

05/27/18Trinity Sunday B

-- Every time we begin Mass we pray *In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*. And our Opening Prayer (Collect) always concludes, *Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever*.

-- And when the priest concludes Mass he blesses people with the formula: *May almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*.

-- When most of us come into Church, we dip our hand in the Holy Water, which is a sign of our Baptism, and cross ourselves saying *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*. By doing that, we are echoing what Jesus said in our Gospel today.

-- Now, I could go on and on offering specific examples of invoking the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in our prayers and various Masses and most of the sacraments. What is the point of all of this?

-- Too often, we look at the Trinity as a mystery we need to solve, or at least explain as precisely as humanly possible. But that's not how the profession of faith in the Trinity began.

-- It was first experienced by the early Christians, and then prayed about. It was a product of their reflection on how God had worked in the world and, even more importantly, in their lives.

-- The first disciples had all grown up as practicing Jews. They were heirs to the promises to Abraham, Moses, the prophets and leaders of the people.

-- They saw God as Father, but not so much as a male figure. God is Father in the sense of being the creator of the world, but God also cares for all of his children. God is above all things but is also near to all of us.

-- The disciples lived with Jesus, first regarding him as a rabbi, then as the promised Messiah. But after Jesus' resurrection they began to realize his intimate relationship to God the Father. So they called Jesus Lord, a term reserved for the divine person.

-- Before the risen Jesus left them, he promised to send the Spirit to give them the strength to go out to proclaim God's word to the world. At Pentecost these men and women had an intense experience of the Holy Spirit.

-- Gradually they realized that this Holy Spirit was God's very presence with them. Their experience confirmed the familiar saying that "Faith is caught, not taught." And they expressed that faith in prayer.

-- Once again, on this Trinity Sunday, we are invited catch the love of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as a truth we experience every day. We are thankful that God has chosen us as his adopted children. God did not have to do this, but out of love God has chosen us as his own.

-- And God continues to guide us through the power of the Holy Spirit. Last Sunday about 80 adults, including one from our parish, experienced that as they received the Sacrament of Confirmation at the cathedral and completed their Christian initiation.

-- As we pray in this liturgy for Trinity Sunday, may we reflect a bit more intensely than usual on the prayers of the Mass which profess our belief in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as the one, true God.

-- This is not simply an abstract truth, like some mathematical formula which happens to be true. It is the outpouring of God's love for us as God's creatures.

-- May the love of God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, penetrate your hearts and minds. May you and I catch the faith that has allowed God's people to live and thrive for literally thousands of years.