

Scripture Study

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity— Cycle C



Opening prayer

Proverbs 8:22-31

(Psalm 8:4-9)

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

Overview of the Gospel:

- As in recent Gospel readings, the setting for this Sunday's Gospel is the Last Supper in the upper room in Jerusalem. It is part of Jesus final discourse which spans chapters 14 through 17 of John's Gospel.
- Jesus has just confirmed to his disciples that he is going away to a place to which they cannot follow (John 13:33; 14:1-3). He tells them, however, that it is to their advantage that he go away (verse 16:7) as he will then send them the Holy Spirit (verses 14:25-26), who will accomplish many tasks (verses 8-11).
- The main task of the Holy Spirit will be to take what is Jesus' (that is, the things he wants to teach us), and declare it to his Church (verse 14), in effect, picking up where Jesus left off after his ascension into heaven. He can do this because the Spirit, like the Father and the Son, is God—the third Person of the Holy Trinity.

Questions:

- What will the Holy Spirit do when Jesus sends him (John 16:8-15; CCC 729)?
- How do we know that the Holy Spirit is not just an "impersonal force," as some groups teach, but a *Person*—God, the third Person of the Holy Trinity (see the First Reading; the Gospel Reading, verses 13-14; CCC 243, 252-255, 258-59)? Can you lie to an impersonal force (Acts 5:3-4)? Does an impersonal force speak and hear (Acts 13:2-4, 21:10-11) or be grieved by our actions (Ephesians 4:30)?
- How does the Second Reading show how all three Persons of the Trinity are active in our sanctification and our salvation?
- The Trinity is often referred to as a *mystery*. What is the difference between when we speak of a spiritual mystery such as the Trinity, and when we speak of, for example, a "mystery novel"?
- How does the "Spirit of Truth" differ from the *other* spirit who attempts to influence and indwell mankind (John 8:44, 13:26-27; CCC 392, 2482)?
- Where do we hear the voice of the Spirit of Truth today? Does it make sense that the Spirit would speak *definitively* through the Church and the successors of the apostles rather than to individuals to interpret on their own? Why or why not?

Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 202, 689-90, 813, 731-32

Closing Prayer

Our Lord does not come down from Heaven every day to lie in a golden ciborium. He comes to find another heaven which is infinitely dearer to Him - the heaven of our souls, created in His Image, the living temples of the Adorable Trinity. -St. Therese of Lisieux

Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings!

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth"

Scripture: *John 16:12-15*

"I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Meditation: Jesus makes a claim which only God can make – he knows all things – the present and the past, as well as the future. Jesus not only claims to speak the truth, he calls himself the very source of truth when he proclaims that he is the way, the truth and the life. Now Jesus promises to send his disciples the Spirit of truth who will guide them in understanding all that Jesus came to say and do! Jesus tells his disciples that it is the role of the Holy Spirit to reveal what is true. It is through the gift and working of the Holy Spirit, who enlightens our hearts and minds, that we come to understand that God is a trinity of persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Jews understood God as Creator and Father of all that he made (Deuteronomy 32:6) and they understood the nation of Israel as God's firstborn son (Exodus 4:22). Jesus reveals the Father in an unheard of sense. He is eternally Father by his



relationship to his only Son, who, reciprocally, is Son only in relation to his Father (see Matthew 11:27). The Spirit, likewise, is inseparably one with the Father and the Son. Jesus reveals the triune nature of God and the inseparable union of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The mission of Jesus and of the Holy Spirit are the same – to reveal the glory of God and to share that glory with us by uniting us in a community of love with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.. That is why Jesus tells his disciples that the Spirit will reveal the glory of the Father and the Son and will speak what is true. Before his Passover, Jesus revealed the Holy Spirit as the “Paraclete” and Helper who will be with Jesus’ disciples to teach and guide them “into all the truth” (John 14:17,26; 16:13). The ultimate end, the purpose for which God created us, is the entry of God's creatures into the perfect unity of the blessed Trinity. In baptism we are called to share in the life of the Holy Trinity here on earth in faith and after death in eternal light.

Clement of Alexandria, a third century church father, wrote: “What an astonishing mystery! There is one Father of the universe, one Logos (Word) of the universe, and also one Holy Spirit, everywhere one and the same; there is also one virgin become mother, and I should like to call her 'Church'.”

How can we personally know the Father and his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ? It is the Holy Spirit who reveals the Father and the Son to us and who gives us the gift of faith to know and understand the truth of God’s word. Through the Holy Spirit, we proclaim our ancient faith in the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ until he comes again. The Lord gives us his Holy Spirit as our divine Teacher and Helper that we may grow in the knowledge and wisdom of God. Do you seek the wisdom that comes from above and do you eagerly listen to God's word and obey it?

"May the Lord Jesus put his hands on our eyes also, for then we too shall begin to look not at what is seen but at what is not seen. May he open the eyes that are concerned not with the present but with what is yet to come, may he unseal the heart's vision, that we may gaze on God in the Spirit, through the same Lord, Jesus Christ, whose glory and power will endure throughout the unending succession of ages." (Prayer of Origin, c. 185-254)

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