

Bound by Love

I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS

FIRST READING (Prv 8:22-31)

The son (wisdom) speaking in first person, when brought forth

^{22*} The LORD begot *me*, the beginning of his works,/ the forerunner of his deeds

of long ago;/ ²³From of old I was formed,/* at the first, before the earth./ ²⁴ When there were no deeps I was brought forth,/ when there were no fountains or springs of water;/ ²⁵Before the mountains were settled into place,/ before the hills, I was brought forth;/ ²⁶When the earth and the fields were not yet made,/ nor the first clods of the world./

The son (wisdom) speaking in the first person, his eternal presence

²⁷When *he* established the heavens, there was I,/^h when he marked out the vault over the face of the deep; ²⁸When he made firm the skies above,/ when he fixed fast the springs of the deep;/ ²⁹When he set for the sea its limit,/ so that the waters should not transgress his command;/ When he fixed the foundations of earth,/ ³⁰then was I beside him as artisan;/* I was his delight day by day,/ playing before him all the while./ ³¹Playing over the whole of his earth,/ having my delight with human beings.

THE FOCUS: The Eternity of the Father and the Son

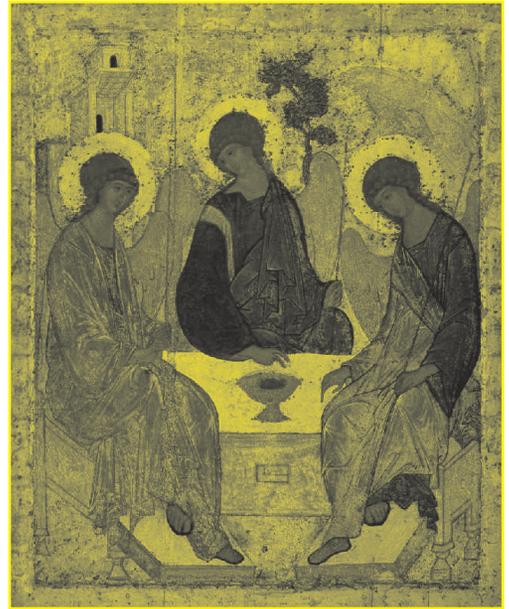
COMMENTARY

• In vv.22-26, wisdom (personified as son) describes his pre-existence as first born of his ways; forerunner,

- Before the earth, no depths, no fountains, springs (depths);

- Before the mountains, hills (heights).

- Before the earth and fields, first clods (lump/mass of clay) (surface, ground, vegetation).



- In vv.27-31, wisdom (son) describes his presence when God was creating, fixing, setting the limits of the heavens, deep, skies, earth, sea - As craftsman (*artisan, engineer, skilled worker*) and musician and company (*companion*) of humanity.

REFLECTIONS

The text of the book of Proverbs represents well the two important descriptions of the son of God: pre-existent and present and active during creation.

God (Lord, Father) is acknowledged as the begetter of the son (wisdom) and creator of all things. The wisdom (son) was with the Father since the beginning of time and since the beginning of creation.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9)

**O LORD, OUR GOD, HOW WONDERFUL
YOUR NAME IN ALL THE EARTH!**

SECOND READING (Rom 5:1-5)

The fruit of faith in general terms (peace, grace, glory)

^{1*} "Therefore, since we have been **justified by faith**, we have peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ^{2b}through whom we have gained access [by faith] to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God.

The fruit of faith in more specific, concrete terms (in the believers)

³Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, ^{4c}and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, ^{5d}and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us.

THE FOCUS: On the Benefits of Having Faith

COMMENTARY

- The text speaks of what happens when we are justified by faith.
 - We have peace with God (v.1).
 - We have access to grace (v.2).
 - We boast of our afflictions (v.3).
- In vv.3-5, notice the sequence of the following: **Affliction** (suffering) produces endurance. **Endurance** produces character. **Character** produces hope. **Hope** does not disappoint us.
- V.5 continues mentioning the reward of having been justified by faith:
 - The love of God has been poured out.
 - The Holy Spirit has been given to us.

REFLECTIONS

Paul shares his reflection on being justified by faith (made right by believing in Jesus).

By faith in Jesus, we are entitled to live in peace with God and we have access to his graces and we can look forward to participate in his glory.

The text is a very appropriate consolation to those who are suffering because they live their faith.

In fact, it is an invitation to “boast” of our afflictions (other translations: “let us rejoice in our sufferings”).

How can we boast of our afflictions? How can we rejoice in our sufferings?

The exhortation tells us that rejoicing is a matter of personal decision.

We can choose to be happy even if we are suffering.

Paul has a reason: suffering produces endurance; in turn, endurance produces character, character produces hope....

Avoidance of suffering (sacrifices) does not produce anything (no patience, no character, no hope). Suffering is the road to success (glory).

GOSPEL READING (Jn 16:12-15)

The Son speaking

^{12c}“I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now.

The holy Spirit representing

^{13*} ^h“But when he comes, the **Spirit of truth**, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. ¹⁴He will glorify **me**, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.

The Father sharing

¹⁵Everything that the **Father** has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.

THE FOCUS: The work of the holy Spirit

COMMENTARY

- The text belongs to the farewell discourse at the Last Supper.
- v.12 indicates the immensity of Jesus’ materials for sharing with us and our inability to process them all for now.
- vv.13-14 indicate the role of the holy Spirit:
 - Guide to all truth;
 - Represents Jesus (speaks for Jesus);
 - Declares (reveals) things coming in the future;
 - Glorifies Jesus;
 - Takes / brings / declares whatever pertains to Jesus.
- v.15 indicates the source of Jesus’ richness.

REFLECTIONS

The text does not really develop the mystery of the Trinity. It is more on the holy Spirit.

We can know more about the Trinity if we inquire from theologians.

Theologians try to systematize their readings of biblical texts and the reflections and teachings of apostles, their successors and the magisterium (teaching authority of the Church).

Of course, from the short Gospel Reading, we can know the dynamism (activities) of each of the persons in the holy Trinity.

The Father shares with the Son whatever belongs to him. The Son acknowledges that whatever belongs to him belongs to the Father. He is willing to share with us all that he has and is. The holy Spirit does not speak for himself but for the Son and the Father. He comes to guide us to the truth.

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit act together as one God in us. They do not act separately, without coordination. No person goes his own way.

What a perfect community!

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

The First Reading talks of the pre-existence, power to create and ever presence of God known to us as the Father and the Son/wisdom.

The Second Reading talks about the rewards of having faith in Christ.

The Gospel Reading talks about the role of the Holy Spirit.

How to develop our sharing / homily

Describe your community or family. How many members? What are they doing? (father: breadwinner, mother: housekeepers, sister: OFW, etc.)

How does each member relate to the other members? (*very open, very close to one another; sometimes tense, there is conflict, there is favoritism, etc.*)

The Holy Trinity is a perfect community, family. The Father, Son and holy Spirit are all distinct from one another, yet they are one God, one community. They are related to one another in love. They don't contradict each other.

Why do we give them homage or due to worship? Because of what they do to us as one God and as three different persons.

The Readings tell us that each of them is active in us, in our history and in our world.

The Father is the one who created everything, put all things into order and their limits. (*First Reading*).

The Son, if we believe in him, brings us grace and assures us of our salvation. (*Second Reading*).

The Holy Spirit leads us to the full truth, to understand the fullness of God's revelation [self-disclosure to be more intimate with him, to share in his life] (*Gospel*).

This feast serves to remind us of what our families or communities should be.

We recognize our differences and uniqueness. We do not make others or expect them to be like us.

We also recognize their particular giftedness which they are supposed to contribute to the building up of our families and communities.

Each member must find one specific job, to share in God's creativity, Jesus' salvific mission and the holy Spirit's light and clarity.

All members must be interconnected through love and devotion to one another.

Divisiveness, fragmentation, racism, sexism, discrimination, claims of past privileges, exclusivism, ghettoism are all hindrances towards community building. They are in no way reflective of the Trinitarian life of God.

The eucharist is a sacrament of unity. The Holy Trinity is acting upon us who devoutly listen to his words and receive the sacrament. Here in the mass, we express our prayer to God the Father, through Christ, in the holy Spirit.

Each member who is learned in the ways of the Triune God must come to the eucharist to get strength and to participate in the life of God.

-Prepared by Fr. Cielo Almazan, OFM

III. OUR CONTEXT

1. What concrete experiences can you recall wherein you feel the love that binds the Holy Trinity.
2. How can we be Trinitarian People? (HM)