Wellspring
Fransalian Center for Spirituality
P. O. Box 440, Whitehouse, Texas 75791
www.wellspringcommunity.net frgusmsfs@gmail.com

June 4, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This Sunday, we celebrate and renew our faith in one of the most important doctrines of our Church: The Most Holy Trinity - God as Father, Son and Spirit in one single, indivisible communion of persons. Many have attempted to explain this dogma in a variety of ways. None of them can adequately explain the meaning and the power this doctrine has on our lives. We must strive to know God as God is. It is one thing to know about God. It is yet another thing to know God as a person and as three persons in one, single indivisible communion.

Once, a little girl was painting a picture. Her mother asked her what she was painting. "I am painting God," she said. The mother responded, "No one has ever seen God. How can you paint his picture." The girl replied, "wait a few minutes, mom. When I finish this picture, every one will know what God looks like." We tend to paint our own images of God.

Images of God as an angry, a vengeful and punishing authority have been used to scare people to conversion. We have heard of an angry, judgmental God who is just waiting to catch us in our mistakes, errors, or sin and seems almost eager to eternally punish people. We have heard about God keeping a book of records of our sins and failures which will be opened at the last judgement. Even some of the events described in our Sacred Scriptures portray God as vengeful and threatening punishment.

There was a time when God was seen as tremendous, fascinating, awe-inspiring and frightening mystery before whom one couldn't even stand (Exodus 3:5; Luke 5:8). God was "wholly other" and could not be seen or named (Exodus 3:5-7). God said to Moses, "you cannot see my face, for no one can see me and live" (Exodus 33:20). God was mystery – beyond ordinary human touch, understanding and vision. And yet, God revealed himself in Jesus as a forgiving father who loves all his children. Jesus said, "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." (John 14:23)

St. John writes in his first letter… No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His love is brought to perfection in us. The way we know that we remain in him and he in us, is that he has given us of his spirit. We have seen for ourselves and can testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. When anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God (I Jn. 4:12-15).

One of the of the most important learnings for me through my fifty three years of ministry has been that a person's vision of God has a huge influence on her or his life - relationship with God, with self, with other people, and the rest of the universe. The vision of God inspires and moves certain people to embrace challenging and outstanding lives of love, dedication, devotion, service, compassion, justice, generosity, prayer and contemplation. But some people's vision of God leads them to doubt, insecurity, anxiety, depression, self-hate, fear, etc. There are others whose vision of God leads them to judgmental, hateful, abusive, destructive and violent behaviors.

In Jesus, God revealed himself as a loving father who gave us life, who sent his son Jesus to redeem the life that we messed up and who sent his Hoy Spirit to heal our brokenness and make us whole. As we celebrate Trinity Sunday, we celebrate the Father of Life, and the Son of redemption and the Spirit of love, healing and wholeness. Jesus revealed the Father as a father waiting for his estranged son's return, as a shepherd in search of the lost sheep, as a woman searching for the lost coin, as a father of mercy and love. Jesus revealed himself as the son of God who came to give us the fulness of life, complete joy and perfect union with the father of Love and he prayed for it (John 17). And that is essentially what the doctrine of the Trinity means. Celebration of Trinity Sunday is a celebration of our call to the fulness of life, complete joy and perfect union with the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Made in the image of the Triune God, we are to be for others what God is for us. Jesus said to his disciples, "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (John 13:34-35). The Psalmist says, "The Lord has not withheld his steadfast love from me" (Psalm 66:20). We are called to love others as God loves us, as Jesus loves us, to reach out to others and "not to withhold" our love from others. We are called to give what we have received as gifts from the Lord.

It is never sufficient to abstain from doing wrong. We are called to be good and to do good - a good word and a good deed proclaim who we are. We have many opportunities to share God's gift of Love and life. We meet people who are hurting and bleeding and needing a "transfusion" of love. Selfless service, total giving, unconditional love – steadfast love is the challenge of Christian living. It is this steadfast love, poured into the heart by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5) that we must find deep within us and let it mold, shape and transform our lives.

I encourage you to take a few minutes each day of this week to be still and get in touch with your knowledge and experience of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Has God become the center and source of your life? Have you come to know that you are safe in the hands of a loving God, and you don't have to be afraid of what may happen tomorrow? Has your experience of God deepened over the years? Is your life in a continuous process of conversion and transformation in Christ?

God bless you and your family.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

The Most Holy Trinity

June 4, 2023

**Christian faith is not only a matter of believing that certain things are true,
but above all a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
It is an encounter with the Son of God that gives new energy to the whole of our existence.
When we enter into a personal relationship with him, Christ reveals our true identity
and, in friendship with him, our life grows towards complete fulfilment.
(Pope Benedict XVI)**

Collect

God our Father, who by sending into the world
the Word of truth and the Spirit of sanctification
made known to the human race your wondrous mystery,
grant us, we pray, that in professing the true faith,
we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory
and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Liturgy of the Word

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

God's steadfast love is foundational to who God is and to what you believe and how you live your life.

Exodus 34:4-6, 8-9

Moses had gone up the mountain and was in deep conversation with God on Mount Sinai. His people became impatient and made a golden calf and began to worship the image. Moses came down the mountain with God's directives written on two tablets and found his people impatient and unfaithful. In anger, Moses broke the tablets of the law and destroyed the golden calf.

Moses pleaded with God to come down and be with his people and the Lord came down again in a cloud. The Lord asked Moses to cut two stone tablets and go up Mount Sinai alone and Moses followed God's directive early next morning.

In this excerpt, we have the intimate conversation between God and Moses. God declared himself to be "merciful, gracious, slow to anger, rich in kindness and fidelity and so on. Moses bowed down to the ground and worship the Lord, his God and asked the Lord to be with his people in spite of their wickedness.

Daniel 3:52-56

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers,
Praiseworthy and exalted above all forever;
And blessed is your holy and glorious name,
Praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages.

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

This excerpt carries the last few verses of the last chapter of the second letter to the Corinthians. In this chapter, Paul made it clear to the Corinthians that he was coming to settle the problems once and for all, exerting his authority if needed; expressed his desire to settle matters amicably without having to exert his authority and shared his hope that they would live in peace and harmony.
In this excerpt, we have Paul's sincere prayer and wish for the Corinthian Church: the Grace of Jesus, the Love of the Father and fellowship of the spirit. It is with this blessing that he closed his second letter to the Corinthians. How noble it is to close the letter to a troubled community with blessing and prayer for Grace, Love and fellowship.

John 3:16-18

Verse 16 of this Scripture passage is one of the most frequently quoted scripture verses, displayed on banners, signs and bumper stickers……"God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life". This verse is worth memorizing, remembering and contemplating. This is the central message of the Gospel. This is the good news. It tells us that God loved first and salvation comes from him as his gift. It tells us that God loved the world – not a few favorite people or nation, not even a few good people – but the world. God's love is an all-embracing love.

We are invited to ponder this all-embracing love of God for the world! As Saint Augustine says, "God loves each one of us as if there was only one of us to love."

God's love, his abiding presence, his intimacy has the power to change people and things and the universe. It is this intimacy that brings peace, God's gift of peace. We long for a sense of oneness, a union and communion with others like us and communion with God. We long for the liberation which Jesus proclaimed, which only he can offer. It is this communion that brings peace. Jesus is our door to intimacy with God, others, the universe and self. In Jesus, we discover our freedom and our salvation – Jesus is our freedom and our salvation.

We are called to become witnesses to the mystery of God's presence: God's Light, Truth, Life, Love...in the world - in us the world must see the "sign" of the "presence" of the "heart" of God - mercy, peace, joy, justice, compassion, love.

Baptized in the name of the Triune God, we are called to be models, witnesses, living examples of intimacy with God, Father, Son and Spirit.

Be Still for a few moments!

Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.

Spiritual Communion

Lord Jesus, I believe in your real presence in the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar. I place myself in your presence and adore you, worship you and glorify you. I am unable to receive you in Holy Communion at Mass today. I hunger and thirst for your way, your truth and your life. Come into my heart Lord and satisfy my hunger and quench my thirst. Bless me that I may give witness to your presence in my life. Amen

Be Still for a few moments!

Saint of the Day, June 4 - St. Francis Caracciolo and 19 other saints are remembered this day.

St Francis Caracciolo was born on October 13, 1563 in Villa Santa Maria in the Abruzzo region, in the Kingdom of Naples. From a young age, he had a reputation for gentleness and uprightness. At age 22, he developed a troublesome skin disease resembling leprosy, one of the most dreaded diseases of the day. So serious was this attack that he was considered hopeless.

With death so near, he made a vow that if he regained his health, he would spend the rest of his life in the service of God and his fellow men. He recovered so quickly after this vow, that his cure was considered miraculous. Eager to fulfil his promise to God, he went to Naples to study for the priesthood. There he befriended a man who wanted to establish a new religious community that would focus on both the active and the contemplative life.

Francis helped draw up Rules for the new Order of the Minor Clerks Regular. Members of the Order agreed among themselves never to seek leadership within the group, though Francis was elected many times to serve in such positions.

Even in his capacity as superior of the Order, he insisted on sharing simple tasks: sweeping rooms, making beds, washing dishes. As a priest, Francis spent many hours in the confessional. He also begged in the streets for the poor and gave away most of his possessions to the needy. Francis died on June 4, 1608 and was canonized on May 24, 1807 in Rome by Pope Pius VII

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Live in such a way that those who know you
but don't know God will come to know God because they know you.