

Most Holy Trinity

Today we celebrate the fact that with the coming of Jesus into the world and the sending of the Holy Spirit, God has revealed that at the center of all being there is a communion of persons. What is at the very center of God is love between the Divine Persons from all eternity. Through the gift of faith, through baptism, and a gradual transformation, we are offered the opportunity to become members of this eternal communion. St. Paul beautifully explained in the passage that we hear that our communion with the Holy Trinity is made secure by the Presence of the Holy Spirit with our souls. This great truth was celebrated last Sunday – Pentecost.

When we receive the Holy Spirit, this is not one third of God. When we receive the Holy Spirit we are received the Father and the Son. Then it is up to us whether we allow the Spirit of God to have His way with our lives or we continue to try to run our lives all by ourselves. This is a life of in which we are afraid to let God be God. We continue to push away this invitation to be part of the communion which is at the center of everything that exists.

St. Paul calls the Holy Spirit given freedom to work in us, the Spirit of adoption. Personally, I have always been fascinated by adoption since I was a little child. I think I was one of those kids who said, “I must have been adopted.” St. Paul compares being drawn into the life of God as “adoption”. Think about adoption a little. A gratuitous act of generosity. Bringing into the most intimate relationship someone whom I am not obliged to love, but choose to love freely. For the child there is a gradual process of receiving the love of adoptive parents and gradually absorbing the family heritage and identity. There is inevitably some testing of that love, some doubt (“You’re not my real father!”)

St. Paul continues this comparison. By the Spirit, we feel moved and free to call God the Creator of all things “Daddy.” Wow! With the Spirit’s help we come to believe we are loved by God infinitely and unconditionally and eternally. I am His beloved child. I have an identity that not even death can take away from me! That is the inheritance to which Paul refers, when he says that being made sons and daughters of God also makes us heirs. The life of God the Holy Trinity is eternal. If we are drawn into this life, then we are drawn into eternity. There can be no other way! We are not eternal by nature but we are by love.

Now, Paul, being a lawyer and all, is careful to make full disclosure when he reminds us that we have to suffer (with Christ) if we are to take on the family likeness, the likeness of God. Many do not want to be reminded that there is a God. Many are afraid to give up the illusion that they are in complete control of their lives. Many are pushing away guilt or shame for things they have done in their lives that they are not yet ready to be forgiven for. When you bear the likeness of God to any degree, this may trigger some “odd” things in other people. It kind of goes with the turf. It’s not really about you, however, it’s really about how they are feeling about God. It’s what happened to Jesus in spades when He took human nature upon Himself. But whatever may come out, it still more than worth it!

So, it is with all of this in mind, that Jesus tells the apostles before He returns to the Father, that He has been given the power to make children of God, to widen the family by more adoptions. Therefore, their (our) mission is going to be to make disciples (siblings), baptizing them into the Trinity and teaching them everything that Jesus had taught them. Making disciples of Jesus begins with an invitation. Not unlike the invitation to a party. Only this is a party that never ends! At the same time, it is like inviting someone to become a member of your family. For each person who responds to God’s invitation made through us, becomes our adopted sibling!