

Trinity Sunday Year B

May 30-31, 2015

Readings: Deut. 4:32-34, 29-40; Romans 8: 14-17; Matt. 28: 16-20

“By sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret: God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange.”¹ These words from our Catechism highlight the fundamental truth on which everything in the Christian faith rests, namely the dogma of the Holy Trinity.

Curiously, it may seem almost anti-climactic in comparison with last Sunday’s celebration of Pentecost. Yet, the Holy Trinity must be affirmed in our liturgy, and it must make a difference in our own daily lives. The most sacred document that has been handed down to us by the Church other than the Scriptures is the Nicene Creed said at every Sunday Mass. If we were to examine the Creed, we would find that the mystery of the Holy Trinity occupies chief place in it.

In some ways, we have we tried to explain this dogma, rather than simply fathom it in awe and mystery. At one time, the Trinity was represented by a head with three faces set on one body; but in 1628 Urban VIII forbade the Three Persons to be shown in this fashion; it had appeared to some as almost monstrous. Borrowed from geometry, by its form the triangle depicted the divine Unity in which are inscribed three angles, expressing the three Persons in God. If you visit St. Patrick’s Shrine, you’ll see a shamrock depicted in his bishop’s Crozier, used to teach the Trinity.

All of these depictions, however simplistic or even crude they may seem to some, are attempts to explain in human terms, what we all acknowledge is beyond our grasp. Yet, at least they are all attempts to grasp the mystery.

¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph #221, Cf. *1 Cor* 2:7-16; *Eph* 3:9-12

Each Sunday we pray these words in the Creed: “God from God, light from light, true God from true God.” All that is required of us is a joyous and firm belief that there is one God in three persons: the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. No one Person is greater or lesser than the others; the Son is begotten of the Father from all eternity, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

The Creed affirms that the first person of the Trinity is both Creator and Father. We know that all three Persons played a part in creation, for all are God, but the Father is in a special way the Creator. Every flower, every animal, every mountain—it has been made by God. “The earth is the Lord’s and all its fullness.” Yet, beyond merely the originator of all things, we have a relationship with the Creator—he is our Father.

The Old Testament seldom presumed to call God “Father,” but Christ has taught us to approach God freely and to address Him in the words: “Our Father.” We have become too familiar with this term for our own good, but to the early Christians converts from paganism, it was such an overwhelming and gladdening thought, that St. Paul was prompted to exclaim to them: We can call God, “Abba,” that is Father.

Everything that happens is determined by the Father, as Christ often testified. The Father is the origin of all things, and He disposes all things. God truly holds us in the palm of His hand. And till, God remains a mystery beyond words: “If you understood him, it would not be God.”²

Most Christians find that they most closely relate to Jesus Christ, among the Persons of the Trinity, for obvious reasons. But perhaps we are too much attached to the historical life of Christ, and regard Him as the little Babe of Bethlehem, or the Savior hanging on the cross of Calvary. Too

² St. Augustine, *Sermo* 52, 6, 16: PL 38, 360 and *Sermo* 117, 3, 5: PL 38, 663)

few of us see Him as the Mediator, as the first born among many brethren, as the font of grace, or finally the one who sits at the right hand of the Father in glory.

The Holy Spirit is that divine Person who is now closest to our souls. This truth was forcefully proclaimed on Pentecost. God the Holy Spirit is the Life-giver, the Paraclete, the Consoler. In the end, we all have the same goal- to draw closer to God, the source of love and the source of our strength. I close with this brief prayer:

My Lord and my God, take from me everything that distances me from you.

My Lord and my God, give me everything that brings me closer to you.

My Lord and my God, detach me from myself to give my all to you.³

³ St. Nicholas of Flüe; cf. Mt 5:29-30; 16:24-26, cited in Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph # 226.