

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

The Most Holy Trinity, June 11, 2017

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on one or more of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. It prepares readers to hear God's Word at Mass and it offers a point of reflection to consider in the days leading to Sunday. Looking to Sunday is written by Father Tom Iwanowski.

LIKE AN OCEAN WAVE

This Sunday, Trinity Sunday, the Church directs our attention to the mystery of our faith that we proclaim in the Creed and that we call to mind each time we make the Sign of the Cross. The mystery that the One God we worship is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Over the centuries, popes, theologians, preachers, religion teachers, homilists, poets, and artists have attempted to give us some insight into that divine mystery.

For example, Saint Patrick famously used the shamrock to help his listeners understand something of the Trinity. Three leaves on one stem. Three persons in one God.

Others have used a triangle with its three equal sides forming one shape, and still others have use the image of three circles intersecting with each other.

But while no image or no theological treatise – no matter how long or scholarly – can ever explain the Trinity, they can give us glimmers of insight into the God who reveals himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

This Sunday's Gospel (John 3:16-18) might lead us to consider another image, imperfect and incomplete as it may be. That image is an ocean wave – a wave that rolls onto a sandy beach and then recedes into the depths of the sea.

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus tells us that out of love God sent his Son into the world so that humanity might be saved and brought to eternal life.

As a wave comes out of the depths of the sea, so God the Father sends the Son from the depths of his love into this world. The Son of God takes on flesh and comes among us, and we see his glory. Just as we see a wave moving across the water, so we see the Son of God moving into this world.

The wave then makes its way onto the shore where it stirs up the sand. So Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God who comes among us, sends forth his holy, life-changing Spirit who stirs up human lives. The Father sends the Son, the Son sends the Spirit – the Triune God comes into this world and into our lives.

Then as a wave recedes into the sea, taking with it what was lying on the shore, so that same dynamic happens as the Holy Trinity interacts with us.

The Spirit that was sent by the Son touches hearts and draws people into a relationship with Christ. As Paul tells us, "no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the holy Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:3)

We come to Jesus and Jesus then brings us into a relationship with the Father. As Jesus tells us, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

When we come to the Father, we enter eternal life. For as Jesus tells us, "Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3)

This image of a dynamic wave moving to the shore and then receding can give us a small insight into the dynamic life of the Holy Trinity. God is not a static being disconnected from creation, but a dynamic, creative community of persons reaching out to us and then drawing us into the ocean of the Trinity's eternal love.

Like that shamrock in the field, an ocean wave can help us to understand a bit more about the God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

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