

Reflections from the Upper Room:

for the Pastoral Musician

Sunday, June 6, 2020

Reflections for The Most Holy Trinity (Trinity Sunday)

By: Joe Cullinan, *Director of Sacred Music at Our Lady of Mercy, South Bound Brook and Director of Instrumental & Choral Music at St. Thomas Aquinas High School*



On this Feast of the Most Holy Trinity we are treated to a selection of brief but powerful readings, including arguably the most popular Gospel verse of all time: John 3:16.

“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.”

The powerful love and forgiveness found in those words cannot be understated. And since John 3:16 has been called “The Gospel in a Nutshell” by some biblical scholars, those of us eager to spread the Good News should be pleased with how deeply it has permeated into our pop culture. Consider:

You can see “John 3:16” written on signs at almost every major sporting event.

Country music favorite Keith Urban included the reference in his hit song “John Cougar, John Deere, John 3:16.”

World-class monster truck driver Devin Jones has “John 3:16” painted on the side of his truck.

When he wrote “John 3:16” on his eyeblack for the 2009 BCS National Championship game, Tim Tebow helped make it the most Googled term in America that week.

Now there are some people who would look at the popularization of the verse and respond with concern over the dangers of trivializing the foundational belief of our Faith into something that you find at the bottom of soda cups at fast food restaurants (In-and-Out Burger).

But this week we are reminded that the power and glory of our God takes on different forms, specifically for the purpose of evangelization. The Most Holy Trinity: Three Persons in one God, each different yet the same, a mystery that exists to spread the Good News in the most effective way possible: through differentiation.

As a teacher of 13 years, I’ve attended a meeting or two on differentiation, and what my experience so far has taught me above all else is that students are all willing to learn, but sometimes they need to hear the lesson in different ways – and this is even more true now, in this challenging time of COVID-19.

So if a member of our congregation tells us they know of the deep and personal love God has for them, and they come to worship because they've heard our songs and read the Bible, that is a wonderful thing. If they tell us they know of that same love and come to worship because they read it on the bottom of their soda cup, that's wonderful too.

Selected Reflection Music

Reckless Love

By: Cory Asbury

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sc6SSHuZvQE>

Amor Sin Condición (Reckless Love) || Spanish Translation

Original Lyrics By: Cory Asbury

Posted by: Abels Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytwXvyCqvjk>

Contributor Introduction

Joe Cullinan is the Director of Instrumental and Choral Music at St. Thomas Aquinas (formerly Bishop Ahr) High School and the Director of Sacred Music at Our Lady of Mercy in South Bound Brook. He conducts a total of three Choirs and four Bands, and has also served as pianist for the Tokens, the Chiffons, and the Flamingoes.

Thomas DeLessio

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