

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

The readings and especially the gospel call us to examine who we are, what type of person are we, and most importantly what type of person do we want to become. Do we truly desire to become a blessed, holy disciple like our Blessed Mother Mary or is our deepest desire to become a more secular person? Do we desire to follow the Blessed Mother's example of docility to the Father's will and truth, so as to become a more intimate loving adopted member of the Trinity's family? Or do we truly desire to follow the example of secular icons, self-centered paragons of culture's relativistic values?

For us to become more intimate loving adopted member of the Trinity's family, we need to work on truly desiring to follow in the footsteps of the Marys in the New Testament; Mary Magdalene, Mary, the sister of Martha, and most importantly the Blessed Virgin Mary. If we truly desire to follow the example of the Marys in being Christ's disciples, we need to let go of secular culture's notion that doing is what is important, and accept Christ's admonition to Martha in regards to her sister, Mary, that being with Christ, and listening to Him is what is most important; we need to choose to be with Christ; to spend prayerful, meditative, time with Christ, who resides in the Tabernacle. We need to let go of secular culture's values, ideas and approach to life which states doing is what defines who we are; and, learn to live by the Trinity's truth and way so as define ourselves by who we are, beloved adopted sons and daughters of the Father, and beloved adopted sisters and brothers of Christ.

To do this, we need to follow Mary Magdalene's example of going to Christ to be healed by Him; to learn to turn our weaknesses, our sins, over to Him through the sacrament of Confession, so as to access the Trinity's healing, transforming graces. During the periods between Confessions, we also need to pray to the Trinity for the graces to strengthen the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the graces to strengthen the Cardinal and Theological virtues so as to grow in our ability to weed out those influences and things, which prevent us from rejecting secular culture's values, ideas, and approach to life, we can love the Trinity as They love us.

We need to follow the Blessed Virgin Mary's admonition to the servants at the Wedding Feast of Cana, and learn to do what He tells us to do; to learn to live as obedient daughters and sons of the Father. This requires that we grow in our ability to patiently stay in Christ's presence, no matter what, just as the Marys did at Christ's crucifixion, in order to always hear and obey Christ's voice in our lives. We need to learn to grow in our ability to spend quiet, prayerful, and meditative time in Christ's presence in the Tabernacle.

Before we receive our Lord and Savior at communion, will take a moment and ask the Trinity for the help we need to quiet our heart, mind, and will, so we may receive the Trinity's healing graces in order to grow in our ability to weed out those influences and things, which prevent us from rejecting secular culture's values, ideas, and approach to life, so we can always hear and obey Christ's voice in our lives.

After we have consumed our Lord and Savior, we are given quiet time for prayer and meditation the Trinity desire us to have so as to be completely open to the graces we have received so we can deepen and strengthen our relationship with the Trinity. Listen to this portion of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM para 45) which echoes the Trinity's desire for us, to have time to quietly pray and meditate during the Mass:

“Sacred silence also, as part of the celebration, is to be observed at the designated times.<sup>54</sup> Its nature, however, depends on the moment when it occurs in the different parts of the celebration. For in the Penitential Act and again after the invitation to pray, individuals recollect themselves; whereas after a reading or after the Homily, all meditate briefly on what they have heard; then after Communion,

they praise God in their hearts and pray to him.

Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner.”

And to this portion from the Roman Missal (Order of the Mass para 139) which also echoes the Trinity’s desire for us to have time to quietly pray and meditate during the Mass right after Communion:

“Then, standing at the altar or at the chair and facing the people, with hands joined, the Priest says:

Let us pray.

**All pray in silence with the Priest for a while, unless silence has just been observed. Then the Priest, with hands extended, says the Prayer after Communion.”**

During the quiet meditation time given us right after communion, will we spend that time deepening and strengthening our relationship with the Trinity by praying to the Trinity, and reflecting on what the Trinity said to us in the gospel passage? Will we spend some of that time in prayerful contrition and repentance for our sins so we can grow in ability to live as obedient daughters and sons of the Father? And most importantly, will we spend time praising and thanking the Trinity for Their greatest gift, our redemption, which allows us to become adopted members of the Trinity’s family?

After the Mass, during this week, will we try to find some time to pray to the Trinity for the graces we need to hear Their voice and then slowly, careful meditate on the scripture readings for the Christmas Masses which will be the readings and gospel for Mass at Dawn; so we can have the Blessed, Joyful and peaceful Christmas season the Trinity desire us to have?

Before we continue on with the Mass, let us ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit now, and especially when we consume our Lord in the Eucharist; so we can be open to the Trinity's graces; in order to reject secular culture’s values, ideas, and approach to life so as to become holier, more intimate adopted members of the Trinity’s family.