

## Father Dave's Weekly Homily

06/03/12 ..... Trinity Sunday B

*You did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a Spirit of adoption through whom we cry "Abba, Father"*

-- Slavery is not something we think of as present today, especially in our own country. But there is a type of sexual slavery that is actively practiced, even in NW Ohio.

-- Young people are trapped in this sexual slavery, typically through promises of money. Some of them are undocumented, and so powerless in that sense. Several months ago the *Chronicle* had an article on this, and on the efforts of religious sisters in our area to combat it.

-- The main evil of this, as well as all types of slavery, is that it treats people as objects. In this case, they are objects for people's pleasure or economic gain. But it makes them less than human.

-- The slavery of the first century did the same thing, perhaps in slightly different ways. Some people even had an image of God that was close to an image of a slavemaster.

-- But St. Paul tells us we are not slaves, but adopted children of God. God has chosen to bring us into his family and his community of love. We can call him *Abba*, a Hebrew word that means more than *father*. It is an intimate term, one we could almost translate as *daddy*. We need not be distant from God, as powerful as He is.

-- Our ability to relate to God on this intimate level says a lot about who God is. And that gets us to the meaning of the feast we celebrate today, the Holy Trinity.

-- God is not some remote deity in the sky. God doesn't sit in heaven with a notepad (or, if you want to be more contemporary, a laptop computer) writing down all our good and bad deeds so he can make out the balance sheet at our judgment day.

-- God invites us into a community of love because God himself is a community of love. The Father has given his Son to us in self-sacrificing

love. He has sent the Holy Spirit into the world as God's continuing presence with his people.

-- After all, if St. John is right in saying that God is love—and we know God has existed for all eternity—God would have to be a community of persons from the beginning. Otherwise, God would have had no one to love before the world existed.

-- It is that triune God of love we experience when God's grace touches our lives. Once we realize that we are his adopted sons and daughters, we are in a new and exciting relationship with him.

-- And that affects the way we see each other. For if we are all sons and daughters of God, we must treat each other accordingly and not as objects for our pleasure, our exercise of power, or our economic benefit.

-- The Triune God transforms our relationships, with God and with each other. Today we take a few moments to reflect upon the awesome but tender love that God has for each of us, and for all of us as a people.

-- We pray that we may never allow ourselves to be slaves to any power on earth—be it money, popularity, pleasure, fame or whatever may masquerade as a godly force.

-- And we earnestly resolve to treat each and every one of our brothers and sisters like the Triune God intended, as adopted daughters and sons of God himself.