

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

May 30, 2021 B

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 all loving, slow to anger and 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 reads focus statement: The Monday after Pentecost Sunday, our Church liturgical calendar returns to Ordinary Time. The Sundays in Ordinary Time after Pentecost begin with two Solemnities, namely, the Most Holy Trinity and Corpus Christi. On this Sunday, as we honor the Holy Trinity, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: "*The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and the Christian life*" (Art.261). In the first reading, which is Moses' farewell address to the Israelites, Moses speaks about the greatness of God and their obligations to follow his ways. In Jesus' farewell address to his disciples, he commissions them to "make disciples of all nations." In the second reading, Paul speaks about our spiritual adoption by God through Jesus.

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: Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40

The choice of the first reading from Deuteronomy sets up both a *comparison* and a *contrast* between Moses and Jesus. The book of Deuteronomy is presented as Moses' farewell speech to the Israelites. After wandering in the wilderness for forty years, the Israelites, led by Moses, have come to the threshold of the Promised Land. Moses can look across the Jordan to the land which they, but not he, will enter. There, Moses once again takes on his greatest role as the spokesman for God who gives God's Law to the people. The first time he had done this was at Mount Sinai when he delivered the Ten Commandments and all the laws contained in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Now, on the Plains of Moab, Moses repeats the Law for their instruction. This is therefore the second time he gives the Law. (The word "Deuteronomy" means "Second Law.") Thereafter, Moses ascends Mount Nebo where he dies.

This reading is filled with awe for the greatness of God. It is as if Moses could not get over the fact that God spoke to his people and delivered them from the slavery of Egypt. In response to God's goodness to them, they must be diligent in following God's ways. If they are obedient, they will prosper in the land that God is about to give them.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 33

This psalm highlights the privilege of the people who are called to respond to the goodness and justice of God.

SECOND READING: Romans 8:14-17

Paul speaks of the Christian's relationship with God as one of spiritual adoption. It is as if God has legally adopted us as his sons and daughters. As such, we can address God as *Jesus* addressed him, i.e., with the

familial title of “Abba,” which is translated Daddy or Papa. If we truly see God as our “Pop,” we should be able to go to him with the confidence of a child who truly believes that he/she is totally loved by his/her father. To be a child of God also implies a willing-ness to be taught and led, something that may not be easy for those of us who were raised to be self-sufficient and independent.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

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.

GOSPEL: Matthew 28:16-20

Just as Moses gave his people a farewell speech, Matthew presents us with Jesus’ farewell speech to his apostles. He commissions them to go and “*make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them*”—not the Law of Moses but rather “*all that I have commanded you.*” Matthew, writing mostly for Christians who were raised as Jews, presents Jesus as the new and greater Moses who gives them a new and greater Law. The mention of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is a clear expression of the Trinity. They are distinct and equal persons in the One God.

The message ends with the assurance that Jesus will be with his Church at all times. Because of this divine guiding presence, the Church will never self-destruct. Though she will always be imperfect and in need of external reform and inner renewal due to the fact that the Church is made up of sinners, she will never be in need of *replacement*, as the Protestant Reformers of the sixteenth century believed.

FAITH-SHARING QUESTIONS

1. Share with the group or person next to you what spoke to you most in the Gospel. With this first question, try to refrain from commenting on what others said. Just share what spoke to you and then move on to the next person.
2. Which person of the Blessed Trinity do you relate to the most?
3. Instead of seeing ourselves as “beloved children” of God, many Catholics see themselves as “distant relatives.” Comment. What does it mean to you to be a child of God? To what extent have you shifted from seeing yourself as a “distant relative” to being a “child of God”?
4. To what extent do you embrace the fact that being a child of God also means we must “suffer with Christ that we may also be glorified with him.”?
5. The Great Commission of Jesus to us is to “make disciples” of all nations. How well or poorly does your parish act on this command of Jesus? How well or poorly do you act on it?
6. Name 1 thing today’s Gospel says to us that we disciples of Jesus need to heed/ act on.

JOURNALING

Having listened to God’s Word and listened 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.

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: *Jesus, in today’s gospel you commission us to spread your message. Show me ways I can do that in my environment. Give me the courage to overcome any hesitation or fear I may have about sharing my faith with others.*

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Share with the person next to you one way you can act on this week’s readings. Suggestion: As we approach this great solemnity, try to relate to all three Persons of the Trinity. In other words, pray to all three persons of the Trinity.

CONCLUDING WITH PRAYERS OF PETITION, THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Facilitator: What are we grateful for? For what and for whom do we need to pray? Pray that you can be free of all negative and unhelpful images of God.

CLOSING PRAYER (TOGETHER)

Prayer to the Blessed Trinity

You, Eternal Trinity,
are a sea so deep
that the more I enter in,
the more I find;
and the more I find,
the more I seek of you;
for when the soul is satisfied in your abyss,
it is not satisfied,
but it ever continues to thirst for you,
Eternal Trinity,
desiring to behold you
with the light of your light.
As the heart desires
the springs of living water,
so does my soul desire
to leave the prison of this dark body
and to behold you in truth.
O how long shall your face
be hidden from my eyes?
O abyss, O eternal Godhead, O deep sea!
Clothe me with yourself, Eternal Trinity,
so that I may run this mortal life
with true obedience,
and with the light of your most holy faith.
Amen.
St. Catherine of Siena