



TRINITY SUNDAY-REFLECTIONS & PRAYERS

Reflecting on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, Fr. Dennis McBride writes:

John and Josephine have just celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary. Since their four children have left home and married, they have spent seventeen years on their own, a time they describe as “a new towards each other.” When they were asked why they still enjoyed each other’s company, Josephine replied: “We’ve always had a healthy respect for each other’s differences. And we’re still growing to know each other better. I just wish that we could have communicated with each other years ago the way we do now. But perhaps our easiness with each other now could only come about because of all the struggles we went through.”

The longer we are acquainted with people, the more we grow to realize how little we know them. Family and friends continue to surprise us, reminding us that they are always more than our understanding of them. We can all give instant impressions of people after knowing them only for a week, but if we’re honest with ourselves we have to admit that our clarity is born of ignorance. We can have epic conversations about a new acquaintance, but the lengthy talk is mostly guesswork, makeshift images built from a few clues.

Unless we settle for stereotypes, understanding other people is a lifetime’s task. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that when it comes to understanding God we can become paralyzed by the sheer magnitude of the mystery.

The mystery of God

The more we discover about God, the greater becomes the mystery of his presence and love. The considerable knowledge of the Church can never dispel the mystery of ages. Mystery means that we can never say the final word about God; there is always more to discover, there is always more to share, there is always more to experience. In that sense the mystery of God invites us never to abandon the endless task of growing to understand the power behind the world we live in. And each year, Trinity Sunday calls us to reflect on the life of God.

As Christians our principal entrance into the mystery of God is the person of Jesus. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, the Word made flesh among us. As Jesus said to the apostle Philip: “He who has seen me

has seen the Father.” Jesus is god’s adventure among us. To make our journey to God we begin with him. And the Good News we heard today tells us that Jesus has promised to accompany us until the journey to God is completed: “Know that I am with you always, to the end of time.”

In the person of Jesus the mystery of God has a face, a voice, a language, a love, a life. In the pages of the Gospel we meet Jesus’ friends and enemies, his enthusiasms and dislikes; we are caught up in his struggle for what is right; we are challenged to keep alive the values he cherished. In the three years of his public ministry the light from light shone among us. In Jesus we are still able to taste and see the goodness of god. God’s particulars are revealed in him. “He who has seen me has seen the Father.” To look on the Son of God is to begin to understand the mystery of God.

The feast of Pentecost that we celebrated last week reminded us that we cannot begin to understand the truth of God unless we are gifted with the power of the Spirit. Even the apostles could not recognize the full truth about the Jesus they knew and loved without the gift of the Spirit. The same is true for us: to understand Jesus we need the Spirit. To reach the Father we need to go via the Son. So it is the mystery of the Trinity that is at the heart of the Christian life of faith. Which is why we begin and end everything in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The mystery of ourselves

Today’s second reading reminds us that we are not God’s slaves living in fear: we are children of god, heirs as well. We have been granted the privilege of inheriting the glory of God, we have been given the right to belong. So, we can move around with the easiness of sons and daughters who have to share in our Father’s inheritance. And if God is a mystery, it is hardly surprising that his children are of similar strain.

If we are all made in the image and likeness of god, it should come as no shock to realize that it takes a lifetime to work out and understand each other. We know that we learn best about people when we really want to know them for ourselves, refusing to be satisfied with second-hand accounts. Our love for people prompts us to know them better; our love for God urges us to deepen our understanding of him.

Loving is the highest form of understanding. Our journey towards God and towards each other is made along the same road. And when we journey that road in

love and respect, the way we travel assures us of our destination. That is the Gospel.

Trinitarian Prayers of Two Mystics

A second way to get a glimpse into the life of the Blessed Trinity is by prayerfully sitting with the prayers of mystics—people who have been granted infused knowledge into the life of our triune God.

PRAYER ONE

You, Eternal Trinity,
are a sea so deep that the more
I enter in, the more I find;
and the more I find, the more
I seek of you;
for when the soul is satisfied
in your abyss, it is not satisfied,
but it ever continues to thirst for you,
Eternal Trinity,
desiring to behold you with the light
of your light.
As the hart desires the springs
of living water,
so does my soul desire to leave the prison
of this dark body
and to behold you in truth.
O how long shall your face be
hidden from my eyes.
O abyss, O eternal Godhead,
O deep sea!
Clothe me with yourself, Eternal Trinity,
so that I may run this mortal life
with true obedience, and with the light
of your most holy faith. Amen
St. Catherine of Siena

PRAYER TWO

O my God, Blessed Trinity whom I adore,
help me to become utterly forgetful of self,
that I may bury myself in thee,
as changeless and as calm as though
my soul were already in eternity.
May nothing disturb my peace
nor draw me out of thee,
O my immutable Lord!
But may I penetrate more deeply every moment
into the depths of thy Mystery.
Give peace to my soul;
Make it thy heaven, thy cherished dwelling place,
thy home of rest.
Let me never leave thee there alone,
But keep me there all absorbed in thee,

in living faith, adoring thee and
wholly yielded up to thy creative action.

O my Christ, whom I love,
Crucified by love,
fain would I be the bride of thy heart;
fain would I cover thee with glory
and love thee, until I die of love!
Yet I realize my weakness,
And beg thee to clothe me with thyself;
to identify my soul with the
movements of thine own.
Immerse me in thyself;
possess me wholly; substitute thyself
for me that my life may be
but a radiance of thine own.
Enter my soul as adorer,
as restorer, as Savior!

O eternal Word, utterance of my God!
I long to pass my life in listening to thee,
to become docile,
that I may learn all from thee.
Through all darkness, all privations,
all helplessness, I crave to keep thee
ever with me and to dwell beneath
thy lustrous beams.
O my beloved star!
So hold me that I cannot wander
from thy light.

O "Consuming fire," Spirit of Love!
Descend within me and reproduce in me,
as it were, an incarnation of the Word,
that I may be to him another humanity
wherein he renews his mystery.

And thou, O Father, bend towards thy poor little
creature and overshadow her,
beholding in her none other than thy beloved Son,
in whom thou hast set all thy pleasure.

O my Three, my all, my beatitude, infinite solitude,
Immensity wherein I lose myself!
I yield myself to thee as thy prey.
Merge thyself in me,
that I may be immersed in thee
until I depart to contemplate in thy light the abyss of
thy greatness! Amen
St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

Have a prayerful week,

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