

Whenever we celebrate Holy Trinity Sunday, I'm reminded of the time a young priest got a lesson in humility from a little child...when he went into a 2nd grade classroom and asked the class, "Who can tell me what the Blessed Trinity means?"...Now, at 1<sup>st</sup>, none of the kids responded, until a little girl stood up and confidently proclaimed, "The Blethed Twinity meanth there are thwee perthonth in one God." ...The priest was kind of caught off guard by the little girl's lisp and didn't quite catch what she said, "Would you please say that again ? I didn't understand it." ...The child patiently responded, "you're not thuppothed to underthand; ith a myhttewy."...It's a mystery....{She sure straightened him out.}

.....The little girl was right. The Trinity is a mystery we mere mortals will never fully understand. ...Here is just a small portion of the Church's official teaching on the Trinity... *God is one God... in 3 persons: Father, Son, Holy Spirit... The 3 persons do not share the one divinity among themselves, but each of them is wholly and entirely God ... Each is really distinct from the other two. The Father. is not the Son... The Son is not the Father.... The Holy Spirit is not the Father. or the Son... Each is really and truly God, and yet there is only One God...* If that doesn't confuse you,...I could read you the rest of the teaching...but I won't do that to you....St. Augustine,..one of the great Christian theologians once said : "Anyone who denies the Trinity is in danger of losing their salvation; anyone who tries to understand the Trinity is in danger of losing their mind."

Every year, the Church gives us Holy Trinity Sunday not as a time to risk our sanity trying to explain the Trinity, ...but as a time to celebrate and give thanks that our God is no ordinary, run-of-the-mill God...Our God is not a distant, hands off kind of God who created us and then left us to stumble along on our own...Our God is a God who can't leave us alone,...because our lives – in the here and in the hereafter – matter to God.... What happens to us matters to God...We've seen this throughout the Bible and throughout hisotry: God the Father sending prophet after prophet to enlighten His people...God the Son coming to live as one of us and die for all of us...God the Holy Spirit bursting into the world at Pentecost...Our God is a God who cares...who loves.

And our God is no solitary God...Our God is a community of 3 persons bound together by a love so great, so immense that God wants to share it with His creation – with us...This love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit for one another is so great that it overflows and is poured into each of our hearts as St Paul tells us in Rom 5:5....The Bible says we have been made in God's image and likeness... And so – like the TrinITY - we too are to live in loving relationship with one another ...Let's take a look at that Bible verse ...In Gen 1:26 we read: "Then God said, '**Let US make man in OUR image and likeness.**'" ...Did you catch that? ...God didn't say, "Let ME make man in MY image."...God said, "Let US make man in OUR image."...God spoke there not as a single person but as the Holy Trinity, the eternal community.. of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,...all 3 present at the creation.

My friends, the "what" of the Trinity is not as important to our salvation as the "how" of the Trinity, how God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - are present and working in the world,...and in our lives...Now it's a very big world with a lot of people for God to watch,..so you might think God divides it up into 3rds,...you know: 1/3 for the Father., 1/3 for the Son.,...and 1/3 for the Holy Spirit...But that's not how God operates...No, all 3 – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – are always working together as one,...and yet each...connects to our lives in different ways.

Here's how I like to look at it... Suppose we have a completely dark room...and there's a table in the middle of the room...Now suppose we place 3 lit candles on the table...What happens? ...The room becomes filled with light...Now, as we look at the light, can we tell what part of the light comes from which candle?...No, it appears as one light even though it comes from 3 candles...This is same way we experience God's love...This ONE divine love comes to us from 3 sources of love - Father, Son, & Holy Spirit - to fill up our lives as the light from the 3 candles fills that dark room...You see, God's love is so great that it cannot come from just one source; it comes to us from three sources, 3 persons, each expressing divine love in their own way, yet each is the same loving God

Ok, here's the main thing: we have a God who just won't leave us alone...But, if you are anything like me, you can go hours, days, even weeks totally oblivious to God's presence and love in your life. ...For example, not a day goes by that I don't marvel at some miracle of creation: ...a beautiful flower,.. a star-filled sky,...a baby's tiny fingers,...the warmth of the sun,...the face of one I love,...but how often do I stop to give thanks to God the Father, the source and creator of the universe and everything in it? ...And how often have I had what seemed to be a chance encounter with someone going through a very tough time in their life, and they really needed to talk, really needed support and prayers? ...Was it truly just a chance encounter? ...Or was it God the Father. bringing our two hearts together?

And what about God the Son?...Well remember when that person you can't stand - the one who gives you all kinds of trouble – was diagnosed with cancer, and you sent her a card and prayed for her complete recovery?...Was that because Jesus' voice echoed in your ears, "Love your enemies, ...pray for those who mistreat you?"...Then there was the time you were very sick, in pain, afraid - "God, why aren't you helping me?" - and you thought about Jesus hanging on the cross in agony, and you realized that He knew what you were going through, and He was there suffering with you,...and this gave you strength to keep on going. ...And remember when that missionary came and told us about the children living in extreme poverty in Central America, and even though your own finances were pretty shaky, you dug deep and offered to sponsor a child? ...Was it because you recalled Jesus' words, "Whatever you do for the least of my children, you do for me?" ...God the Son, always challenging us, strengthening us to live as He wants us to live.

Then there is God the Holy Spirit, who came on that first Pentecost and who is with us today. ....The Spirit dwelling within every believer,...animating our faith and our worship, guiding us, leading us,...turning on the lights when our paths are unclear, uncertain...The Holy Spirit is the lifeline,...the wireless connection between us and God the Son, and us and God the Father....It is the Holy Spirit who keeps the words and deeds of Jesus alive in our minds and hearts so that we always know what Jesus wants us to do...It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the courage to then go and do it...It is the Holy Spirit's work to make bread and wine the Body and Blood of Christ, bringing Him into our presence to feed us and strengthen us for our mission to bring Christ into the world....

My friends, we should get down on our knees every day to give thanks that we have a God who can't stay away from us...Our God is always right here in the center of everything going on in our life...right where He wants to be... God the Holy Trinity,..Father, Son, Holy Spirit right here

in the nitty gritty,...down here in the trenches with us...in every trouble, every trial and every cross,...and in every joy and every triumph.

Now, as much as we believe this, there will be times when we don't feel God's presence, ...when it feels like God has abandoned us...Even the human Jesus felt that way as He hung on the cross. ...This can happen to us when we're going through heavy troubles and God seems to be turning a deaf ear to our prayers,...or when we know we have let God down by the bad choices we've made,...and we don't see how God would want anything to do with us...It's at times like these that our heart – maybe our voice – might cry out,...“ God where are you? Did you leave me?”...That's when we need to listen carefully for God's answer, first as God the Father: “No...I will never leave you...I created you!” ...Then as God the Son: “No...I will never leave you...I died for you!”...And then as God the Holy Spirit: “No...I will never leave you...I dwell inside of you!”

On this HolyTrinity Sun, let's together gratefully proclaim: Glory be to the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and forever will be world without end. AMEN!