

The Solemnities of The Trinity & The Body & Blood of Christ

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This feast deserves our serious reflection. We're not presented today with a piece of history, a parable, or a moral lesson, but an opportunity to think about "Who God Is" and therefore Who We Are. Examined together, the Scriptures present God to us as a Trinity of Persons "who is always giving" – the Father gives to the Son, the Son gives to the Spirit, and then the Spirit gives to us." It's like God can't help himself, can't stop giving, can't stop pouring out the divine self.

One result is what we call creation – and God is so big, so incredibly full of energy, so dynamic, that creation is not merely some plants and animals, not only humanity; not just a planet, or a solar system or a galaxy; but an entire universe filled with innumerable galaxies!

And what do we receive from God? The Scriptures tell us that just as God delights in the Spirit (and really, all the Persons of the Trinity delight in one another), so God delights in the human race. God's Spirit also teaches us the Truth (so we don't have to live with superstition or delusion); God gives us Love (not just bits and pieces of love, but everlasting love with no limitations is "poured into our hearts"); God gives us Peace (the deepest contentment that all is at it should be); and finally God gives us Hope (because God is calling us into the eternal glory of God). All of this says that Who God Is – Delight, Truth, Love, Peace, Hope – is what God gives to us, because God is constantly calling us and doing everything possible to draw us into the life and heart of God the Trinity. We learn Who God Is, and therefore we know Who We Are – part of God's creation who are called back into the full union of life with our Creator.

We have other images from the Scriptures that teach us the same thing in different ways. For example, we're called the "Body of Christ." We're the parts or members of Christ's glorious body. It's a body that transcends spatial boundaries; it's a body not limited or fixed by time; so while Jesus lived in history, we know the Second Person of the Trinity pre-existed history and will exist beyond time. And we're part of that Body, because Christ only has one Body; there's not a resurrected body and then an earthly body – as parts of Christ's body, we're already joined to his glorious ascension! Who Christ Is, We Are also – we have suffered and died, and we are raised and ascended. What is happening in my life and yours isn't simply that we may become more like Christ; we are truly becoming Christ.

The Eucharist we receive is the concrete expression of that truth. The Eucharist is the tangible reality of who we are and who we are becoming. Sometimes that's hard to see and hard to believe. St. Athanasius wrote that Jesus didn't just come "to be seen;" if that were so, he could have been much more splendid, more handsome, more famous than he was – a simple craftsman and preacher. And so it is with the Eucharist – if the Eucharist were merely something to be seen, it could be a more noble food and more unique drink than pieces of unleavened bread and wine from Paw Paw.

The Eucharist is another outpouring of God's life to us – our God who just can't stop. The Eucharist is the ultimate expression of Who God Is. The Eucharist is God's gift of Love – poured out to us even though we're sinners. It is God's gift of Peace – because we realize we're accepted as we are. The Eucharist is God's gift of Hope, because we are reminded over and over that God is drawing us into the fullness of life. The Eucharist is a precious time of sheer delight, because it leads us to our finest moment of union with God until we shed the limitations of space and time.

The Eucharist is also the expression *par excellence* of Who We Are, because we are joined in the eternal life of that same Trinity-God. The Eucharist is the Truth of Who We Are – people who pour out our lives in Love for others, which results in our own suffering and dying; we pour out Love again and again – not because we'll get something out of it, but because others will be rescued because of our sacrifice; their lives will be saved because of our love.

So even though we celebrate the Trinity and the Eucharist as two solemnities these two weeks, they are intimately united. St. Paul said, "What I received, I handed on to you." Jesus said, "Do this in memory of me." Do what? I don't believe he meant build churches and have mass. I believe he meant live your lives as sacrificial givers. Lay down your life for the sake of others who need you. Imitate me; live like I do. With a wider perspective we can re-state it – imitate the life of the Trinity. Live in the Truth; be at Peace; move forward in Hope; remember Who God Is and Who We Are, and gladly Delight in the union we have now in this Eucharist, and the greater union we'll share forever. As a friend said to me last night, "God is never separate from us; that's a lie."