

Trinity Sunday - A
Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9;
II Corinthians 13:11-13;
John 3:16-18
Little Flower - 6/15/14

My Brothers and Sisters,

The parish staff and I want to wish all fathers a very blessed and happy Father's Day. Thank you to all the fathers in our parish and all the men of our parish who assume a parental role in the lives of children.

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Trinity. We celebrate our faith in three Persons in one God. The heart of Old Testament revelation is that God is one and personal. The heart of New Testament revelation is that there are three distinct persons in this one personal God. Today's second reading contains the final verses of Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians. Scripture scholars and theologians see Paul's words as one of the most explicit expressions of Trinitarian faith in the New Testament: "*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.*" Paradoxically, his concluding blessing of the Corinthians is the greeting with which we begin our Liturgy today.

In the blessing or greeting "*the love of God*" refers to God the Father's love. God's love is always a self-giving love. As Jesus said in today's Gospel, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...*" Fr. Rene Latourelle cites this verse to argue that one of the unique characteristics of Christian revelation is God's super-abundant love for us. God not only loved the world. He loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. In today's first reading, God described himself as "*a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity.*"

Grace is gift. "*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*" proclaims that Jesus is God's greatest gift to us. Paul wrote to the Romans, "*But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us*" [5:8]. The grace or gift of Christ is our sharing in the mystery of his death and resurrection. His death and resurrection enable us to die to selfishness and sin and to rise to new life in Christ.

Prior to the revision of the Roman Missal 2½ years ago, our opening greeting contained the word *fellowship*. Now we use the word *communion*. The word *communion* expresses a deeper relationship than *fellowship*. As we heard last week, "*in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body..., and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.*" The Holy Spirit is the soul or life principle of the Church. In other words, our communion with one another is grounded in the Holy Spirit. Again, as Paul wrote to the Romans, "*the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us*" [5:5].

However, although we are in communion with one another because of the Holy Spirit living within us, today's second reading reminds us that we have some responsibility for building up the community, including our families. First, Paul tells us to rejoice. We need to allow ourselves to be happy. We also need to be grateful. Second, Paul encourages us to mend our ways. We are aware of Jesus' words, "*Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own eye?*" [Mt. 7:3]. In our communities and family, we tend to notice the faults of others more than our own. Paul reminds to focus on our own faults and work to change those. Paul encourages us to agree with one another. It is okay to disagree if we do not become disagreeable. However, I would suggest that Paul is urging better communication and conflict resolution skills. A lot of disagreements could be resolved if we would communicate better. Likewise, we are encouraged to live in peace with one another. We all need to work at identifying what binds us together rather than what separates or divides us. Finally, he tells the Corinthians to greet one another with a holy kiss. I would suggest Paul is calling us to treat each other with politeness and respect.

My brothers and sisters, marriage, family, and church are all about love—God's love for us and our love for one another. Once again, happy Father's Day to all our fathers.