



Bringing Home the Word

Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity (A)

June 7, 2020

Salvation's Cost

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

In Ludovico Carracci's painting *The Trinity with the Dead Christ*, we see a meditation on the Trinity in a hidden moment. Rather than paint the moment when Mary takes her Son into her arms, Carracci painted the scene when the heavenly Father receives the spoils of his Son's battle for the salvation of humanity.

The dark colors communicate the pathos and drama. The Father's head turns away in grief even as he offers the Son. He reverently holds him, yet almost fears to touch his pierced hands.

Sunday Readings

Exodus 34:4b–6, 8–9

[Moses said,] "Pardon our wickedness and sins, and claim us as your own."

2 Corinthians 13:11–13

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

John 3:16–18

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.

Consider how much love God showed in allowing the Son to go to the cross, in sacrificing one beloved child to gain life for all his others.

Theology struggles to balance the truth of a loving, caring God the Father with the appreciation that he is unable to suffer as we do. Yet Carracci focuses on that popular intuition that the Father and the Spirit suffered the death of the Son. We should reflect on what our salvation cost the Trinity and how much love they showed in sending the Son to die. God suffers when we suffer and wishes to console and protect us, even if the good Father doesn't remove the suffering.

Faith teaches us that God willed his only begotten Son to suffer and die to save humanity. This divine decision manifests justice and mercy. It shows not only that God actually required satisfaction for our sins but also that no one but a God-man could offer a suitable sacrifice. Because he was God, Christ could offer an infinite satisfaction for our infinite offenses. Because he was man, he could offer a man's satisfaction for humanity's sin. +

*God suffers when we suffer
and wishes to console
and protect us.*

A Word from Pope Francis

With our eyes fixed on Jesus and his merciful gaze, we experience the love of the Most Holy Trinity....His person is nothing but love, a love given gratuitously....The signs he works, especially in favor of sinners, the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the suffering, are all meant to teach mercy.

—*Misericordiae Vultus*, April 11, 2015



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Which person of the Trinity do I most easily relate to—the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit?
- Do I remember to direct my prayers to all three persons of the Trinity?

The Gift of John's Gospel

By Bishop Robert F. Morneau

One of the treasures of the Church is the Gospel of John. In this work we are given a unique insight into the life of Jesus. Moreover, we are invited to enter into intimate union with Christ at a personal level and as members of a community.

In John's Gospel we learn the concept of "blessedness," what it means to live a Christian life. To the extent that we respond to our fourfold baptismal call, we will experience the blessedness John articulates.

Through the other evangelists—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—we see Jesus as someone who is earthly but also the very presence of God in history. The Gospel of John, on the other hand, presents Jesus as the preexistent one. In becoming human, Jesus reveals the inner workings of divine life. That life is offered to us, and salvation consists precisely in our participation in it. To the extent that we accept Jesus into our lives, we enter into the mystery of salvation.

Through our baptism into the life of Jesus, we are called to maturity, holiness, community, and service. John's Gospel articulate those calls and provides insights into living them. Responding to the call is the way to a blessed, happy life.



Four Calls

The call to maturity.

The mature disciple is a person of faith. Faith is the opening of our lives to God revealed in Jesus. Everything depends on faith, on our submission to Jesus and his word. Maturity is a lifelong process; faith demands ongoing development.

The reading and rereading

of the Gospel of John helps us grow into the full stature of Christ.

The call to holiness. Within Catholic tradition, holiness is the perfection of love. John speaks eloquently of the grace of love. In the Last Supper discourse, Jesus speaks profoundly of the values of friendship, intimacy, and love. This love points to union with God and unity among us. The tenderness and force of God's love is overwhelming. And the test? To lay down one's life for others.

It is in John's Gospel that Jesus uses the metaphor of the vine and the branches. This image captures the essence of holiness. To the degree that we are united to Jesus, the Vine, then we, the branches, can bear fruit that will last forever. Holiness is that union, that oneness that sustains us on our journey.

The call to community. One characteristic of early Christians was the insistence on Jesus' command that

its members love one another. Another feature was dedication of the community to the person of Jesus. His vision and values were their compass. They came together because of an outside enemy, the "world," which stood for all that was not good.

The call to service. John depicts Jesus as someone for others. In the Cana miracle of water turned to wine, in the healing of the royal official's son, in the raising of Lazarus from the dead, in the washing of the feet at the Last Supper, in the resurrection accounts—Jesus is serving the physical, psychological, and spiritual needs of the people.

Simple Treasure

The Gospel of John is a great treasure. Though complex in many ways, there is an underlying simplicity: Jesus, the preexistent Word of God, is for and with us. We are invited into a life of deep friendship and called to share the gift of light, love, and life with others. Thus, we live the words of Jesus: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me" (14:1). +



Lord, you live in communion with God and the Holy Spirit. Help me to live in communion and peace with all people.

—From *Hopeful Meditations for Every Day of Easter Through Pentecost*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 8–13

Monday, Weekday:

1 Kgs 17:1–6 / Mt 5:1–12

Tuesday, Weekday:

1 Kgs 17:7–16 / Mt 5:13–16

Wednesday, Weekday:

1 Kgs 18:20–39 / Mt 5:17–19

Thursday, St. Barnabas:

Acts 11:21b–26; 13:1–3 / Mt 5:20–26

Friday, Weekday:

1 Kgs 19:9a, 11–16 / Mt 5:27–32

Saturday, St. Anthony of Padua:

1 Kgs 19:19–21 / Mt 5:33–37

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