

Father O'Connor's Homily for 26 May 2024  
The Most Holy Trinity-B

Deuteronomy 4: 32-34, 39-40

Romans 8: 14-17

Matthew 28: 16-20

The Trinity – one God in three divine persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

There is a classic story about Saint Augustine walking along the seashore, struggling to understand the mystery of the Trinity. He encountered a youngster with a small pail. The boy trekked back and forth, emptying bucket after bucket of ocean water into a hole that he had dug in the sand.

When Augustine asked him what he was doing, the lad replied that he was going to put the whole ocean into that hole. When Augustine told him that this was impossible, the boy responded that he would sooner be able to empty the entire ocean into that hole in the sand than Augustine would be able to completely understand the mystery of the Trinity.

Bishop Fulton Sheen, years ago, delivered a lecture on the Trinity. Afterwards a woman in the audience told him that, thanks to his brilliant talk, she now totally understood the Trinity. Bishop Sheen replied, “Madam if you think that you now fully understand the doctrine of the Trinity because of my talk, you didn’t understand a word that I said this evening!”

Today throughout the world the Church celebrates Trinity Sunday – one God in three divine persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that the Trinity is “the central mystery of our Christian faith and life” [#234]. We profess our belief in the Trinity every time that we make the Sign of the Cross.

From all eternity, without beginning or end, God the Father loves God the Son. And God the Son loves God the Father. And their love for each other is so intense, so dynamic, so personal that their love is Himself a person – God the Holy Spirit.

How do we know about this mystery of the Trinity? Only because Jesus revealed it to us. His last words to us before He ascended into heaven are found in today’s Gospel: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age” [Matthew 28: 19-20].

We Christians are necessarily Trinitarians. Why? Because we are made in the image and likeness of the one God in three divine persons. And so we are going to find evidence of the Trinity all around us. One place is in Christian marriage.

Christian marriage – the lifelong union of a man and a woman – is God’s idea and God’s gift to the human race. Marriage is not simply a civil or political construct that can be re-designed or re-defined.

Christian marriage mirrors the life of the Trinity: a husband and a wife – two distinct human beings – love each other so intensely and so personally in the intimate unity of their marriage that their love itself may become a person – another distinct human being – in the conception of a child. And all of this, of course, in cooperation with God, who is the Author of Life.

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Moses told the people in today’s first reading: “The Lord is God, in the heavens above and on earth below, and there is no other” [Deuteronomy 4: 39].

And God has chosen us, adopted us, to be His beloved sons and daughters. And so we sang in our Psalm Response right after this reading: “Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be His own,” [Psalm 33].

Saint Paul goes on to teach us in today’s second reading: “Brothers and sisters: You received a Spirit of adoption, through whom we cry, ‘Abba, Father!’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” [Romans 8: 15-17].

Why did the Lord choose us when there are so many other people He might have chosen? Why did He choose the twelve apostles? They all had their weaknesses, but He still chose them. For His own reasons, the Lord has also chosen us to be His disciples.

I came across these thoughts about people that we read about in the Scriptures and maybe this reflection will be helpful to you:

There are many reasons why God shouldn't choose you or me, but don't worry:

Because Moses stuttered, and David's armor didn't fit.

John Mark was rejected by Paul, and Hosea's wife – she was a prostitute. And God chose them.

The prophet Amos' only training was as a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore trees. Solomon was too rich, Abraham was too old, David was too young. Timothy had ulcers.

Peter was afraid of death, and Lazarus WAS dead.

John was self-righteous. Naomi was a widow. Paul was a murderer, and so was Moses. And God chose them.

Jonah ran from God, and Miriam was a gossip.

Gideon and Thomas both doubted. Jeremiah was depressed and suicidal.

Elijah was burned out, John the Baptist was a loudmouth, Martha was a worrywart, and Mary was sedentary. Samson had long hair. And God chose them.

Did I mention that Moses had a short fuse? So did Peter and Paul and a host of others.

God doesn't require a job interview. God doesn't hire and fire like most bosses. Because with God, He is more our Dad than He is our boss.

With all of our weaknesses, God the Father has chosen us. We must know our weaknesses, and we must know our strengths. It is important that we put them both in the hands of Jesus Christ and rely upon the grace of the Holy Spirit to guide us in our living.

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“You received a Spirit of adoption, through whom we cry, ‘Abba, Father!’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” [Romans 8: 15-17].

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them

to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age” [Matthew 28: 19-20].

Every time that we make the Sign of the Cross we profess our belief in the Trinity, one God in three divine persons, “the central mystery of our Christian faith and life.” And every time that we make the Sign of the Cross we profess our belief in and our gratitude for what Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did for us by His cross and resurrection.

With this in mind on this Trinity Sunday, let us conclude together with the Sign of the Cross: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.