

Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home

Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

June 7, 2020

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

That’s what Paul writes in our second reading today: Second Corinthians 13:13. It’s remarkable that within just twenty years from the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, Paul has already identified and articulated the principle functions of the Trinity as “grace, love and fellowship.” The community of love that we call “the Trinity” is a swirling vortex of love inviting us to add in another, and another, and another until the whole world is in God’s hand.

When scripture says that God is merciful, the image is that God’s tenderness for creatures is like that of a mother for her little ones. The word for mercy derives from the same word as womb and refers to an almost instinctive response of protective care. It is what God expressed when telling Moses “I have heard the cry of my people.” God’s graciousness can be understood as God’s favor, as in the way God regarded Mary, adding affection to protection.

The motherly image of God in the conclusion of James Weldon Johnson’s sermonic poem, “The Creation,” invites us to understand what God’s mercy is. Here is that passage:

Then God walked around,
And God looked around
On all that he had made.
He looked at his sun,
And he looked at his moon,
And he looked at his little stars;
He looked on his world
With all its living things,
And God said: I’m lonely still.

Then God sat down—
On the side of a hill where he could think;

By a deep, wide river he sat down;
With his head in his hands,
God thought and thought,
Till he thought: I'll make me a man!
Up from the bed of the river
God scooped the clay;
And by the bank of the river
He kneeled him down;
And there the great God Almighty
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,
Who flung the stars to the most far corner of the night,
Who rounded the earth in the middle of his hand;
This great God,
Like a mammy bending over her baby,
Kneeled down in the dust
Toiling over a lump of clay
Till he shaped it in his own image;
Then into it he blew the breath of life,
And man became a living soul. Amen. Amen.

That's hardly the picture of an avenging, wrathful God armed with lightning bolts and pepper spray. This image of the tender-hearted God, slow to anger and rich in compassion has been right there in Scripture all along. Today's liturgy gives us a strong reminder.

Have you ever noticed how often we invoke the Trinity during any liturgy? We begin with the Sign of the Cross in the name of the Trinity. The first of the opening greetings mentions all three persons. The end of the Opening Collect prays to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. The Eucharistic Prayer is addressed to the Father, recalls the mission of Christ and invokes the Holy Spirit on the gifts and on the assembly. It ends with a Trinitarian doxology. We end the liturgy with a blessing invoking the Trinity on all of us. This avalanche of Trinitarian prayers should remind us that the whole of our worship is carried out within the Trinity itself.

And many would argue that the Trinity has been present in creation from the very beginning of time and that we are living our whole lives within the action of the Trinity who created and guides and energizes the whole universe. Baptism into the Trinity reminds us

that we share God's very life; through grace we are drawn into the communion of life and love shared by Father, Son and Spirit. Our whole spiritual journey can be summed up as a process of learning to live in conscious union with the Trinity and letting that consciousness shape our attitudes and our actions in daily life.

A theologian 800 years ago, asserted that three is not a crowd, Richard of Saint Victor (who died 1173) was a Medieval Scottish philosopher and theologian and one of the most influential religious thinkers of his time. A canon regular, he was a prominent mystical theologian, and was prior of the famous Augustinian Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris from 1162 until his death in 1173. At the root of Richard's study is a profound vision: the mutuality of divine love and the "three-ness" of that love was key. He argued that supreme happiness cannot exist without mutuality of love. He wrote in this treatise on the Trinity: "For charity to be excellent, as well as perfect, it must desire that the love it experiences be a love shared with another... Thus, charity is not only mutual love between two; it is fully shared love among three."

Almost 800 years later, Dr. Archie Smith, Jr. sums this up well in [The Relational Self: Ethics and Therapy from a Black Church Perspective](#) (1982). From his point of view as an African American Christian, a professor of pastoral counseling, and a practicing therapist, Dr. Smith offers a stinging indictment of Western society. He especially addresses the problems of racism, materialism and a lack of awareness among peoples of all races and classes that their lives and their futures are interrelated. He challenges Black churches to lead the way in what he calls psychic liberation and social transformation. He quotes the African proverb: "One is only human because of others, with others, and for others."

And Hezekiah Walker says it musically in "I Need You to Survive." Take a listen and you might even want to sing along before moving into the readings:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMcJL_UDAw

Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home
Most Holy Trinity – June 7, 2020

Leader: In the name of the Father, † and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Assembly: *Amen*

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God and
the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

All: And also with you

Lord Jesus, you told us of God’s love for you and for us:
Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you promised to send the Spirit to be with us:
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you showed us that we are meant to be with another:
Lord, have mercy.

Opening Prayer:

Merciful and gracious Father,
you showed the fullness of your love
when you gave your only Son for our salvation
and sent down upon us the power of your Spirit.

Because you have made us and loved us
and called us by name,
draw us more deeply into your divine life,
that we may glorify you rightly through your Son,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit. God forever and ever.
Let the church say – Amen.

LET THE CHURCH SAY.....AMEN!

Readings

1st Reading – Exodus 34:4B-6, 8-9

^{4B} Early in the morning Moses went up Mount Sinai as the LORD had commanded him, taking along the two stone tablets.

⁵ Having come down in a cloud, the LORD stood with Moses there and proclaimed his name, “LORD.”

⁶ Thus the LORD passed before him and cried out, “The LORD, the LORD, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity.”

⁸ Moses at once bowed down to the ground in worship.

⁹ Then he said, “If I find favor with you, O Lord, do come along in our company. This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins, and receive us as your own.”

THE WORD OF THE LORD.....THANKS BE TO GOD.

Responsorial Psalm – Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56

R. (52b) Glory and praise for ever!

⁵² Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers,
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever;
And blessed is your holy and glorious name,
praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages.

R. Glory and praise for ever!

⁵³ Blessed are you in the temple of your holy glory,
praiseworthy and glorious above all forever.

R. Glory and praise for ever!

⁵⁴ Blessed are you on the throne of your kingdom,
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.

R. Glory and praise for ever!

⁵⁵ Blessed are you who look into the depths
from your throne upon the cherubim,
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.

R. Glory and praise for ever!

2nd Reading – 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

¹¹ Brothers and sisters, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the holy ones greet you.

¹³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

THE WORD OF THE LORD.....THANKS BE TO GOD.

Alleluia – CF. Revelation 1:8

R. Alleluia, alleluia.⁸

Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; to God who is, who was, and who is to come.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel – John 3:16-18

¹⁶ God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.

¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

¹⁸ Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD.....Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection Prompts:

John 3:16 is not just a bumper sticker or T-shirt or a great Gospel hymn. It is a summary of the whole Gospel in one verse. You can carry it with you when you're traveling light.

The image of the Trinity needn't be distant and abstract, but just as portable and welcoming as John 3:16. The spirituality writer Kathleen Norris shares that her appreciation for Trinity Sunday "grew considerably when I heard an Episcopal priest say in a homily that she never felt as close to the Trinity as when she learned she was pregnant with twins: a perfect image of three-in-one."

She reminds us that there are other Threes in Nature. The early theologian Tertullian was the first to mention the Trinity in Latin. He imagines it as a plant – the Father as the root, the Son as the shoot breaking forth into the world, and the Spirit as that which fills the earth with flower and fruit.

Also Modern Physics offers us the Quark – a subatomic particle which exists in threes. There is not such thing as one quark, but only three interdependent beings, acting together.

Our Orthodox Christian sisters and brothers do not use the triangle as an image of the Trinity. They use the Greek word "perichoresis" which literally means "going around" – suggesting a vigorous swirling dance-like movement with each of the three persons circling, interweaving whirling in vibrant interaction with the others. (Sounds like a job for our choreographer in residence, Kenya Griffin.)

But this dance of love is not for the sole enjoyment of the divine dancers. According to Scripture scholar, Barbara Reid, "The dance is an open circle that invites all onto the dance floor, drawing them right into the midst of the energetic flow of divine delight. If some hesitate, preferring to sit on the sidelines, the Three-in-One circle back again and again, extending the invitation over and over to each and to all, changing the pace and the rhythm, so that even the most clumsy of us can learn the steps in the dance of divine love." Let's dance!

1. Build a quiet interlude in your schedule and pray with this image of perichoresis and let yourself join the circle dance of expanding love.
2. In your life, how do you balance the mercy of God and the justice of God?
3. Paul calls the Corinthians to mend their ways, to encourage one another, to agree with one another, and to live in peace. Ask yourself how you are under repair, how you encourage others and how you are living in peace.
4. How do we empathize or make ours the sufferings of others who struggle for survival in the midst of so many violations of their rights and dignity? How do we live God's justice in solidarity with the poor and rejected?

Listen to this rendition of "For God So Loved The World" by the GMWA (Gospel Music Workshop of America) Mass Choir – YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfs|pl4jEeg>

Then, after a moment of contemplative ease, move into the intercessions, followed by singing or reciting the Lord's Prayer.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS – June 7, 2020 TRINITY

Leader: When Jesus was condemned to the cross, God could have chosen to never love again. Instead, Our God showed us grace and mercy, kindness and fidelity. And then God gave us the most precious gift of all: everlasting life. Let us pray for all those in most need of God's unconditional love.

Reader

1. In Christians of every congregation and language, every nation and race, that we may together be a sign of the diversity and the unity of God. We pray: **Save us, O God.** (RESPOND: **Save us, O God.**)

2. For Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison as he guides the prosecution of the George Ford case. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
3. For courage and persistence to continue to address racism and white privilege and to change our society into the Beloved Community where all people have co-equality, dignity and power. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
4. For those who have never experienced God's love in their lives, that we may be messengers of God's love. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
5. For our efforts to care for those in need, especially during this pandemic-caused economic downturn, and for our parish efforts to offer loving support. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
6. For our Stephen Ministry, its leaders, and all Care Team members and receivers here at Lourdes. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
7. For displaced persons, refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants, that they be welcomed and included in safe havens. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
8. For the nearly 43 million who are now unemployed as well as those who are underemployed or underpaid, that they find the work they seek and be paid a living wage with health care benefits. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
9. For all our loved ones in the military and their families, that they be returned to us safely and experience a welcoming community. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
10. For all those who are separated from us by infirmity, especially those listed in our bulletin, those afflicted by the corona-virus, and for all those living with HIV and AIDS, that they know our community's care for them. We pray: **Save us, O God.**
11. For all the dead, that they see God face to face, especially Selite Garcia and for Annie Glenn, for whom this Mass is being celebrated. We pray: **Save us, O God.**

12. Please share any intention you have [PAUSE.....] as well as all our own needs. We pray: **Save us, O God.**

Presider: Loving God, show us how to be a community of love and peace, accepting and supportive of one another. We pray in the name of your son, Jesus, whom you generously sent to us. **LET THE CHURCH SAY – AMEN!**

CLOSING PRAYER

**May the peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
LET THE CHURCH SAY: AMEN**

CLOSING HYMN

End your Lourdes Liturgy at Home with the “title song” – the familiar hymn “Holy, Holy, Holy” – which was written for the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity in the 1820s.

Holy, Holy, Holy
by Reginald Heber, 1826

Holy, holy, holy!
Lord God Almighty
Early in the morning
Our song shall rise to Thee
Holy, holy, holy!
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy
All the saints adore Thee
Casting down their golden crowns

Across the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim
Falling down before Thee,
Which wert, and art, and
Evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy!
Though the darkness hide thee
Though the eye of sinful man
Thy glory may not see
Only Thou art holy
There is none beside Thee
Perfect in power, in love and purity

Holy, holy, holy!
Lord God Almighty
All thy works shall praise Thy name
In earth and sky and sea
Holy, holy, holy!
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity
Oh God in three persons
Blessed Trinity!

[set to tune of “Nicea”]