

Trinity Sunday - C
Proverbs 8:22-31;
Romans 5:1-5;
John 16:12-15
Little Flower - 5/22/16

My Brothers and Sisters,

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. Today we celebrate our faith in three Persons in one God.

It is often said that the Trinity is the greatest mystery of our faith. “Three Persons in one God” seems to be a contradiction. When we apply the word *mystery* to our faith, we are using the word in the sense that we use it when we talk about the mystery of a person. Because the mystery of a person is so profound, we can never know or understand another person completely. In the Mass for Trinity Sunday in the pre-Vatican II Liturgy, the first reading captured this sense of mystery: “*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!*” [Rom. 8:33].

Living in a scientific, technological society, we find it difficult to believe in what we cannot see or understand. However, if we could see and understand, we would not need faith at all. As we often sing, “We walk by faith, and not by sight...” [*Gather*, 3rd ed., 680] and “without seeing you, we believe” [*Ibid.*, 922]. On the other hand, St. Augustine once said, “If you see charity, you see the Trinity.”

It is an axiom of Catholic theology that God's revelation of himself also reveals us to ourselves.

In the creation story in the first chapter of Genesis, God said, “‘*Let us make man in our image ... God created man in his image; ... male and female he created them*’” [26-27]. In light of our belief in the Trinity, note the shift from singular to plural: “*God created man in his image; ... male and female he created them.*” In other words, because God is one God in three persons, the image and likeness of God is not found, first, in us as individuals but in community, of which the prototype is marriage.

This helps us understand the sacredness of marriage itself as well as the sacramentality of Christian marriage. This is why Pope Francis wrote so passionately about the family in *Amoris Laetitia* a few weeks ago. The family, a community of persons, is both the basic unit of society and the domestic church.

However, the doctrine of the Trinity also has implications for us as a society. As a society, we have to balance the rights of individuals against the good of the community. In the upcoming election, the Church will remind us to choose candidates who will do the most to advance the common good, i.e., the overall good of society.

Finally, I would suggest that the doctrine of the Trinity calls us to look beyond our own society to the peoples of the world, the human family. We too often focus on the needs of our country and not enough on the needs of the peoples of the world, all of whom are God's children. Throughout the world so many people suffer from hunger and thirst, so many people do not have the medical care we have, so many people live in poverty, so many people are victims of war, violence, and persecution. I would argue that if we profess faith in the Trinity, we have to care about all people because we are part of the human family created in the image and likeness of God.

My brothers and sisters, the Trinity gives us the model for family and community. Although we can never approach the perfection of the Trinity, it gives us ideals for which to strive. As Paul points out in his Letter to the Romans, “*the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.*” Again, as St. Augustine wrote, “If you see charity, you see the Trinity.”