

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity (B)

June 3, 2012

The Solemnity of the Trinity that we celebrate today invites us to step back – back in time and to a respectful distance. This movement begins with listening to Moses, after forty years in the desert, as passionately exuberant about the God of Israel and what God has done as if it had just happened. Moses is calling on the people to use their imaginations to go back in time and asks: “Did anything so great ever happen before? Was it ever heard of?” He is talking about the experience of God speaking to him from a burning bush. And then he goes on to remind them of what some remember firsthand: God’s leading them out of Egypt, taking them through the wilderness, giving them water from the rock, feeding them with manna and quail that suddenly appeared.

Moses is talking about how God entered into a covenant with them, a relationship of such intimacy that it would be compared to that between a parent and child by the prophet Isaiah, and between husband and wife by the prophet Hosea. Moses is asking them to compare what has happened to them with all that has gone before, even to the beginning of creation. Can you hear the wonder and awe and love in his words?

This feast speaks to us especially of the passionate love shown for us in Jesus. God’s love for God’s People comes to fulfillment in the person of Jesus, the marriage of humanity and divinity within one Person. God’s desire for intimacy with us led to the birth of Jesus. A birth that led to a violent death for us and for our salvation. But that was not the end. That desire for intimacy led God to draw us to be baptized in the Spirit and become God’s adopted children. That Spirit prays with us in our joys and sorrows, even in our groaning, Paul says. That Spirit of adoption prompts us to call God “Father.” God’s passion expresses itself, then, not only in love for all creation, but also for each of us who have moved from living in fear to living in faith.

Finally, the mystery of the Trinity speaks about a God committed to persevere in that relationship: "I am with you always, until the end of the age." When Jesus bids farewell to his followers, sending them out to baptize and teach, he does not send them out alone. He promises his presence, and he gifts them with the Spirit, who will give them courage and wisdom, so they might baptize and teach and live out of the mystery of the saving death of Jesus, remembered here and now in this Eucharist.

The beauty of this mystery of our faith, the Holy Trinity, can never be absorbed at any one time, not even in any one lifetime. Every so often we need to step back from our business and busyness and focus on it, acknowledging it as the great mystery of love that envelopes our lives as individuals and as a community.

Perhaps a time will come when we too will be caught up in the wonder of it, just as Moses was, and Paul, and those believers throughout the ages who laid down their lives to profess it. Then we will be able to sing with mind and heart and soul that great hymn of praise:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Praise him all creatures here below.

Praise him above ye heavenly host,

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen.

Paul A. Magnano

Pastor