

HOMILY FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY.

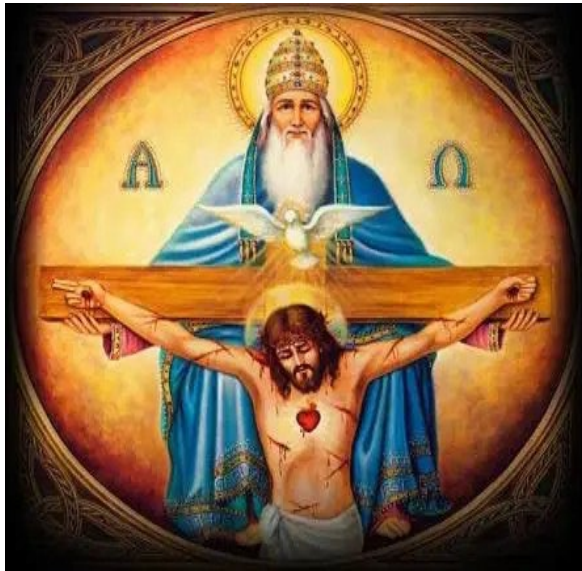


EXODUS 34:4b-6, 8-9, (Ps) DANIEL 3:52-55, 2 CORINTHIANS 13:11-13.



GOD, THE HOLY TRINITY, IS PERFECT LOVE.

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, today we celebrate the solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, the mystery of the three Persons (the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) in one God, which our Catechism describes as, “The central mystery of the Christian faith and of the Christian life,” stating further that “God alone can make it known to us by revealing Himself as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (CCC 261). Even with divine revelation, our understanding of this mystery is limited by human nature, and thus we are unable to grasp it fully. Yet what we know of the Holy Trinity is sufficient in this life. Nevertheless, an easier way to interpret the Trinity as three persons is to see it as our perception of God in creation, salvation, and sanctification. While each of these is the common work of the three divine persons in one



God, each divine person performs the common work according to His unique personal property (CCC 258). In this way, it is God the Father who creates, God the Son who saves, and God the Holy Spirit who sanctifies.

On the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, our emphasis here is not so much on its theological formation but on a reflection on the love of God who invites us to share in this communion with Him. At the heart of the Gospel, we hear that God’s relationship with the world is rooted in love. St. John makes it even clearer when he says that love, indeed, is the name of God: God is love (1 John 4:15).

This love is not rooted in suspicion or condemnation as rumor has led so many to believe. It is God’s radical love which gives our world its importance; it is that same love which gives all of us our essential dignity. God’s love is more significant because it is fully aware of the sin, the brokenness, and the stupidity that are part of our lives. It is a love that faces the complexity of reality.

That same truth is underlined in today’s first reading when we hear God and Moses in conversation. Moses admits to the truth that the people are headstrong with a litany of sins and faults to their names. But this does not alter God’s nature of being “a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in kindness and faithfulness.” Whatever happens, God’s love is never at issue.

At the center of the mystery of God is His everlasting love and fidelity. Given the shabby response of the world, the constancy of God's love is very difficult to grasp: a love that continues to be faithful even when it sees continued infidelity in those it loves. God's ceaseless love for the world is so great that He sent His beloved Son among us. The Son's faithful love is so great that He faced the ultimate infidelity—being put to death by those He loved. But God's love survives the death of Jesus: God raised His Son and sent His Spirit so that we could share the very life of God's love. God is love. In honoring the Trinity today, we celebrate the awesome stubbornness of God's extravagant love for our world.

It is of the nature of God that His love abides forever. And if there is one thing we all ache to experience in our lives, it is the love we can depend on, the love that is not withdrawn when misfortune comes, the love that sees beyond our frailty and faults because it sets no limit to forgiveness. None of us has experienced the fullness of this authentic love, yet it is to that love that our whole being aspires. We can catch glimpses of it in our own experience of love in the community. As St. Paul says in today's reading: "Live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you."



The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, all three persons, reveal the fullness of the unity of God's love. We experience something of that love when it is communicated simply through the people of grace we meet in our lives. Most of us have experienced it first in the generosity of our parents' love, one that is so important in the growth of every child of God.

Beloved friends, love is the essential atmosphere for every child to grow in, and when that love is sure, any hardship can be faced. We are all children of the one God, and love is the essential atmosphere for our continued growth. But we are all responsible for playing our own part: none of us can retire from the task of helping to make our family and community a place where God's love gives shape to what happens. That is why Paul encourages the divided church in Corinth: "Be united; live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you."

None of the Trinity retires from the task of loving the world. God's love is sure and everlasting. As children of the one God, we never grow out of the need for His love. Neither do we outgrow the responsibility to share it with others.

