

THE MOST HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY - YEAR A
SCRIPTURE READINGS

Exodus 34:4-6, 8-9 - "So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the former ones, and he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tablets of stone."

2 Corinthians 13:11-13 - "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you"

John 3:16-18 - "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty"

INTRODUCTION

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. We have just blessed ourselves and we have begun the Mass in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever we gather and pray, we invoke the Trinity God. Christians are baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". Through the baptism, we are enveloped in the profound mystery of the Holy Trinity. We believe in God the Father our Creator, God the Son our Savior and God the Holy Spirit our sanctifier. It is that mystery that we are called on to celebrate and reflect today. Today, as we celebrate the mystery of Holy Trinity, we are invited not just to grasp it but to actively live the Mystery. The feast of the Holy Trinity challenges us to cultivate the Trinitarian relationship of love and unity in our families and communities. May the feast of the Holy Trinity inspires us to promote love and unity of the Triune God in our families and communities.

HOMILY

(Extracted and adapted, added and edited by Fr.Hrudaya)

Theme: Comprehending, Believing, Praying and Living in the Holy Trinity

Humor

I have a fitting humorous story for the solemnity of the Holy Trinity today. There was a young man in a small city who was very drunk and seemed out of his mind, climbed to the top of a tree. It was late evening and getting dark. Many who witnessed this were concerned. They shouted for him to come down, but he refused. The crowd kept their distance from the tree because they feared the drunk man might go crazy and act irrationally. They called the mayor to persuade him to come down, but he was not convinced. He said he planned to sleep in the tree that night. Then they called the sheriff to warn him of the legal consequences, but he didn't budge. At this point, the crowd became very anxious. Among the crowd were some Catholics. They thought they could call a catholic priest to help with the worrying situation, hoping he might do something miraculous. A retired priest came. They specifically asked the priest to offer a blessing in case the young man fell and got hurt or even died. The priest approached the tree slowly, looked up, and as the people watched, he made the Sign of the Cross with his hand. The crowd was astonished. The young man quickly climbed down from the tree. The people were happy that the priest was able to resolve the situation so quickly. Some curious individuals asked the priest how he convinced the young man to come down. The priest replied: "*No, I didn't convince him to come down. I simply said, (tracing a vertical line with hand) If you don't come down, and (tracing a horizontal line with hand) I will cut this tree + After that, he came down!*"

The sign of the Cross, my friends, is the prayer of invoking the power and help of the Holy Trinity God in everything we do. It is the shortest prayer of the Church and the

most powerful prayer of the Church. We are encouraged to pray it and sign ourselves reverently with understanding, conviction, and faith because of its deep and profound meaning and power. Even the devils tremble when we pray it! With the Sign of the Cross, we invoke the Love of God, the Grace of Jesus Christ, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:14). We celebrate that Holy Secret, that Powerful Mystery today!

Origin of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity has its origins in the Bible. The historical discussion about this doctrine arose when the Arian controversy challenged the divine nature of Christ. This theological dispute was resolved through the Nicene Creed that came out of the Councils of Nicea (325 A.D) and Constantinople (381 A.D). By the early 400s, preachings and liturgical texts were developed to reinforce the Church's teachings on the Trinity and the practice of Trinity formula, leading to the establishment of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The Athanasian Creed (500 A.D) firmly articulated and upheld that the three persons of the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are not three eternal, but one eternal; not three almighties, but one almighty; not three Gods, but one God. In this Trinity none is greater or less than another; all three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal. Besides, the Church has been teaching us that the Holy Trinity is not only the source of our faith, but also it is the goal of our lives.

Analogies of the Holy Trinity

The Mystery of the most Holy Trinity is the mystery of faith in the strict sense, one of the "mysteries that are hidden in God, which can never be known unless they are revealed by God"(CCC #237). The Catechism tells us that "The mystery of the Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and of the Christian life" (CCC #261) - because the doctrine of the Trinity is of incalculable importance as it is the root of all dogmas of Christian faith and life. So, the mystery dimension of the Trinity has led many theologians to explain it with analogies. The image of an equilateral triangle is often used to reflect the Holy Trinity, for it has three equal sides and three equal angles. St. Cyril tried to explain the Trinity using sun as an example - "God the Father is that blazing sun. God the Son is its light and God the Holy Spirit is its heat – but there is only one sun." St. Patrick of Ireland likens the Trinity to a 3-leafed shamrock rising from one stem - the Three in One and One in Three. St. Ignatius of Loyola sees the three divine persons as three notes of a musical chord. St. Augustine of Hippo explains binding the Trinity - Father as the Lover, Son as the Beloved and Spirit as the Love.

We have modern analogies which can bring us closer to the truth. For instance, ice, water and steam - are three distinct forms of the same substance - H₂O. Then we have the three-in-one coffee - milk, sugar, coffee in one cup. Analogies such as these offer a glimpse into the nature of the Trinity, yet they do not provide a complete clarity. In fact, as many would say, the mystery of the Trinity is a divine truth understandable not with our heads but with our hearts. Our minds cannot simply grasp the doctrine of the Trinity mathematically or scientifically which teaches that $1+1+1 = 1$, and not 3!

The word "mystery" comes from the Hebrew term "mystor" which often refers to divine secrets. God is the greatest mystery, my friends! – a mystery so big, so transcendent, so awesome, so holy – that our limited minds can never grasp the wholeness of it. The Catholic understanding of 'the mystery' is that we can never proclaim the ultimate truth about God; there is always more to discover, always more to experience. Many biblical illustrations regarding the Trinity are simply that, inviting us to dive deep into that great

Mystery of God. Yes, the Holy Trinity is an infinite Mystery. But, it doesn't have to be fully comprehended; rather it is meant to be celebrated! Hence, when we pray the Rosary of contemplating the mysteries of salvation of Christ, we pray a concluding prayer to - "imitate what they contain and hope to obtain what they promise". The Catholics, indeed, in their own fashion, seek to imitate and celebrate the mystery of the Trinity God!

Faith-seeking understanding of the Mystery of God

In our quest to understand the mystery of God, we often tend to create God according to our own imagination. We wish to think that God shares our thoughts, makes the same choices we would make, and assesses the world's problems as we do. This temptation is indeed real. However, the reality is that God is distinct from us and far superior. He is one of a kind. God is pure spirit, all-powerful, and eternal. There will always be elements of God that we do not comprehend. To avoid the tendency to create false gods, we must continually remind ourselves that God is a mystery, transcending both us and the world we live in. This is where the Feast we celebrate today, the Feast of the Holy Trinity, can help us a lot. Theology is the study of God. St. Anselm of Canterbury described theology as 'faith seeking understanding,' further stating, 'I do not seek to understand in order to believe, but I believe in order to understand.'

Trinitarian Spirituality

By embracing the Holy Trinity in our daily lives, we not only deepen our faith but also transform our relationships and spiritual practices. The Trinity is not a riddle/puzzle to be figured out but the relationship to be experienced—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who welcome us into their perpetual love. The Holy Trinity is the greatest mystery of amazing love to be adored, contemplated and imitated. The Trinity provides the ultimate model for human relationships—distinct persons united in perfect love, each glorifying the others rather than seeking self-glorification.

The mystery of God is also our own, helping us to understand the complexities and simplicities of being human. The Holy Trinity illustrates that there can be both equality and diversity: equal in dignity but distinct in characteristics. God's goodness towards humanity is expressed through all three Persons of the Trinity. Their divine family reaches out to the human family, as we are made in God's likeness. This faith has to be realized, embodied and materialized concretely in our lives. The Catholic Dictionary of Spirituality states: *"The doctrine of the Trinity affirms that it belongs to God's very Nature to be committed to humanity and its history, that God's Covenant with us is irrevocable, that God's Face is immutably turned toward us in love, that God's Presence to us is utterly reliable and constant...Trinitarian spirituality is one of solidarity between and among persons. It is a way of living the Gospel attentive to the requirements of justice, understood as rightly ordered relationships between and among persons".*

Praxis

The Trinity God is by nature generous in loving and giving and sharing. Theological reflection on the very reality of God as a Trinitarian unity of persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—shows that being a believer means being united to other persons in mutual love. Let us practice the Trinitarian relationship of love and respect and unity and witnessing goodness to each other. The unchanging charity, unity, dignity, equality, affirmity, reciprocity and ecstasy of joy in the relationship among the Father, Son, and

Holy Spirit should be the supreme model of our relationships within our Christian families. Our families become truly Christian when we live in a relationship of love with God and with others. If only we could emulate that love in our families, in our parish, in our communities, what a great life that would be!

Let us live and move and have our being in the Most Holy Trinity, and all will be well.

“The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you” (2 Cor 13:14). Amen.

PASTOR’S PEDAGOGY / HOMILY

(Extracted and adapted, added and edited by Fr.Hrudaya Gade)

Theme: The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity - Is it relevant?

Does it actually make a difference in our lives today?

Comprehending the Mystery of God the Holy Trinity

Mysteries are a significant part of our lives. We exist amidst both the undeniable facts and intriguing mysteries. Sciences - philosophy, psychology, biology, chemistry, physics, meteorology, cosmology, and other sciences are filled with mysteries. Each discipline has ‘unknowns’ that compel us to search for answers. One of the difficulties everyone must deal with is understanding human psychology, how the human brain works - It’s amazing! Each person is unique – Each person is different. So, to truly know someone, we need to form a relationship with them. Sometimes we dismiss people because they appear very different from us or disagree with us. If we neglect it, we might be doing ourselves a disservice, we could be missing a chance to learn, to evolve and to become a deeper person ourselves.

Similarly, we all wrestle with the probing question: “What is God really like?” Christians of every generation have pondered the mystery of God the Trinity, trying to find a plausible way of explaining it. But, it is simply impossible to fathom the infinite God. Evagrius of Pontus, a Greek monk of the 4th century who came from what is now Turkey and later lived out his vocation in Egypt, rightly said: “God cannot be grasped by the mind. If God could be grasped, God would not be God.”

My friends, when all is said and done, the Trinity is not a problem to be solved. It is a mystery of overwhelming love to be adored, contemplated and imitated. Pope Francis put it beautifully: *“The Trinity is not a theological riddle, but rather the splendid mystery of God’s closeness. The Trinity tells us that we do not have a solitary God above in heaven, distant and indifferent; no, he is Father who gave us his Son, who became man like us, and who, in order to be even closer to us, to help us bear the burdens of life, sends us his very Spirit”.*

John’s Projection of the Trinity God

Evangelist John gives us perhaps the shortest yet also an incredibly profound definition of who God is - “God is love.” That statement is so simple, yet reveals much about who God is. The Trinity is ultimately a profound mystery well beyond our capacity to understand, but there is one key thing Jesus has revealed about the inner nature of God; namely, in the very center of his being, God is love. We don’t say that God loves, but that God is love itself. If we look at Jesus we see what God’s love is, what love looks like. One person is not sufficient for love. Love is a relationship, which means we need two people involved in this. And because love unites, the Father and the Son and the Spirit are all united in love as one God.

'Unity' in John's gospel is also a constant theme. Jesus says: "*As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love....*" (Jn 15: 9-10). So, the Trinity reminds us that God is by nature generous in loving and giving and sharing. The Father provides everything to the Son; the Son graciously receives all from the Father; and the Holy Spirit is the result of the shared love between the Father and the Son. John reinforces our understanding of that love and unity shared by the members of the Trinity.

By knowing, loving, and serving God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - we participate in the very essence of God. St. Francis de Sales famously taught that our interpersonal relationships and charity should act as a living reflection of the Holy Trinity. He called believers to model their love for one another on the perfect, mutual, and self-giving union shared eternally among the three divine Persons. St. Francis de Sales emphasized that the inner life of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is a perpetual exchange of divine love. He viewed the Trinity not just as an abstract theological doctrine, but as the supreme community of relationship and the ultimate blueprint for human community.

The Holy Trinity and The Holy Family

Like fish in the sea and birds in the air, love should become the very atmosphere in which a Christian lives. The Holy Trinity reveals to us as a family. God wants us to be part of His family. The Holy Family (Jesus, Mary, and Joseph) is viewed in Catholic theology as the reflection of the Holy Trinity Family (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Holy Family is the earthly replica of Holy Trinity. The Holy family of Nazareth stands as the tangible image and the model of divine love, unity, and self-giving.

My friends, living as the members of the human family allows us to see a glimpse of love and unity celebrated in the Trinity family of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God made us out of love and wishes to share His love with us. This love comes from the Father-the Creator, the Wisdom/Word-Son, and the Love power of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, our human relationships become distorted when we are not in a loving relationship with God. Ultimately, without faith in the Holy Trinity, our human life will be unfulfilling and will not reach its goal. God's acts of goodness to the human family are actions of all three Persons of the Trinity. God exists as a Trinity, allowing us to engage within the dynamics of God's own nature. Their goodness overflows into the spiritual health of the whole human family, for we are made in the image of God! So, let us celebrate the Holy Trinity, not as an ancient doctrine, but as the beautiful gift we are called to embrace.

A Mystic's Prayer (St. Catherine of Siena)

You, Eternal Trinity, are a sea so deep that the more I enter in, the more I find; and the more I find, the more I seek of you for when the soul is satisfied in your abyss, it is not satisfied, but it ever continues to thirst for you, Eternal Trinity, desiring to behold you with the light of your light. As the heart desires the springs of living water, so does my soul desire to leave the prison of this dark body and to behold you in truth.

O how long shall your face be hidden from my eyes? O abyss, O eternal Godhead, O deep sea! Clothe me with yourself, Eternal Trinity, so that I may run this mortal life with true obedience, and with the light of your most holy faith. Amen.