

Homily for the Feast of the Holy Trinity

June 15-16, 2019

Readings: Proverbs 8:22-31; Romans 5:1-5; John 16:12-15

Preacher: Sue Howard

Greetings to all who are reading this reflection. I pray that today's inspired writings from Holy Scripture will fill you with great joy and fiery enthusiasm. I have found for the first time a reason why my heart and soul can frolic in the glory of God in harmony with the Holy Trinity!

How can this be? Should I spend my life pondering the nature of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit and their internal relationship? Do I have the mind of St. Augustine or Thomas Aquinas who spent their lives in this study? No, I am going to trust in the words of the angel who spoke to St. Augustine at the seashore, "Trying to understand the Trinity is like trying to empty the ocean into a tiny hole in the sand."

But I do have some questions that I would like to delve into.

In the first reading from Proverbs, the divine persona of Wisdom is depicted in womanly terms as one who is possessed or "impregnated," one who is poured forth or "birthed," one who is the source of springs of water, and the co-creator, co-maker of the foundations of the earth. She was his "delight" or muse, "Playing before him," "Playing on the surface of the earth." She "found delight in the human race"!

My question is, what does the word *play* have at its root?

In II Samuel, we read, "And David danced before the Lord with all his might." In one Hebrew word study, Chaim Bentorah suggests that this means he danced *with* God. But the dancing was not a choreographed performance; rather it was a spinning twirling dervish. It was a letting go of all sense of all propriety and adult ego and entering into a childlike frenzy. We have civilized the concept of dance or play to say we "celebrate." But wouldn't you like to imagine and come to realize in a new way that Jesus is actually singing, dancing and playing with us while we worship? I liken this to the concept of frolicking. Oh how joyful this all becomes! I imagine Wisdom as the great harmonizer.

On to the next question. Justified by faith?

If we understand the word *justify* to mean “made right” or brought back to “true,” which is a technical term for being in line with, I would like to broaden that concept to mean being brought back into harmony with. In my words then, our faith brings us into harmony with the Trinity. There is no need to intellectualize or try to grasp the Trinity, as if then we would attain that harmony or as if our intellect would somehow then be able to manipulate the Trinity to our own purposes for our own benefit.

If we humans can be justified by faith, then that justification belongs to everyone in the world as a free gift. That is what Paul boasts about. He boasts about what God has done for him, making him a new person, forgiving his sins, bringing him into union with God, through the saving work of Jesus and the harmonizing work of the Spirit.

Jeremiah says, “Thus says the Lord: ‘Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts, boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight,’ declares the Lord.”

And finally in the Gospel of John we hear Jesus say there is some knowledge that we cannot bear. Is that a challenge? A puzzle we need to work out? Or should we trust in the promises of Jesus—all of it, his whole life, poured out for us so that we might come to believe. Do we await the great truth? Are we able to enter into now? Of course we do and we are entering into that great truth right now! Whenever we place our trust in God, whenever we open our hearts to the possibility of harmony and peace with God, we have an opportunity to know the Great Truth. And when we are given that gift, then we can truly dance and sing and play and frolic with the Holiness of the Trinity. By our worship and our joyful celebration we glorify God, not for the purpose of gaining favor with God but so that we can dance with delight for God!

