

Trinity Sunday Year "B"
May 29-30, 2021

Quaerite faciem eius semper

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

It is perhaps the supreme test of any homilist or theologian to effectively address the mystery of the Trinity in less than ten minutes. "On the Trinity" was Saint Augustine's second longest work. He toiled on it intermittently for the better part of sixteen years, amidst other projects.

"Dear reader, whenever you are certain about something as I am go forward with me; whenever you hesitate, seek with me; whenever you discover that you have gone wrong come back to me; or if I have gone wrong, call me back to you. In this way we will travel along the street of love together as we make our way toward him of whom it is said, 'Seek his face always.'"¹

We seek these mysteries in utter humility, but also knowing that God gave us a mind, and we should neither hesitate, nor fear to use it. Is there any value to going down this path? Should we merely surrender? The great authors in the history of the Church clearly saw the value in thinking about God, because a better understanding leads to a more complete loving. They wondered whether it is possible to love what is not known.²

Seeking God is more than an intellectual exercise. It is more akin to a longing of the heart. Augustine prayed: "O Lord my God, my one hope, hearken to me, lest through weariness I be unwilling to seek You, *"but that I may always ardently seek Your face."* (cf. Ps 104; Ps 24)³

He understood that the ascent of the human mind to God is an encounter with beauty and truth itself. God is known so that He may be loved more purely. Perhaps the better question for us is: "Do we burn with love for God so as to know Him better?"

¹ Augustine, De Trinitate 1.3.5

² De Trinitate 8.4.6

³ De Trinitate XV.28.51

Yesterday, Archbishop Hebda ordained seven new priests. While always a joyous day in the local Church– this year was even more so. It was the largest gathering here since Christmas 2019. Sharing up close in the joy of the newly ordained is one of the great benefits of serving here. You can see it in their faces.

It is not unlike how seeing a newlywed couple conjures up memories for married couples. So too, ordination day is a joyous day for all priests. The same may be said for 1st Holy Communicants, on their special day. Their faces radiate with joy, show forth the love and presence of God who dwells in us through Grace.

Christ revealed the will of Father through relation. When we hear the word “Father,” it immediately brings forth an image of a relation—there is no father without a son or daughter. God is known through our relationships with Him. We do not love an idea, but a person. We seek God’s face, for in loving God, we receive his bountiful love as a pure gift.

What does it mean to discover God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? The answer is not so obvious. Perhaps the real answer lies that “there can be no finding without a change in the seeker. Our minds, when purified, must be made fit and capable of receiving what is sought.”⁴

Truthfully, our love ebbs and flows– some days, we are much more fervent than others. That is how it works, not only with God, but with each other! If we tire of seeking God’s face amidst the mystery, we have truly ceased living a Christian life. We have effectively stopped growing, and we will begin rather quickly to backslide.

⁴ Robert Louis Wilken, “The Spirit of Early Christian Thought: Seeking the Face of God,” page 108.

At the close of his treatise, Augustine noted that he had argued and toiled diligently, seeking God intellectually. But he closes by asking for strength to seek God, the God who gives hope to all who seek to find Him.

The ten-minute limit has more than passed, yet as Jesus noted, there is much more to say, but ultimately the Spirit will guide us to all truth. Let us never tire of seeking the face of God each and every day in the sublime mystery of the Holy Trinity. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.