

Trinity Sunday C SML 2019  
JN 16:12-15

Having celebrated the crux of the Catholic Faith, from Lent to the passion, death and resurrection of Our Blessed Lord, to Pentecost celebrated last Sunday, today, having returned to Ordinary Time, we celebrate Trinity Sunday, next week, Corpus Christi. Ordinary Time focuses on the daily life, mission and travels of Our Blessed Lord, and the simplicity and directness of His teachings. We spend time listening over and over again to the parables and centering our lives, not on the high points of Jesus' life, but on His teachings. So while the time may be "Ordinary" in the sense that it is not about the extraordinary feasts, it is what is central to our lives as Catholics, and living the kingdom of God in the here and now.

Today's Gospel speaks of the intimacy that Jesus enjoyed with His Father, and how fitting we dwell on this intimacy since it's Father's Day. Children can understand it, but the intellectuals cannot. It is not an intellectual message anyway. It is an emotional message, a message of trust. The disciples were the children who trusted. Those who put their trust in the Father will fare better. Knowledge of God only takes you part of the way. Thus Our Blessed Lord can reveal His Father to

His disciples, His “children,” and many other things that learned men will never understand.

A prime example is the Trinity – three persons in one God. Though many often discerned God’s unity, no intellectual, no philosopher, no theologian, brought all the evidence to the conclusion of the Trinity, until Our Blessed Lord revealed it to be true, for the Trinity is a mystery that surpasses our unaided ability to understand or reason. This does not mean that God is unreasonable, but rather, that any god we could completely understand could not be God, because such “divinity” would be inferior to our own minds. So whenever you ask God “Why?” because you do not know the answer, take consolation in that. Because if I completely understood God, then God would be dumber than I am, and that is a god in whom I could not trust.

Knowledge of God only takes us part of the way. Trust in God will take us the rest of the way. All of us have heard this lesson a hundred times, in a hundred different ways. Just the other day, I was driving down Route 70 and a bumper sticker read, “Let Go, Let God!” It is a lesson so difficult to put into practice.

Last week, a parishioner asked me to pray that her cat, little “Chicklet” would return home. Last Saturday night, the

parishioner told me little “Chicklet” did return home! So let me share with you a story I read about a father who finds yet another stray dog in his front yard:

I’ve seen that look at least a dozen times. *Should I trust or should I not?* I know well the battle that rages not fifteen yards from me as the latest stray dog tries to decide whether I’m safe or not. The torment is unbearable. She takes a few halting steps forward, then thinks better and turns her head away as if to break a spell that is about to overcome her. I would love to rush in, scoop her off her feet, and convince her how safe I am for her, but if I so much as lean forward, she scurries even farther into the darkness. Right now, the dog across from me has no idea what awaits her if she could just trust.

All of the benefits of my house are hers if she comes, and they are considerable. The long list of stray or abandoned puppies that have shown up in our front yard makes me wonder if our address isn’t scratched into a fire hydrant somewhere because my wife is the softest touch in town when it comes to a dog without a home.

Here strays receive the royal treatment, complete with a flea bath, loving attention, and plenty of food and water. During the following weeks my wife will do everything she can to locate the owner. Failing that, she will take an ad out in the newspaper promising a free dog to a good home and will let it go only when she is convinced the new family will treat her dog well.

Many warm up to the attention right away, but others act as if they've been beaten by every human they've ever known. Instead of running toward the open gate, the lighted doorway, and all the love they could handle, they shrink back in the shadows, unsure whether it's safe.

The latest dog is one of those. I hold out my hand, offering her food. I know she hasn't eaten in a while because I can count every rib right through her fur. I coax lovingly, speaking in soft tones, trying to caress her with my words. This won't be easy. I will not force her into my home and allow her fears to be a risk to my children and my dogs. If she comes, she will have to come willingly.

The game will go on for a while, and right now it could go either way. Will I take care of her and help her, or will I be like all the others who have hurt or abandoned her? She doesn't want any more pain, preferring to leave now if my invitation will only add more grief.

I know exactly how she feels. Every time I play this game, I can't help but think how much this mirrors God the Father reaching out to me, and the difficult time I have learning to trust Him. The choice to trust is never easy – not for dogs, nor for sons and daughters of God.

The end result is childlike trust and faith in God who is the Spirit of truth. There are not many words of Our Blessed Lord that are more beautiful than this: I have so much more I want to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when He comes, the Spirit of truth, He will guide you to all truth.”

Imma “Mommy” and Abba, “Daddy” are the first words Jewish children learn to speak. But too often, our understanding of the word “Abba” never delves below the surface of Daddy. Abba means so much more. Within the word Abba contains all the attributes of God that make a good father:

- ✓ The one I trust completely
- ✓ The one I honor
- ✓ The one who is strong
- ✓ The one who is completely fair
- ✓ The one who is wise
- ✓ The one who is humble
- ✓ The one, the one, the one . . .

Each one of us was created in God’s image “So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (GEN 1:27) I am speaking specifically to you fathers. Knowing that you are made in the same image as God, this establishes an unbreakable bond you share with God the Father and a solid form of intimacy that cannot be replicated with any other “god” or human. The potter made the clay, you, and with the making

of you, He put time, attention, and love into you that He also placed within Our Blessed Lord, who was made in the Father's image as well. Hence the reason why Jesus could say, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." (JN 14:9)

As fathers, you have the exact same responsibilities as God the Father. Your responsibility is awesome, to be a father in the image of God the Father. And to do that, you will need to pray for the grace of God the Father. You want to be the father your children will ever trust. Because when the day comes, and we all know it will, when your children need to trust God the Father, it will be that much easier, because their skids to trust were greased by you.