

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY “B”     JUNE 2/3, 2012

Perhaps the most familiar of our traditional short prayers, the Glory Be, is also the one to which we give the least thought. We immediately identify the Our Father and the Hail Mary with familiar Gospel passages. The Glory Be belongs to that family of texts we call “doxologies”—praise words. Our rich inheritance is one of naming God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The greatest of these doxologies is the one which concludes the Eucharistic Prayer in the celebration of the Mass. As the consecrated bread and wine which have been transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ are held high and offered to God, the priest proclaims, “Through him, with him, in him, O God almighty Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours forever and ever”. All assembled give their assent to this fundamental doctrine of faith in God in what is popularly known as the “Great Amen.” The familiar Christmas hymn of the angels beginning “Glory to God in the highest” subsequently expanded into song of praise of the Holy Trinity used on all Sundays and great feasts of the year in the liturgy, except on the Sundays of Advent and Lent, is also another example of a doxology.

This weekend’s celebration of God revealed as the Holy Trinity following the celebrations of Jesus’ birth, passion, death, resurrection, ascension and the bestowal of the Holy Spirit is not some sort of theological “mind game” of the Church to be solved, but rather an invitation to reflect both on the nature and persons of God as well as our share in that divine life. Today’s readings help to unfold this mystery which is both within and beyond us.

In the first reading from Deuteronomy the author speaking in the person of Moses proclaims the majesty and transcendence of God. At the same time he speaks of God’s reaching out to we humans, the creatures formed in the divine “image and likeness” with an invitation to relationship through the covenant begun with Abraham sealed through Moses and the people of Israel in the saving acts of their journey from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. The people of Israel, as well as we who share in their divine call by the same faith of Abraham, will both know and be sustained in this covenant relationship is through the keeping of the Ten Commandments.

In the second reading we encounter the fundamental nature of God as love. Love remains only an idea unless it is given expression. From all eternity God has been outpoured selfless love in the person of the Son, who is “the image of God” (II Cor. 11:7). In time this love became visible to the world as God united to himself our humanity in the person of his Son, Jesus. In our human nature God experienced the fullness of our life even our going down in death. However, the power of death was not able to hold eternally captive the source of life, God. In raising and glorifying the human body of Jesus, God united us to himself by the bond of love that unites himself as the Father and the Son in reciprocal love, himself a person, the Holy Spirit. Through Church’s sacraments of baptism, confirmation and on-going sharing in divine life through the Holy Eucharist, given to us by Jesus, we receive and are drawn into the intimate community of love of Jesus, the Father and the Holy Spirit and so become “sons and daughters of God” (Rm. 8:14).

In the Gospel we hear this fundamental expression of our relationship with and in God. Equally important, we hear the clear command of Jesus that “the gift you have received, give as a gift” (Mt. 10:8). As those who have experienced and accepted the invitation to covenant love and relationship in the divine community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we, are now sent to continue the work of God through Jesus in the Holy Spirit by witnessing, and inviting everyone who encounters us into the life and intimacy we have found in God. Each of us is an “evangelist” a living gospel witness. We evangelize through our daily commitment to love others with the same love we have received from God. Our daily words and actions of compassion, justice, and forgiveness are the means through which God lives and acts in us. In this our own lives become a doxology, praise of God.

“Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”