

Trinity Sunday - Homily

God is Love

Many of you may know that I teach a class on World Religions to seniors at Berks Catholic. Many of the students I teach think that all religions are similar. In fact they know little if anything about the differences. And some think the differences are not very significant. This point-of-view is fairly consistent with what the culture thinks as well.

Most religions tend to focus on God's greatness. And because of this focus they also emphasize **man's search for God**. And because our human nature is **limited**... Our search can only give us a **limited view of God**. Christianity has **different view**... Christianity focuses on **God's search for man**. When Jesus Christ came to earth, he came in order to **rescue** the fallen human race and bring us to the joys of eternal life. And so, in Christianity, we have the privilege of **receiving God's own revelation of himself**. **God actually shows us, who he is, and what he is like in the person of Jesus Christ**. And through Christ we see God's most **fundamental** and **essential** characteristic, which is **Love**. Not power, not knowledge, not transcendence - but **love**. Jesus exists from and for love: "God **so loved the world** that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Love also explains the essence of the **Holy Trinity**.

Love is always anchored in **relationship** and the purest and holiest relationships require self-giving. And for as much as we think we know about love... a complete and full grasp of love always seems to elude us. That is because love is a mystery... it has a depth and a breadth that is beyond our understanding.

Today we celebrate the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity...

The Trinity is likely the greatest mystery of our faith. it is at the source of every other mystery... The Immaculate Conception, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection. Each is a mystery of love, and the Trinity is the light that

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illuminates them. Everything Christian and everything human bears the imprint of the Holy Trinity. And to understand the Trinity is to understand love in its truest and deepest reality.

A Word about Mystery

So when we say that the great truths of our faith are mysteries... what do we mean? A mystery is... A **divinely revealed truth whose inner essence cannot be fully understood by the finite mind**. Our inability to understand revealed mysteries comes from the fact that they are manifestations of God, who is infinite and therefore **beyond the complete grasp of our created intellect**. Even though mysteries appear obscure, **they can be understood by the intellect**. So when we speak of the mysteries of the faith we are speaking of truths. **However... these are truths of which we cannot know everything**.

It is important for us to **accept that mystery is essential to any human reflection on the nature of God**. This is true because God is infinite, immeasurable, and limitless... and we are finite, measured and limited. He has endowed us with a nature that allows us to know something of Him. This is much like an endless gallery into which we can advance ever deeper to the enrichment of our minds and hearts but to the ends of which we will never come. It is an **inexhaustible well of truth**.

Mystery therefore is an invitation to think, to pray, and to reflect.

The mysteries revealed by God are food for the mind. The Trinity is the supreme mystery of God revealed by Christ, and beyond it there is no further mystery for it deals with the innermost life of God.

An Experience of God

In today's first reading Moses communicates and enjoys an experience of God. We call this a Theophany. The Lord passes before Moses. Overwhelmed with joy, Moses humbly invites the Lord to accompany his people on their journey as he says... "If I find favor with you, O Lord, do

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come along in our company.” Joy is one of the fruits of true love.

It is this unique relationship with God... a relationship rooted in love that makes us unique. No other religion has this kind of relationship with God. And this truth is verified in the questions that other religions seek to answer... Judaism focuses on... Who are we as a people? Islam focuses on... What must I do to be rightly guided? The Christian however must always confront... Who he or she is, in relationship to Christ.

The Trinity

400 years after of the death Christ, St. Augustine reflected on the significance of the Trinity, and he concluded that though all things reflect the Trinity to varying degrees... the best model of the Trinity would be the human person himself. The one made “in the image and likeness of God”

Augustine saw three dynamisms or sources of vitality present in the human person...

- **A lover,**
- **A beloved**
- **And a shared love**

This dynamism was **NOT** a ONE + ONE + ONE = THREE... But rather a **ONE X ONE X ONE = ONE**... An expression of a shared love that is exponential!

Our Share in the Trinity

As Christians we are part of a religion that connects us to the very creation of the world. Our history points to a truth... Our history is rooted in a unique relationship. This unique relationship is rooted in the uniqueness of the Most Holy Trinity. And our being made in God’s image and likeness. This relationship is a promise that the love and peace of God will be with us always.

That is the promise at the heart of today’s Gospel message... “Whoever believes in Jesus will not be condemned.” This is a promise only a lover

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can make. It is a promise only a beloved could receive. And most importantly a promise that only lovers can share.

Conclusion

To understand the mystery of love in its fullness and depth all we need to do is reflect on the cross... That is true love in its richest sense...

True Love is a decision... a choice!

A choice made first by the Father... "Who so loved the world that he gave His only Son." A choice made by the Son, who empties himself in love for us. This is a choice we are invited to share in.... And we might respond to this shared love in this way... "If I find favor with you, O Lord, do come along in my company."