

## **A reading from the letters of St Athanasius**

The Trinity, which is recognized in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is holy and perfect, and has no adulteration of that which is foreign or external. Nor is it compounded of creator and created matter, but it is endowed with the complete power of creating and energizing; its nature also is consistent with itself and undivided, and its energy and activity is one. For the Father makes all things through the Word in the Holy Spirit, and in that way the unity of the Holy Trinity is preserved. Thus in the Church one God is preached, who is “above all things and through all things and in all things.” Yes, certainly, “above all things” as the Father, the first principle and origin; and truly “through all things”, that is through the Word, and finally “in all things” in the Holy Spirit.

When Saint Paul was writing to the Corinthians about spiritual matters, he traced all things back to one God the Father as to the fountain-head in these words: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord: and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one.”

The gifts which the Spirit distributes to individuals are given by the Father through the Word. For all things which belong to the Father likewise belong to the Son: so that those things which are given by the Son in the Spirit, are true gifts of the Father. Similarly when the Spirit is in us, the Word by whom we receive him is also in us, and in the Word is also the Father, and this is the meaning of the text: “We (that is, my Father and I) will come to him and make our home with him.” For where there is light, there also is brilliance, and where there is brilliance, there the power and the glory of the light shines out.

Paul also in the second letter to the Corinthians gives the same teaching in these words: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” For grace and the gift which is given in the Trinity is given by the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit. For just as grace is given from the Father through the Son, so within us the fellowship in the gift cannot be brought about except in the Holy Spirit. If we have received the Spirit, then we have the love of the Father, the grace of the Son and the fellowship of the Spirit.