

Sunday May 30, 2021

Trinity Sunday Parishioner Reflection

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This weekend we celebrate Trinity Sunday. It is the celebration of the central dogma of Christian Theology, that one God exists in three persons and one substance. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The nature of this union was much debated in the early church and today remains one of the great mysteries of our faith. This Sunday we reflect on the significance of the three manifestations of God's self revelation, and ask ourselves what significance it may have for us today in the time that we find ourselves in.

Although the word *trinity* is not found in scripture, it is the truth that Jesus speaks of in today's Gospel when Christ commissioned his followers to "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." It is the mystery of God in three persons which is the underlying doctrine of all of our major Christian feasts, all official prayers of the Church, and all Sacraments. All of these are ways in which God is present to us and enables us to develop a deeper communion with his people. This mystery is a mystery of love.

What does this mean. What it means is that God *is* community. The three persons of the trinity are in relationship with each other, a oneness with diversity and a great example of how we are to live as Christians.

The definition of community in the dictionary is rather vague. "...characteristics in common, living in one place, common ownership, people of a district or country etc." It is so much more than that. It is human relationships and a shared identity. In other words it is people that care about each other and feel they belong together. That seems simple enough, but is a challenge to all of us in an ever changing world. Community requires dialogue and participation, but it also requires sacrifice, support and trust. Above all, community requires love, and it needs to be achieved on a much larger scale than we are accustomed to.

It is a challenge at the best of times as any one of us living with others during the pandemic can attest to. Too often we fail to listen and to truly hear the needs of the other members of our family because of our failure to put our own needs aside. On a larger scale with our global community our collective effort leaves even more to be

desired. When we put the needs of others first, we can truly realize the Trinity in the loving relationships we develop. We need this now more than ever.

In our homes we have found that it is often difficult to live in communion. Each of us is dealing with the changes happening daily, the mounting stress that comes with isolation from family and friends and the lack of a space of our own. But when we find a way to support others in our home, we satisfy our own needs and the unit is strengthened from the developing love. With love there is hope.

We have found in this pandemic that it is only with a community effort that we can stop the spread of the virus. When we all work together to follow safety guidelines and practices, we flatten the curve. We have made great efforts to support restaurants and small businesses so that they will be around to flourish when this is over. We recognize the burden of those who live alone and families who are struggling financially and are finding ways to reach out and support them. We have begun to understand our commitment to all peoples. We have come to see the importance of fair and widespread distribution of vaccines, understanding that we cannot individually be safe unless we are all collectively safe. We need to extend this level of understanding to the other pressing issues of the day.

History and experience teaches us that proper solutions to society's problems have always required a selfless collective effort based on a shared identity. It is the only way to overcome this pandemic. It is the only way to address environmental degradation, the rapidly growing divide between rich and the poor, and the way in which we will learn to support and give voice to those among us who are marginalized. Each of these is a daunting task for sure, but it is the call of every Christian to take up these challenges.

In the gospel today Matthew makes note again that there were some that doubted. How often have we doubted? We doubt our ability to affect change, or that we will ever work together as a true community. Sometimes we even doubt the presence of God in the world but Pope Francis tells us today that "the Trinity is the model for the Church, in which we are called to love each other as Jesus loved us."

God the Father is love, that love became manifested in Jesus the Son, and wherever the love of Jesus is, there is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of Jesus **makes us one** and that Holy Spirit within the church as a body, becomes a transforming community of love in the world.

