

Among our Hispanic brothers and sisters there is a phrase that expresses the virtue of hospitality that, upon reflection, also expresses the mystery and person of God who on this feast we affirm to be one being manifested in three persons. The phrase is: *Mi casa es su casa*, “My house is your house.” To a guest arriving at the home of the host or hostess this greeting says, “You are family. All we have is yours.” During the years of my study for the priesthood and the subsequent years as a priest I have been blessed with several close friendships in which I have become “family” to my friends and they, “family” to me. Visiting them, for me, is “going home”: sharing their joys, weeping with them in their sorrows, hoping with them in their dreams and experiencing fellowship with them around the dinner table, and communion of thought and spirit as we carry each other in our hearts. I count these persons and the love we share among my life’s greatest blessings. Through their love I have experienced *Mi casa es su casa*.

At the heart of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is love. Love is a mystery but not mystery in the common use of the term. For example, “who done it” novels or television shows such as “SVU” or real-life police detective work are not so much “mysteries” as they are “puzzles”—finding and putting the pieces of a crime together to solve it and bring justice to its victims. Mystery, on the other hand, is a reality or truth of life we experience, but cannot fully define, not enough words exist to completely explain it. Love, by definition, implies selflessness. Love is the freely willed gift of self to another. As such, love draws another into relationship. Love’s gift, if it is true, in turn is reciprocated by a like love to the one to whom it has been received. Love is taking the risk of relationship, of community. With love’s gift comes the risk of rejection, betrayal or abandonment. Yet, love willingly suffers such risks for its own growth. If we have ever been loved, or loved others, we know this to be true.

Today’s scriptures present us with a snapshot of the Holy Trinity, the community of love. In the first reading from the book of Proverbs we see God personified as “wisdom” through whom the universe is created. Creation is the first sacrament, the first divine gift of love. Creation in all its myriad expression and beauty speaks to us of

the limitless diversity, depth and beauty of God. Today's first reading teaches us, as our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI stated in his encyclical letter of last summer *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth) that care for the natural environment is part of our moral obligation as Christians: "The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole. ...Nature is at our disposal not as a 'heap of scattered refuse' but as a gift of the Creator." (#48)

Today's second reading from St. Paul's letter to the Romans develops the theme of love further. In time, God expressed the fullness of his love by himself becoming a human being in the person of his Son Jesus. "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" Paul states. Jesus is *The Sacrament* of God: divine love made flesh and blood, divine love given even to death for us. In Jesus we come to know, understand and share in the love that is God.

Today's Gospel selection tells us that the way we enter into this divine relationship of love between the Father and the Son is through union in their love force which is also another personal being, the Holy Spirit: "The Spirit of truth will guide you to all truth.... Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you." Through Father, Son and their Holy Spirit we become a "holy family", the People of God.

Today we celebrate our "home dwelling" in God. This is what happens in every Mass.. *Mi casa es su casa.*