

FAITH AND REASON

The Holy Trinity: It is interesting to note how God uses the most primitive symbols - fire, wind, water, to communicate with primitive man. Primitive man realized that fire and wind can be helpful or destructive. Furthermore, they were viewed as spiritual forces - one could see them but not grasp them, and water preserved life. God communicated with Moses through the fiery bush, burning but never consumed. At the first Pentecost, God used the symbols of fire and wind to symbolize his presence.

The miracles of the Old Testament were also the means by which God liberated his people, provided for their needs, defended his people against their enemies. The miracles of the New Testament are Jesus' credentials indicating who he is and what he has come to do. This is clearly evident in St John's Gospel, which the Church and scholars around the world recognize as the "Book of Signs". St John gives us the most profound image of Christ in his Gospel. In other words, John sees in all the actions, miracles of Jesus as "signs" of who he is and what he has come to do. Jesus gradually reveals the mystery of his person to his people who yearned for his coming: "The Father and I are one"; "He who sees me sees the Father"; "I will ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit"; "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full"; and then, "Before Abraham, was, I am".

The people who heard this were strictly "Monotheistic". "Hear O Israel, the Lord your God is Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your soul" is from The Shema (Duet 6), which is the most important and essential creed of Judaism. Understandably they were confused, shocked! Was Jesus contradicting, nullifying, the Law given them by Moses? They were unable to read the "signs of the times".

The great theological Saints - St Augustine, St Anselm, St Thomas Aquinas, to mention a few, tell us that God is very mysterious, utterly transcendent, above and beyond the grasp of unaided human reason. Let us consider the mystery of the Holy Trinity in the following way: Each person has an image of himself or herself. This image involves, not simple our appearance, but our whole self, our personality. This image of self, good or bad, shallow, or profound, gives rise to self-knowledge. Which can lead to love, hatred, dislike of self, negative attitudes.

God, who is pure spirit has an image of himself. But since God is infinitely perfect, the image God has of himself is equally perfect. So perfect indeed, that it constitutes a second person, the Son, And the bond of love that exists between the Father and his image - the Son, is the Holy Spirit.

Blaise Pascal, recognized by the scientists of his day as the greatest scientist of his century, wisely refused to engage in any proofs by natural argument about the existence of God, The Holy Trinity, the immortality of the Soul! And why.... "Because that knowledge without Jesus Christ is futile and fruitless. All who seek God outside Jesus Christ, and who halt in nature, either find no light to satisfy them, or they begin to contrive a method of knowing God or of serving him without a mediator, and thereby fall into atheism or deism, two things almost equally to the Christian religion. Having lost himself in nature, man may find himself again in the God who counts every hair of his head, without whose knowledge not even a sparrow falls to the ground. In the willingness to say "Amen, thy will be done lies the greatness of man". Man must look up from licking the earth, to the skies, to the destiny God has for him. Man, that fugitive from reality who must see through his despair and confusion to the brightness of eternity. Be silent, O-man, impotent reason".

Pascal simply asserts...God walked this earth in Christ Jesus, How foolish then to seek God other than through Christ... The Way, the Truth, the Life.

To seek God, about whom who is utterly transcendent (beyond reason) and refuse to recognize God coming to us in Christ Jesus is, in the thinking of Pascal, a kind of spiritual lunacy. Personal prayer is our "lifeline with God. Humble prayer helps us to realize and accept our nothingness without God. The prayer of the humble is peaceful and gentle. Let us pray with the great John Henry Newman: "O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at last!.... **Fr. William C. Mooney**

A Convert shares her thoughts on the Holy Hour: During the Holy Hour, which I have attended for a number of years, I have learned to say the Rosary, attended Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, I have come to realize the value of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Rosary teaches me to slow down and listen to Jesus. Adoration teaches me to focus on Jesus, who has become the center of my life. Confession is a special meeting with Jesus, person to person.

“Woman, behold your son!; ‘Behold your mother”: And so, in the redemptive economy of grace, brought about through the action of the Holy Spirit, there is a unique correspondence between the moment of the Incarnation of the Word and the moment of the birth of the Church. The person who links these two moments is Mary: Mary at Nazareth and Mary in the Upper Room at Jerusalem. In both cases her discreet yet essential presence indicates the path of ‘birth from the Holy Spirit’. Thus, she who is present in the mystery of Christ as Mother becomes—by the will of the Son and the power of the Holy Spirit—present in the mystery of the Church. In the Church too she continues to be a maternal presence, as is shown by the words spoken from the Cross: ‘Woman, behold your son!; ‘Behold your mother.’” **Pope St. John Paul II**

In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he spoke to us through a son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created the universe, who is the refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being, and who sustains all things by his mighty word. When he had accomplished purification from sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high... **Hebrews 1:1-3**

A Thought For the Day

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| Sunday | God does not fit in an occupied heart. |
| Monday | The glory of God is man fully alive, and the life of man is the vision of God. |
| Tuesday | Whatever you do, think not of yourself, but of God. |
| Wednesday | The only perfect happiness we know in this world is an imperfect happiness. |
| Thursday | Nothing succeeds like Christian failure. Even by our failures God is teaching us something. |
| Friday | Let us never forget that if we wish to die like the saints we must live like them. |
| Saturday | Never will we understand the value of time better than when our last hour is at hand. |

In his prayer intention for the month of May, Pope Francis prays that “ecclesial movements and groups may daily rediscover their evangelizing mission, and that they place their own charisms at the service of the world’s needs”.

The Pope notes that “ecclesial movements are a gift” and “a treasure in the Church”, and that they “renew the Church with their capacity for dialogue at the service of her evangelizing mission. Each day”, he says, “they rediscover in their charism new ways of showing the attractiveness and the newness of the Gospel”. The Holy Father explains that ecclesial movements seem different because they speak “different languages”, but that “it is their creativity that creates these differences”. He notes, too, that they always understand themselves and make themselves understood, and that they work “at the service of the Bishops and parishes to avoid any temptation to close in on themselves”.

Pope Francis concludes by urging ecclesial movements to “always be on the move, responding to the impulse of the Holy Spirit, to the challenges, to the changes in today’s world”, and to “remain in harmony with the Church, since harmony is a gift of the Holy Spirit”.

How they need to be cleansed, these poor feet with which we touch the earth! Even though the head that thinks, the heart that loves, the hands that act may pursue ends which are pure, yet our feet trail in the dust and are soiled by the mud from the road they tread. We need the pitcher of water and the touch of the Savior’s hands. We need submission to cleansing grace if, with Peter protesting and yet converted, we will “have part” in the gift Jesus brings: “If I was thee not, thou shalt have no part with me.” A moment later Jesus shows that the washing of the feet has still another meaning, He speaks of His Apostles, and of the unity that He has come to establish between them and Him, a unity like that between Him and His Father. Jesus washes the feet of the Twelve to prepare them for their journeys across the earth. Purity and humility are the condition of love; and love is the soul of the apostolate... **A.G. Sertillanges**

In His Will is Our Peace
Fr. William C. Mooney

Spiritual Direction and Confession
Email: Fr.WCmooney@gmail.com
Appointments: (90 4) 315-8554
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Instagram: [faith_and_reason](#)