

# ***A Communion of Love***



*El Greco's Painting on the Blessed Trinity*

## **I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS**

### **FIRST READING** (Dt 4:32-34; 39-40)

<sup>32</sup>Ask now of the days of old, before your time, ever since God created humankind upon the earth; ask from one end of the sky to the other: Did anything so great ever happen before? Was it ever heard of? <sup>33</sup>Did a people ever hear the **voice of God speaking** from the midst of fire, as you did, and live?<sup>9</sup> <sup>34</sup>Or did any **god venture to go and take a nation for himself** from the midst of another nation, by testings, by signs and wonders,<sup>1</sup> by war, with strong hand and outstretched arm, and by great terrors, all of which the LORD, your God, did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

<sup>39</sup>This is why you must now acknowledge, and fix in your heart, that the LORD is God in the heavens above and on earth below, and that there is no other.<sup>40</sup> And you must keep his statutes and commandments which I command you today, that you and your children after you may prosper, and that you may have long life on the land which the LORD, your God, is giving you forever.

**FOCUS:** **The God whom we call Father**

### **COMMENTARY**

- Vv. 32-34 talk about the greatness of the God of Israel.
- The God of Israel (YHWH) is an unprecedented God. No one was like him before.
- Four Questions:
  - Did anything so great....?
  - Was it ever heard of...?
  - Did a people ever hear...?
  - Or did any God venture...?
- God is a God who does wondrous things for Israel.
- Vv. 39-40 speak of the implications of the greatness of God.
- Keep his statutes and commandments... you and your children.
- V. 40 specifies the result of obedience:
  - you may prosper,
  - you may have long life.

### **REFLECTIONS**

To be a chosen people is a great honor from a great God. Yet there is a great responsibility which is expected of every Israelite.

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**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** (Ps 33:4-5)  
BLESSED THE PEOPLE THE LORD  
HAS CHOSEN TO BE HIS OWN.

**SECOND READING** (Rom 8:14-17)

<sup>14\*</sup> For those who are led by the **Spirit of God** are children of God. <sup>15k</sup> For you did not receive a **spirit** of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a **spirit of adoption**, through which we cry, “Abba,\* Father!” <sup>16l</sup> The **Spirit** itself bears witness with our **spirit** that we are children of God, <sup>17m</sup> and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

**THE FOCUS: The Holy Spirit**

**COMMENTARY**

- Three actions of the Holy Spirit:
  - Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.
  - The Spirit of God is a spirit of adoption which makes us children of God and cry out: *Abba!*
  - The Spirit of God bears witness that we are God’s children.
- As children of God,
  - We become heirs of God, heirs with Christ.
  - With one condition: If we suffer with him.

**REFLECTIONS**

We owe our adoption as children of God to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit allows us to address God as our Father.

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**GOSPEL READING** (Mt 28:16-20)

*Eleven Disciples*

<sup>16</sup> The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted.

*Jesus’ command*

<sup>18</sup> Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them **in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit**, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

*Jesus’ presence*

And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

**THE FOCUS: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (the Holy Trinity)**

**COMMENTARY**

- The eleven disciples go to Galilee (where Jesus ascends into heaven, according to Matthew. According to Luke, ascension happens at Bethany [v.16]).
- V.17 tells of mixed reactions of the apostles on the resurrected Jesus.
- Vv.18-20 = the great commission: to make disciples. The disciples must be taught to observe all commandments of Jesus.
- The apostles will employ the method of baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity. The Greek form for name is *onomati* (not *onomasi*, plural) which is correctly translated into English. If Matthew used the plural form, translations would read “In the names of the Father...”
- Jesus assures: presence always in v.20b.

**REFLECTIONS**

The mention of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit (the Trinity) is in passing only.

It is mentioned in the context of Jesus' ascension into heaven.

We must not forget that the Jesus who commissioned them is the resurrected Christ.

The Trinitarian formula is expressed in the context of his resurrected body and ascension.

More particularly, the Triune God is mentioned in the context of making disciples, through baptism.

In the beginning of the gospel, there was baptism in water, then in the Holy Spirit, now in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The picture of God-hood is now complete. God's self-disclosure is now complete in its formulation. Never in the previous verses that the persons in one Godhead were put together under one singular name.

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## II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP YOUR HOMILY/SHARING

The First Reading is the action of the Father.

The Second Reading is the action of the Holy Spirit.

The Gospel Reading is the mention of the Trinitarian formula (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).

### How to make your homily/sharing

Begin with a short comment on the feast of the Holy Trinity. This feast comes after the Pentecost (now the three Persons are celebrated in the same day).

As Catholics, we are Trinitarians. Research why, where we got the formula (the term is not in the Bible).

Of course, we should not delve so much on the arguments or the explanations of the doctrine. Your homily will become celebratory. It is a mystery to live by (not something to explain).

Now, go back to the Readings: 1) The First Reading tells that the **Father** does wondrous things; 2) the Second Reading tells that the **Holy Spirit** helps us build relationship with the Father and Son and with one another; 3) The Gospel Reading tells of Jesus' commissioning the apostles **to make disciples**, baptizing in the name of the Trinity. In other words, all the Three persons are active in our history. Develop the dynamism of the Trinity in our lives, each person acting in our families, society and world.

End your homily relating the Trinity to the Holy Eucharist. Again we pay attention to Jesus. We receive him in the form of bread and wine. This is a way of keeping his promise to be with us till the end of time. The eucharist reminds us of our communion, not only with Jesus, but with the Holy Trinity. The mass contains many Trinitarian formulas: the sign of the cross, the glory, the opening prayer, the blessing, etc. The mass is a celebration of the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

-Prepared by Fr. Cielo Almazan, OFM

## III. OUR CONTEXT

1. Making the Sign of the Cross when passing by a sacred place or when embarking on a long or risky journey. Why?
2. What does leading a Trinitarian Life mean?
3. Is the Catholic Charismatic Movement increasing in number?
4. Remember brave teachers in rural areas as school year 2018-2019 opens.(HM)