where Abraham was willing to offer his only son as a sacrifice but also the hill of Calvary where God the Father offered His Only Son as an atoning sacrifice for sin. The Holy Spirit inclines His head, directing us to the central figure, who is Jesus.

**God the Son** is dressed in brown, the colour of earth, the colour of His humanity. Yet He wears a band of kingly gold on His shoulder and His blue robe speaks of His divinity. The fingers of His right hand give a sign of blessing over the cup – His blood shed for our redemption. Above His head is a tree, perhaps both the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the scene of humankind's first sin and where sin and death entered the world and also the Tree of Calvary, where "death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor.15v54) and where sins are forgiven. The Son's head is turned towards the figure on the left, God the Father, for the Son only does the will of His Father (Jn.6v38), always pleases Him (Jn.8v29) and speaks only what the Father gives Him to say (John 12v49-50).

**God the Father** is dressed in a more indistinct and shimmering robe, as it is only through the Son that we "see" the Father (Jn.6v46; 17v6). His gaze is towards the Son and the Spirit, thus completing the Trinity. Above His head is a house with an open door, for "in my Father's house are many rooms" (Jn.14v2).

And there is an **empty place** at the table, to which you and I are invited and where we may break the bread and share the wine...(1 Cor.10v16; 12v23-26; Rev.3v20).

### **BE STILL**

You do not have to look for anything  
Just look.

You do not have to listen for  
Specific sounds,  
Just listen.

You do not have to accomplish anything,  
Just be.

And in that looking  
And the listening  
And the being,  
Find  
Me.

(Ann Lewin)