

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of your divine Majesty to worship the Unity: Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

- Jesus said, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” And again, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.” Why would we read these passages on Trinity Sunday? What does the Trinity have to do with me, really?
- *Nuns on the Run* – “Of course it makes no sense! If it did, you wouldn't need a religion to explain it!”
- To be **BORN OF THE SPIRIT** is to receive a whole new set of eyes – “the renewing of our minds”. Also Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God**—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”
WHAT'S IT LIKE TO HAVE THIS NEW SET OF EYES?
- When parents are about to leave the house for the evening, every child has three questions:
 1. Where are you going?
 2. Can I go with you?
 3. Who will stay with us?

36 Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered, “Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterward.”

John 13:37 Peter said to him, “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” [We all know how that turns out!]

Who will stay with us?

And then later, in the 14th chapter, Jesus says to his disciples:

John 14:15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate [or, a Comforter], to be with you forever. 17 This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

18 **I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU ORPHANED**; I am coming to you. 19 In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

- In the power of the Spirit we are **initiated into the life of god**. ***Take this literally!*** When I was a parish priest I used to love to remind folk that in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin the word for “breath” is also the word for “spirit” and is also the word for “wind”. We are born “from above” of the “Spirit”! Of the Breath of God! This is the life we get to keep for eternity! And it’s the Breath of God that opens our eyes to the Presence of God.

- **WHAT IS THE TRINITY ABOUT REALLY?**

- Think about the inevitable **TENSION BETWEEN INDIVIDUALITY AND TOGETHERNESS**. We all need to be individuals – we need to be who we truly are in our essence – and yet we also need family and friends. As we all know, those two can be in real tension. Think about how much energy we all spend encouraging our teenage daughters and sons to resist peer pressure. But the tension between individuality and togetherness goes back even further than that. It goes back to the very way we were parented:

- We've all known parents who are so involved in the lives of their children and so controlling that they do irreparable damage to the child by not allowing him or her to emerge as an individual in his or her own right. **The effect of this way of raising a child is that, ultimately, the child feels utterly unworthy and ultimately unloved. IT'S AS IF THE PARENT CAN'T SEE THE CHILD.**
- We've all known parents who are not involved enough, who deny a child the option of emerging as an individual because he or she feels utterly unworthy and, ultimately, unloved. **IT'S AS IF THE PARENT CAN'T SEE THE CHILD.**
- Notice that: the over-involved parent and the uninvolved parent can have a very similar effect in the life of a child. Rather than nurturing a child to become a confident, self-possessed, and happy adult, either of these parents leave the child wondering who he or she is, and that is not the path to happiness!

- In contrast with many human parents, God sees His children! God SEES US! God SEES US AS GOD CREATED US TO BE!! It's God's wish that we be the individuals he created us to be.
- But we are not created to be individuals in isolation. God creates us for friendship. Let me share with you two of my favorite passages from the Gospel of John.

John 13:34 I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 15:12 “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you.

Our identities are ultimately found in God as we breathe in God's Spirit, as we breathe in a new life, a life in which we know we're loved **AS WE ARE** because we are loved by our Creator, by the ultimately trustworthy parent who will not abandon us to our own devices. And we come to know **WHO** we are as we come to know **WHOSE** we are. And when we come to know Who we are and Whose we are we come to understand true friendship. I am now convinced this is the only path to true maturity and, frankly, to true happiness. Everything else is a sham. I know nobody I consider to be a truly happy and psychologically healthy person who does have and nurture a relationship with a higher power.

- And nothing can separate us from this love of God . . . if we're willing to accept the gift. **Paula D'Arcy and the lady serving time for killing a parent and child in a wreck.** The graphic realization that, despite what we've done and despite what's been done to us, there is that One who loves us without measure, who forgives us, who nourishes us, who calls us into true identity by calling us into Holy Friendship. This young woman, who so tragically killed a parent and a child in an alcohol induced traffic accident, discovered that even that – even that – could not separate her from the love of God.
- What does the Trinity have to do with you and me?

MOMMY, DADDY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? CAN I GO WITH YOU? WHO WILL STAY WITH US?

Listen again to Jesus in the Gospel of John:

John 14: 15¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another [Comforter], to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸"**I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU ORPHANED; I AM COMING TO YOU.** ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

- Sisters and brothers, **THE TRINITY IS OUR TRUE HOME.** The Trinity is the home our deepest selves yearns

for, the Home where we find the Parent who parents us perfectly, who knows us as we are, loves us as we are, yet gives us the power to become the individuals He created us to be, and the power to discover True Friendship.

The Doctrine of the Trinity is God's call to us to come home!