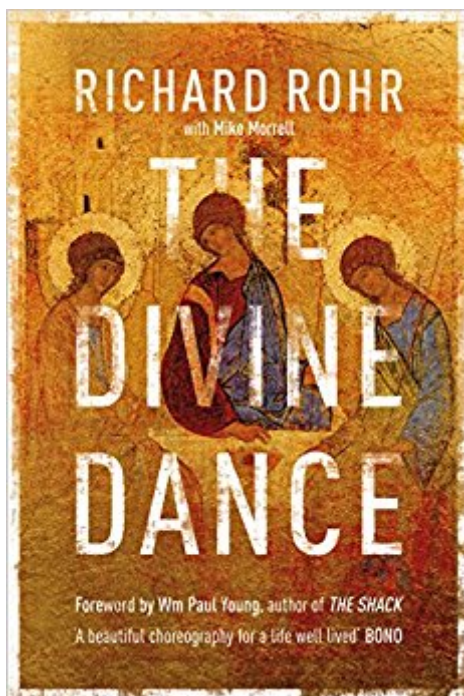


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The Divine Dance: The Trinity And Your Transformation



Synopsis

The Trinity is supposed to be the central, foundational doctrine of our entire Christian belief system, yet we're often told that we shouldn't attempt to understand it because it is a 'mystery'. Should we presume to try to breach this mystery? If we could, how would it transform our relationship with God and renew our lives? The word Trinity is not found in the New Testament-it wasn't until the third century that early Christian father Tertullian coined it-but the idea of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was present in Jesus' life and teachings and from the very beginning of the Christian experience. In the pages of this book, internationally recognized teacher Richard Rohr circles around this most paradoxical idea as he explores the nature of God-circling around being an apt metaphor for this mystery we're trying to apprehend. Early Christians who came to be known as the 'Desert Mothers and Fathers' applied the Greek verb perichoresis to the mystery of the Trinity. The best translation of this odd-sounding word is dancing. Our word choreography comes from the same root. Although these early Christians gave us some highly conceptualized thinking on the life of the Trinity, the best they could say, again and again, was, Whatever is going on in God is a flow-it's like a dance. But God is not a dancer-He is the dance itself. That idea might sound novel, but it is about as traditional as you can get. God is the dance itself, and He invites you to be a part of that dance. Are you ready to join in?

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Customer Reviews

Finding the sweet spot where contemporary science meets ancient mysticism, and theology meets poetry, *The Divine Dance* sketches a beautiful choreography for a life well-lived. In our joy or our pain, true life is always relational, a flow, a dance. (And was always meant to be.)

“Seriously friends, this is Richard in peak form, doing what he does best: showing you how the best ideas for the future have actually been here, in the Jesus tradition, the whole time. In these pages it’s the Trinity—that old familiar word—that suddenly gets infused with insight and electricity as you see just how practical and helpful and healing and inspiring and provocative and dangerous this conception of the Divine is. Our favorite Franciscan has done it again!” Rob Bell, *Love Wins*
 “Richard Rohr is one of the great spiritual masters of our time, indeed of any time.... The Trinity will of course always remain a profound mystery, but after reading Father Rohr’s book, you will experience it as a mystery that can, and will, transform your life.” James Martin, SJ, *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*
 “The Divine Dance is an example of why Rohr has had such a profound influence on so many Christians seeking to balance reason and mystery, action and contemplation, not to mention faith and real life.” Nadia Bolz-Weber, *Accidental Saints*
 “The Divine Dance is a joyful plunge into what is often dry academic mystery. Richard Rohr shares his exploration into the sacred and challenges us all to come along on the nourishing journey to community.” Simone Campbell, SSS, *A Nun on the Bus*
 “The Divine Dance reminds us that God is a holy community.... This book calls us to be like God—to belong to each other, to be one as God is one, and to refuse to do life alone.” Shane Claiborne, *Jesus for President*
 “Richard’s heart is to reform Christianity...by making clear the very shape of God.... The wisdom contained within these pages will enable us all to join in the dance of life!” Francis MacNutt, *The Healing Reawakening*
 “This beautifully-written book can do far more than change your troubled thoughts about God: it can change your way of thinking about God entirely.” Brian D. McLaren, *We Make the Road by Walking* --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

FR RICHARD ROHR is a Franciscan priest of the New Mexico Province. He founded the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1986, where he presently serves as Founding Director. An internationally known speaker, he teaches on such themes as adult Christian spirituality, men’s spirituality, and politics and spirituality, and has published many books, including *Falling Upward* and *Immortal Diamond* (SPCK, 2012 and 2013 respectively).

Franciscan priest Richard Rohr considers *The Divine Dance* the most important book he has ever written. I concur that this is indeed a very important book. His thesis is that whatever is going on in God is like dancing, a flowing of life. Knowledge of God is participatory; it is knowing from within, from participating in the dance. Sin is stopping the flow of the dance. Moreover, he says,

"What physicists and contemplatives alike are confirming is that the foundational nature of reality is relational; everything is in relationship with everything else" (page 69). Being a psychiatrist, I would add that behavioral science and neuroscience are confirming the same. The book contains important take home messages. Among my favorites are the following:

Messages about God: "Whatever is going on in God is a flow, a radical relatedness, a perfect communion between Three [Father, Son and Holy Spirit for a Christian] a circle dance of Love. And God is not just a dancer; God is the dance itself" (page 27). "God is actually inter-being" (page 82). "God loves you, not because you are good, but because God is good" (page 110). "The cross is the standing icon and image of God, showing us that God is in the suffering with us" (page 132).

"Jesus became incarnate to reveal the image of the invisible God" (page 174). Messages about the universe and us: "Our starting place was always original goodness, not original sin" (page 32). "Personhood is not a static notion, but an entirely dynamic and relational one" (page 77). "All human personhood implies a process of coming to be in love! Sin is every refusal to move in the direction of our deepest identity as love" (page 77).

"this whole creation itself [is being] brought into the same glorious freedom as the children of God" and is "groaning in one great act of giving birth" (page 114). "Humans change in the process of love-mirroring, and not by paying any price or debt" (page 132). "Creation just keeps unfolding" (page 147). The book ends with a quote from Catherine of LaCugna: "The very nature of God, therefore, is to seek out the deepest possible communion and friendship with every last creature on this earth" (page 194). An appendix describes seven practices for experiencing the Trinity. I highly recommend this book for people of all faiths who seek inspiration for living in our current time of increasing interconnectedness.

This book is incredible!!! I love it! On Thursday I'm beginning a 6 week discussion group using this book! I appreciate having Richard Rohr's films and the discussion guide to enrich the discussion. Thank you and God bless you! Blessings and peace, Sister Rose Therese Di Gregorio

I've read most of Rohr's other books, have listened to many of his recordings (uh heh), I get his daily meditation, etc., so maybe I was expecting too much when I pre-ordered the book as a result of him touting it in August and September of 2016. I was expecting more detail on how/who came up with the concept of Trinity in the first place and how it has been deemed central-but-ineffable by the Church. Alas, it was not to be. I found the book interesting, but I really didn't learn anything that Rohr hadn't already said numerous times elsewhere. I felt like this was an attempt to define the indefinite, and it seemed another much-too-labored attempt at quantifying the number of angels on the head of a pin. "Trinity" could have just as well been called "Divine Dance of which we're a part," and we'd be done with it. But trying to define some triune nature of God fell flat for me. His central points have been made elsewhere, and this book could have been distilled into a much, much shorter treatise. What I couldn't answer was, "What makes this book different? What is he offering here that he hasn't offered elsewhere in a myriad of ways?" If you like Rohr, you'll probably like this. What I couldn't quite understand were all of the breathless accolades in the front matter of the book, nor all of the 5-star ratings on . It's a good book but, again, if you've read Rohr's other work, read his daily meditations, and listened to his audio recordings, you'll find much of The Divine Dance redundant and repetitious. Triune, Trinity, Trinitarian...it's the cosmic dance of which we're all a part. But trying to operationalize and legitimize an old doctrine seems tortured at best. If humans are part of the divine dance, then why is the concept of three necessary? Or, if you want to carry the number three forward, why aren't there two parts of God with humans completing the trinity as the third part since we're an integral part of the dance? None of these questions was addressed. He states in another writing that, "It took centuries to develop the doctrine of the trinity," so what makes triune, trinity, trinitarian, etc. important? Why three? And why was it necessary to develop a concept of three in the first place? Rohr has said numerous times that he's often run afoul of the church hierarchy and the non-questioning members of his congregations. This felt like a bit of a half-hearted attempt to return to dogma--for what reason, I can't fathom. Rohr acolytes, please save your "Comments" for someone else. Sorry, but there's no need for your attempts at exegesis, exposition, or "you just don't get it." Just enjoy the book you've read or are about to read. I bless you on your journey.

Rohr explores the mystical heart of Christianity with a bold and wholly accessible book on that most enigmatic and ignored doctrine of the Holy Trinity. By doing so he opens the door to authentic Christian spirituality and points the way out of the terrible mess that has been wrought by ignoring it. As Rohr beautifully points out, spirituality, psychology and science are allies, not enemies in the

search for truth. The Holy Trinity is the reason true Christianity is and must be inclusive of all. God as community, God as love, God as the perpetually giving and receiving One does not allow for exclusion of anyone or anything. I could not recommend this book more highly.

What a fine piece of writing by Richard Rohr on a subject that has baffled many. Easy reading, not academic but warm and expanding for all. I love the mystical understanding that is ever-inclusive, relational, perpetually flowing with divine love from/to Creator and creation. A Divine Dance, indeed!

So many times throughout the book, I couldn't hold back the tears. Richard Rohr speaks deeply to my soul in my passion for relationships and dancing. Experiencing the Trinity as relationship sheds light on my own life as well as my work with couples in my counseling practice. My book is highlighted and marked with several sticky notes of places to revisit, quote, and ponder. I color coded the Scripture references with desires to re-read passages through a fresh new lens. My own thoughts and writings are affirmed through Rohr's wisdom.

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