

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

June 16, 2019 C

Facilitator: *Let us take a minute to consciously acknowledge that we are in the presence of God and ask him to help us to hear the Word he wants us to hear this week.*

Pause for a moment and then play a religious song.

Opening prayer: *God of all ages, you are loving, slow to anger, rich in kindness. We praise you for your goodness. You are the Creator and sustainer of our lives. You are our Savior. We honor you for your total gift of self. You are the Spirit of life, forgiveness, and peace. We delight in your tender love. One God in three persons, be near to us who are formed in your image. Dwell in us. We ask this, gracious God, living and true, forever and ever. Amen.*

Response to last week's Word: [Facilitator briefly recalls last week's Gospel.] *Let us spend a few minutes sharing how the Word we heard God speak to us last week has unfolded in our lives during the week.*

Facilitator: The Feast of Pentecost completed the Lent-Easter season. We resume Ordinary Time the day after Pentecost. The *Sundays* in this part of Ordinary Time begin with two Solemnities, namely, the Most Holy Trinity and Corpus Christi. During the *Fifty Days of Easter*, we celebrated what God *did* for us through Jesus. This Sunday on the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, we celebrate *who* God is for us. The first reading speaks of Lady Wisdom's role in creation. The second reading and the Gospel are chosen because both readings mention all three persons of the Holy Trinity.

Let us listen to God's Word to hear what it is he wants to say to us in these readings today. As you hear a word, you may want to underline it or write it down to remember.

Read the first reading, the psalm and the second reading, pausing briefly after each one.

FIRST READING: Proverbs 8:22-31

We are introduced to the mysterious figure of Lady Wisdom. In the first verses of today's reading, Lady Wisdom tells us that she was God's first-born, existing long before anything else was brought forth. Then, in poetic detail, Lady Wisdom tells us how she was present with God as a kind of craftsman when the world was being created. The reading ends with an intriguing image of Lady Wisdom playing on the surface of the earth, taking delight in human beings. Lady Wisdom should not be seen as separate from God. Neither should she be seen as the feminine side of God. (Being pure spirit, God is neither male nor female.) In the Christian era, Wisdom was seen as the Word of God, which became flesh in Christ.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 8

This hymn of praise contrasts God's majesty with human lowliness, and marvels at God's treatment of humankind. The author especially marvels at God's concern for us inferior human creatures.

SECOND READING: Romans 5:1-5

The *saving work* of Jesus is a major theme of Paul's letter to the Romans. We are saved by grace. It is pure

gift. We do not earn it. Rather, we open our hearts to the gift and receive it. This "opening of our hearts" to Jesus is one way to describe what we call 'faith.' By opening our hearts to God in faith, we "gain access" to God who is our peace, hope and end. Because of our relationship with God, we can endure afflictions. Coping with afflictions leads to endurance, and endurance leads to *tested virtue* and *hope*, which keeps us going in difficult times.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL: John 16:12-15

As we listen to this first reading of the Gospel, let us listen with our minds for the content.

**A participant reads the Gospel,
then all pause to reflect.**

As we listen to this second reading of the Gospel, let us listen with our hearts to what Jesus is saying to us. Be aware of what draws us in and what part of the Gospel might be a challenge to embrace. You may want to underline or write down the word you hear.

**A participant reads the Gospel again,
then all pause to reflect.**

GOSPEL: John 16:12-15

Today's Gospel is an excerpt from Jesus' *Farewell Discourse* to his Apostles. They are downcast because of his departure. To console and help them, Jesus promises to send his Holy Spirit. One of the roles of the Spirit is to lead the disciples into "all truth." The Spirit will lead the Church to gradually understand the deep meaning and radical implications of the teachings of Jesus. Often the teachers of our Church use this text when speaking about some of our teachings that are not *explicitly* mentioned in Scripture—beliefs about Mary, purgatory, and original sin. Through centuries of meditation on the Scriptures, Mother Church, led by the Spirit, came to believe that the above teachings were *implied* in the Scriptures. Another role of the Holy Spirit is to help the Church in every age to express, in fresh contemporary language, ancient truths.

FAITH-SHARING QUESTIONS

1. Turn to the person next to you and share what word/s or image/s in the readings caught your attention? Did they comfort, challenge, or touch you in some way?

The facilitator can decide which is more helpful: to share the next questions with the whole group, or to share in smaller groups of three or four.

2. The first reading speaks about Lady Wisdom being playful, creative and appreciative of beauty. To what extent are you like Lady Wisdom? Where do you see beauty in life?

3. What is one of your favorite images of God? Why?

4. To what extent is your spirituality Trinitarian? Do you pray to one person of the Blessed Trinity more than you pray to the others? Do you have a relationship with all three persons of the Trinity?

5. Name one thing today's Gospel says to us that we disciples of Jesus need to heed and act on.

JOURNALING. *Having listened to God's Word and to others' reflections on it, take a quiet moment to reflect on what you are hearing God say to you. Your response will be what you bring to Eucharist on Sunday, asking Jesus to help you respond as he asks of you. When ready, jot down your reflections.*

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Share with the person next to you one way you can act on this week's readings. Suggestion: If you tend to omit praying to one of the Persons of the Trinity, begin this week to pray to that person.

PRAYING WITH THE WORD

FACILITATOR: Let us now pause to see how something(s) said in the reading might lead us into shared prayer. Suggestion: "*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, lead me into a deeper sense of the great mystery that you are; lead me into your Trinitarian life.*"

CLOSING PRAYER (together)

*O Most Holy Trinity, undivided Unity,
when we try to understand you,
it can make our head spin.
Deepen our relationship with you,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Fill us with your delight
and help us pour your love out
into a world so in need of that love.
Amen.*