

Trinity Sunday - C
Proverbs 8:22-31;
Romans 5:1-5;
John 16:12-15
Little Flower - 5/26/13

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.

Judaism and Christianity are very different from the other major world religions. Neither Judaism nor Christianity originates from or is built around an idea or a set of values. Both Judaism and Christianity originate from and are built upon historical events and relationships.

The Exodus, God's deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, was the central event of the Old Testament. This event is celebrated and made present annually in the Jewish Passover Supper. Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection were the central events of the New Testament. These events are celebrated and made present weekly—even daily—in the Eucharist, the Christian Passover. Likewise, both Judaism and Christianity originate from and are built upon God's Old and New Testament covenant relationships with Israel and the Church respectively. Jews believe in and worship the one God of the Old Testament whom Christianity identifies as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christians believe in and worship one God in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In last Sunday's homily, I suggested that we find it easier to relate to God the Father and God the Son than God the Holy Spirit. I would like to share with you what one woman shared with me many years ago about her relationship with each of the three Persons in God. She wrote, "When I was young I related best to the image of God the Father as an old kindly man. When I was in my teens, it was God the Son, a real living person. Now I feel closest to God the Spirit, who[m] I draw my strength, life, and hope from."¹ The point, of course, was that she experienced and related to God differently at different times in her life as we all do.

Today I would like to focus on two verses from today's readings. To understand today's reading from Proverbs, we have to understand that the Christian tradition identifies the Old Testament Wisdom of God with God the Son. In the final verse of today's reading, Wisdom speaks: "*I was his delight day by day, playing before him all the while, playing on the surface of his earth; and I found delight in the human race.*"¹ This verse makes two points: our God is a playful God, and our God takes delight in us. In other words, God wants us to be happy.

At the same time, this past week, many of you have spoken with great sadness of the devastation, the death and destruction, caused by the tornadoes in Oklahoma. Many of you expressed particular sadness because of the number of children killed. Events like these remind us how vulnerable, how fragile, we are and how little control we have over our lives. However, today's second reading reminds us that even in the midst of tragedies in our own lives and in the lives of others we can still have hope. St. Paul wrote: "*hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us.*" What this means is that we always have reason to hope because we know God really loves us.

My brothers and sisters, these events also remind me of something Archbishop Daniel said after 9/11 on a radio call-in show. One caller angrily challenged him, "Where was your God when the planes flew into the Twin Towers?" The Archbishop calmly replied, "He was where he was when his own beloved Son died on the cross. He was there." In the midst of the tragedy of the tornadoes in Oklahoma, we have hope because we believe God was there, loving each and every person, including loving those who died into eternal life.

¹Personal Correspondence, 6/22/88.