

Homily Notes for Trinity Sunday, 16 June 2019 C

Readings: Prv 8:22-31; Rom 5:1-5; Jn 16:12-15.

The Holy Trinity: the nature of our God and why transgender is not God's love.

1. Summary: The mystery of the Holy Trinity is "the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is the light that enlightens all other mysteries of faith" (CCC 234). Our understanding of God's love should direct all of our life.

2. Commentary on the Readings:

Proverbs 8:22-31: This refers to the creation by God, and the pre-existent presence of Jesus Christ, the Word, the Wisdom of God at the Creation (See John 1:1-5). God "spoke" and all came into being.

Romans 5:1-5: St. Paul teaches us that we have peace with God the Father through Jesus Christ, and that the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, especially in overcoming afflictions.

John 16:12-15: Here Jesus, the Son of God, mentions the role of the Holy Spirit, especially as teacher. Jesus highlights His close relationship with God the Father and what the Holy Spirit is going to do for us as we go about our daily tasks.

3. Doctrinal Statement and illustrations concerning the most Holy Trinity: See CCC 232-267.

"God himself is a personal eternal exchange of love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange"

The mystery of the Holy Trinity is that there are three divine persons, sharing the same nature in one God. "There is one God, who has three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person is God, yet there is still only one God" (CCC

The doctrine of the Trinity is not explicitly spelt out in the Bible (the word itself is not used) although it is mentioned or illustrated about forty times in the New Testament. This is another of those concepts like "Purgatory" where the word does not occur in the Bible but the concept is present repeatedly. Its oldest doctrinal formulation is found in the Apostles' Creed.

One of the clearest examples is the Great Commission of Jesus (Matt 28:19-20) where Jesus commands the disciples to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

All the official prayers of the Church, including the Holy Mass and the sacraments begin with an address to the Holy Trinity: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." We are baptized, absolved of our sins, and anointed in the name of the Blessed Trinity. We bless ourselves with the sign of the cross invoking the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and we conclude our prayers glorifying the Holy Trinity, saying "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

4. Illustrations:

St. John Vianney used to explain the Holy Trinity by using lighted candles and roses on the altar and water in the cruets. "The flame has color, warmth and shape. But these are expressions of one flame. Similarly the rose has color, fragrance and shape. But these are expressions of one reality, namely, rose. Water steam and ice are also three distinct expressions of one reality. In the same way God revealed Himself to us as Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Note also that matter has three phases, gas, liquid and solid. All creation is "trinitarian".

5. What we can learn from the doctrine of the Holy Trinity about the nature of our God: St John Paul the Great illustrates this in his "Theology of the body". "In the Pope's language, God is an eternal *Communion of Persons*". This occurs when two (or more) persons mutually "give" themselves to one another in love and service." "The Father eternally "begets" the Son by *giving himself* to and for the

Son. In turn, the Son...eternally receives the love of the Father and eternally gives himself back to the Father. The love they share is the Holy Spirit, who "proceeds from the Father and the Son" (Theology of the Body for Beginners, pp 7-8). Therefore all our family life and all relationships should be modeled on this Trinitarian love. See contrast with Islam. The one God, Allah, is one. He is a transcendent owner. People are his slaves.

6. Because God has loved us so much, we should reflect that love correctly in our relationships as created by God. There is a great deal of confusion about this today. We need to respect ourselves and respect others, regarding our bodies as Temples of the Holy Spirit (See I Cor 3:16-17, 6:19-20). God has designed us to function in certain, correct ways.

7. To be right with God we need to remember that: "without faith it impossible to please him, for anyone who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him" (Heb 11:6).

8. Our Church, based on the Bible, has just given us important guidance ("MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM" TOWARDS A PATH OF DIALOGUE ON THE QUESTION OF GENDER THEORY IN EDUCATION). Since I am teaching about the very nature of God today, I must also be sure that you know what his nature is and what he wants. Several of the positions of that document:

1. The Vatican flatly rejected the notion that individuals can choose their gender. [The document](#), issued by the Vatican department overseeing Catholic education, echoed past statements by Pope Francis. It argued that acceptance of flexible ideas of gender posed a threat to traditional families and ignored the natural differences between men and women.
2. It lamented "calls for public recognition of the right to choose one's gender, and of a plurality of new types of unions, in direct contradiction of the model of marriage as being between one man and one woman." The idea of gender moving along a spectrum was "nothing more than a confused concept of freedom in the realm of feelings and wants."
3. I have a copy of the complete document.

9. What's going on here? First, can any person decide what gender they are? To think this would be true would be to go against all scientific definitions. To go in this direction certainly would be destructive of the Christian idea of family as a union based on a marriage between a man and a woman. Furthermore, it does not work. Such people, even with operations cannot reproduce.

10. Several reflections: Trying to think that one can change whether one is a man or a woman leads to unhappiness and sickness. Examples. Secondly, it doesn't work. One has to reproduce according to whether one is a man or a woman.

11. This kind of thinking is destructive of our society. No form of homosexual union nor a person of imagined gender identity can reproduce. The purpose of our sexuality (our gender), marriage and family is to reproduce and to raise productive children for our society. Right now all Western Societies are dying demographically. We don't have enough children growing up. Right now the United States has more than one million more jobs available than we have people to fill them.

12. This crazy kind of moral thinking is firmly against the will of God, leading to one's condemnation by God, and it is leading to the weakening and collapse of our society and our way of life. Is that what we want to happen? Better to follow our triune God, the love between the persons of the Holy Trinity and to live fruitfully and productively as families of God.

13. Concerning those who fall into these errors, God wants us to be compassionate, to love them (to desire the good, not necessarily what they want) and to teach them and guide them to the truth.

14. Isn't it great to be Catholic and to be part of a Church that is thinking correctly?