

Fr. Ryan homily 6/7/2020 (The Most Holy Trinity)

Read: Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9 (164A); 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; John 3:16-18

Today is the feast of the Most Holy Trinity and it's about our belief in the one God as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and us being invited into that life. And you know I've heard priests say this over the years, maybe you as well, that this weekend can be kind of a nightmare to preach on because its always gonna be a mystery, right? This dynamic of God within Himself, it's the weekend that can cause some panic among preachers. And I think really? Cause I get more panicked about preaching Christmas and Easter myself. It's like, what am I gonna say different this year about them that I haven't said already a million times before. But when it comes to the Trinity, there's really nothing to worry about because the heart of it shouldn't be trying to understand it, or being able to explain it, the focus should be on how do I enter into it, or into Him if you will. Again, what do we believe about the Trinity? It's that we have just one God, just one- not three, but in this tri-un God there is a Father, there is a Son, and there is a Holy Spirit. And instead of going crazy trying to grasp what that means, and how that works together, and knowing its always going to be a mystery and trying to understand what I will never understand fully, what we have to think about is how do I experience the Trinity? So, if you and I really want to get to know Lake Michigan, certainly we can buy books about it and read all about Lake Michigan. We can learn about how the glaciers formed it so many years ago, we can study all the different aquatic life that's inside of it, we can measure the water levels over the years, where people come from when they visit, we can get all this information about Lake Michigan. But eventually, if you want to know it, you've gotta dive in and start swimming, you gotta get in the middle of it. So, you can always learn more and more; great. But it's not real until you're in it. so yeah, we can talk about the Trinity and what do terms like hypostatic union mean? And what does consubstantial mean? That can help, I learned that stuff in seminary. But, how do I participate in it? How do I jump into the Trinity and start swimming, if you will, within that relationship? And the way we do is, of course, through the Holy Spirit. Remember last Sunday we celebrated Pentecost, the descent of the Holy Spirit, how the Holy Spirit came and filled the disciples, He fills us now with

the love of God. The Holy Spirit takes what is outside of us, things that we can talk about and learn about and follow but are always “out there” and He makes them dwell within. He unifies us with God. The Holy Spirit puts God within us. Then the way we remain unified with God is by loving, loving each other because God is love. And we hear God so loved us that He sent His only begotten Son, second person of the Trinity. God so loved the world He gave up what was most dear to Him. He gave up a part of Himself, His own Son. And so, if we wanna remain in God we have to take that love, and not just think about it, not just talk about it, we have to love as God has loved us. And that’s how we experience the Trinity. So, if the only thing I ever do is think about love, what happens? Nothing. I can think about being the most loving man there ever was, what good is that unless I do something about it. I gotta do it. Same when it comes to the Trinity. Contemplating it only takes us so far, eventually I just have to delve in. And when you and I love God above all, we love each other, then that Spirit of God comes and fills us with God and we participate in the life of God, the Trinity. Now, for God to be love implies that He’s never been alone. The Father has always been loving the Son; the Son has always been loving the Father and that love between them is so strong that it forms another person. A third person, the Holy Spirit. So, there’s no loneliness within God and when we pray, when we worship the tri-un God, when we invite the Holy Spirit within us what happens is when the Holy Spirit comes and He swoops us up and brings us into the very life of the Trinity so we know that we are never alone. That’s what happens by simply making the sign of the cross, we call on the name of the Trinity. When we begin our prayer, whether it’s by ourselves, when we come to mass and worship God here. And at mass, as we all know, we’re getting closer and closer to everybody returning to mass, at mass if you never thought about it, we are surrounded by the tri-un God. At mass, the prayers that we offer are always directed to the Father, the first person of the Trinity. And we listen to the Word of God, Jesus, in scripture, the second person of the Trinity. We watch Him take on flesh in the Eucharist. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity, brings Jesus down to the altar and unifies us as the body of Christ once we’ve received the Eucharist. And by receiving Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, we are made sons and daughters with Him of the Father, the first person of the Trinity. So, at mass we’re just being engulfed on all sides by the Trinity, we’re being surrounded by the Trinity, made one in Him and then we go out after mass and we love each other with the love of

the Trinity. So as Catholics, the Holy mass is the most powerful way that we are swooped up into the love of the Trinity. Or in other words, it's the most profound way we can swim in the life of the Trinity and experience the Trinity. And in that, God is making us like Himself, and God is love. And so, when we leave mass, we participate in the life of the Trinity by loving people. And so, the reflection we gotta think about in our lives is how do I love people in the love of God? How do I really do that? How do I lay down my life everyday beginning with God and giving Him time in prayer and then with our family? Putting their needs in front of mine. And maybe we could stay there for a minute. Everybody who is listening, who is part of a family, your part in the family is to put everyone else in your family before you. Correct? That's how we love authentically. Now it doesn't mean much if we just nod our heads and say yes that's true, what matters is if we do it on a day to day basis. Husbands, do you always put your wives in front of you? That's the type of love your called to. Wives, do you always put your husbands in front of you? That's the way you are to love. And it's a beautiful thing when that is reciprocal, when it goes back and forth within a marriage, you know, that isn't always the case. But, as God loved us first, we're called to imitate that in our own homes, in our own families. You know, it's a very human thing to want to weigh our love on a balance, isn't it? Well, if I give you this then you give me that, that's what's fair. But that's not how God loves, He just pours Himself out. He always thinks of us first. And when we love like God, we become like Him, we participate in His life. So, when we look at our families, they're not there to take care of our needs, we're there to take care of theirs. That's how we participate in the life of the Trinity. Or when we think of the poor, the people who don't have basic necessities, we don't try to remember to give to them, we do! We give. And by doing that we're participating in the life of the Trinity. When you reach out to someone who doesn't like you or you don't like and you offer reconciliation, to forgive or ask forgiveness, you participate in the life of the Trinity. When you live life, you participate in the Trinity. We just had Mother's Day a few weeks ago, Father's Day is coming up, parents, you participate in the Trinity when you love your children. When they look at you, moms and dads, they should see the most loving people that they will ever know. They should be able to tell everybody they meet that the most loving people they know in their life is mom and dad and they see it day in and day out. Why? Because mom and dad are meant to show us the love of God, who God is, a trinity of love, a community of love, a family of love.

So, on this Trinity Sunday, it only helps so much to talk about love, you can only do that for so long before we need to make it real by doing it. By putting others first, by laying down our lives, and when we do that, we make the Trinity real. Not real in itself, God is God without us, but He invites us into that love, and it becomes real in our lives. God is made present when we do what He does. And then we show others by your life that we believe in a trinity of love and to say I wanna show you that love so that you can experience that Trinity as well. So that you to can swim within the mystery.

Amen