

FR. JOHN'S HOMILY
Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, May 30, 2021

The Holy Trinity is a mystery we will never fully understand, but one we can celebrate. I always like to tell this story about St. Augustine, one of the brilliant minds of the early church. One day he was sitting on the beach thinking about the Trinity. And thinking and thinking when he sees a little boy come up and he's got a little pail. He keeps running down to the water and filling up the pail. Then he puts the water in this little hole he dug. And he goes back and forth, and back and forth.

And St. Augustine is watching this and asks, "What are you doing?" He said, "Well, you see that ocean out there. I'm going to put the whole ocean in this one little hole." "Well," St. Augustine said, "everybody knows it can't be done. It just can't be done."

So the little boy says, "And you, Augustine, will never be able to understand the Holy Trinity." It's the same problem. It just can't be done. It's a mystery.

We know that this is a mystery, in the sense we can never fully understand, but one we can celebrate and participate in. We say the Mass is a mystery. A mystery we are called to participate in. We participate in this mystery to the extent we put ourselves into the mystery. When I hear people say, "the Mass is boring," I know they are not putting anything into the mystery. You get out of it what you put into it.

Like Paul, a long time parishioner of St. Michaels, in West Memphis. He celebrated this mystery. He had a deep faith and prayer life with God. And each time I saw him after Mass, he would always say, "as many times I have been to Mass, Father, I never heard that before". Something during the Mass got his attention. It might have been a song, the scriptures, the homily, the consecration or the silence, something always touched that man's heart. The Mass was always new to him. Because his relationship with God was alive, active and vibrate. He always got something out of Mass, because he brought his whole self into the worship of the Mass. His heart, mind, body, and soul was into the mystery that was before him. This should be our approach on the Feast Day of the Trinity.

So, our approach is one of wonder and awe. One of our delight in God whom we call Father, Son and Holy Spirit. No matter what analogies we might use, the Shamrock, the Egg, Water, Music, it helps us to understand the concept of three being one, but they all fall short to truth of this wonderful mystery.

The mystery of a very special relationship. Of persons, loving each other perfectly. This mystery of persons loving each other perfectly is something we can ponder, but how many of us experience this unconditional love in relationships? I

suspect it's a very rare occurrence. However, if we reflect upon our families, most of us can say that we are loved for who we are, not what we have, and not for what we do, but for who we are. In families we are called to love each other. Do I feel loved with my family? What about my church family?

We know it's possible because of God's grace, but in reality, it always falls short. This is why we need our faith and belief in this perfect relationship of love, between the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

The beauty of this Love of God in the Trinity is that there is a constant invitation to share in God's love. In however and whatever way we need this love: as a Father, Abba, Lord, Savior, Redeemer, Brother, Friend, Teacher, Guide, Mentor, Advocate, Healer, Consoler, etc. He knows us, He loves us, He cares for us like no other. On the Feast of Holy Trinity can we allow ourselves to enter in and be loved by God?

Jesus in today's Gospel of Matthew brings us back to the Ascension. When Jesus ascended to the Father, commissioning his Apostles, all power in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.

Baptizing us into this mystery of love. Baptizing meaning Immersion. We are immersed into the Trinity from our Baptism. Immersed into the Love of God our Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In this Mass we began in the name of the Trinity, we have been and will continue to pray in the presence of the Trinity, and we will be blessed and end in the Trinity. We are immersed.

When was the last time you felt loved for who you are? Again, not for what you do, or what you have, but for who you are. It doesn't happen often, but I remember once when a family invited me to their house. I had been at their house on several occasions. One thing the Mother did was when there was a special occasion or day, you would be treated with a special red plate - "*You are Special*". The family enjoyed the special red plate. One day that plate was before me; it was not my birthday or any other occasion. I asked why the plate today? The answer, "You are special to us, and to God the Father." I did feel special, loved, and that I belonged. You are family.

On this feast, God is always setting before us the special red plate, you are special, you are loved, and you belong. It is only by God's grace we can even dare to enter in, and be loved by God. So on this Feast of the Holy Trinity, we can only enter into, participate and celebrate the love of the Blessed Trinity that surrounds us. Oh, Most Holy Trinity, fill us with your love.