

## Homily - Trinity Sunday 2023

There are many events occurring in our world that disturb us. War in Ukraine, fires throughout our province destroying peoples home and possessions and a rising cost of living that affects us all. We do not have to think very long to find upsetting events near and far from us. Now try to imagine the opposite to all of that. Try to imagine the biggest amount of love that you can. Try to imagine the most beautiful relationship that you can. That love and beautiful relationship exists and is a reality. It is the love relationship among the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

It's often joked that Trinity Sunday is "the preacher's nightmare." In some churches it is a time when the pastor turns to the deacon or assistant priest and says: "Your turn to preach." But while the Trinity can be viewed as an inaccessible Christian doctrine, perhaps even head over heart, it is also the most ordinary and obvious. It teaches us about love. Every Catholic invokes the Trinity whenever they cross themselves in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. At baptism we were sealed by the Trinity, brought within its life, and sent out on mission.

As the baptized, each of us is called to reflect that love and relationship in the world. Since our baptism we share in the love and relationship among the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in a very special way. We were baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We were adopted by God as his beloved sons and daughters on the day we were baptized. So we are caught up in the love among the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Since our baptism we have a new family. Since baptism we have a new Father, our Father in heaven. We each have a new brother since baptism, Jesus is a brother to each of us. Since baptism we have the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us.

There is a very old and much-repeated story about St. Augustine, one of the intellectual giants of the Church. He was walking by the seashore one day, attempting to conceive of an intelligible explanation for the mystery of the Trinity. As he walked along, he saw a small boy on the beach, pouring seawater from a shell into a small hole in the sand. "What are you doing, my child?" asked Augustine. "I am trying to empty the sea into this hole," the boy answered with an innocent smile. "But that is impossible, my dear child," said Augustine. The boy stood up, looked straight into the eyes of Augustine and replied, "What you are trying to do - comprehend the immensity of God with your small head - is even more impossible." Then he vanished. The child was an angel sent by God to teach Augustine a lesson. Later, Augustine wrote: "You see the Trinity if you see love." According to him, the Father is the lover, the Son is the loved one and the Holy Spirit is the personification of the very act of loving. This means that we can understand something of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity more readily with the heart than with our mind.

God has a most wonderful plan for each of us, that we reflect the love within the Trinity to the world, that we be the image of God in the world. To draw us into that beautiful relationship of love in the Trinity the Father gave his Son Jesus for us. As we heard in our Gospel, "God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son..."

In our first reading God described himself as "a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in kindness and faithfulness." God does not want anyone of us to be lost. God created us to have life and have it to the full. That is why in the Gospel today Jesus says he was sent, "so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost."

As we reflect today on the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, I would like you to think of God's plan for you. You were created in the image of God and since baptism you share in the love and life at the heart of the Trinity. How blessed we are! Recently we saw the

coronation of King Charles III. Yet his dignity as a royal is nothing compared to the dignity of each of us called to share in the life and love of the Trinity. When we reflect on the fact that we so often forget who we really are in the eyes of God we should be ashamed of ourselves. It really is a scandal that we forget and do not acknowledge often enough that each of us is God's beloved.

I wonder if part of the difficulty we have with understanding the Trinity lies not in understanding how One God is three Persons, but rather because we have difficulty truly believing that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit love each of us **as we are** at every moment of our lives. When I experience myself as completely unlovable, God loves me. Do we, in the depths of our hearts, know ourselves to be loved this way? Do we see ourselves as worthy of love but others as unworthy of it? Do we see others as God sees them, as beloved sons and daughters? Do personal characteristics such as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, residency, marital status or citizenship impede us from knowing this truth of God's love for all. Knowing the truth of who we are in God's sight does not diminish the reality of sin in the world, rather it affirms the reality of God's everlasting love. So many need to know themselves and others as the beloved of God. So much that has happened in the world reminds us that this Good News needs to be experienced in the lives of so so many.

Our dignity as sons and daughters of God is far more important than a royal title. We have been claimed by God. We belong to Him and He belongs to us. Today we are reminded both of who God is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one eternal love, and who we are, God's beloved and chosen children. May we always experience one another and our God in these ways. May we learn to live with each other always knowing each person as God's beloved.