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For Sunday, May 31, 2015

Father, Brother, and Spirit

This Sunday's Scripture Readings

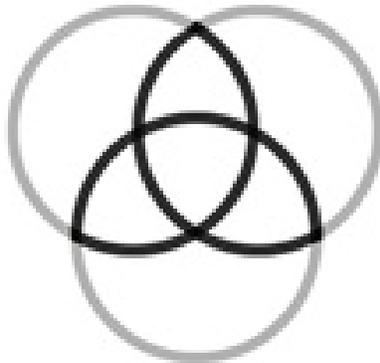
The Most Holy Trinity

<http://new.usccb.org/bible/readings/053115.cfm>

Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40

Romans 8:14-17

Matthew 28:16-20



Are you ready for months and months of presidential candidate news, speeches, and controversies? The next presidential election is over a year away, but already the Internet, television, and print media are filled with information about all those who aspire to be arguably the most powerful person on planet Earth. Unfortunately, too often we only get glimpses into the real person, and even then it is through [the lens of the outlet doing the reporting](#). But regardless of what anyone may think of a particular candidate, each person is a complex human being living a life where one assumes many different roles.

No President of the United States is only a president. Just like you and I, he or she can also be a spouse, a parent, someone's child, a sibling, a cousin, an aunt or uncle, and a friend. One never stops being all of those things simply because one has taken on a very important career. However, how a person relates to others will be dependent on the role one serves in respect to another. President Obama is the president in relation to you and me, and even in that position he plays different roles, such as being Commander in Chief of the United States military. But he is also a husband, and when in the presence of his wife, he needs to relate to her not as the leader of a nation, but as a loving spouse. However, he never stops being the president of the United States. He is also a father. But when he interacts with his daughters, they need to see a parent who cares for them, not a spouse or a president. At the same time he maintains all of these roles, he only relates to certain people with one of those roles being dominant.

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity has always been something hard to wrap the human mind around. We can simply label it as a mystery and not try to comprehend it, or we can attempt to find ways of making sense of it. Sometimes in Eastern Christianity, the image of three burning flames is used to try to explain the triune God. When looking at them from one angle, we see three distinct flames, but from another angle, if we line them up correctly, our eyes can only see

one. Other times I have heard people compare God to how water can be a liquid, solid, or vapor in explaining the Trinity.

I like using the idea of relationship to understand this doctrine. My wife is spouse, mother, and daughter at all times, but for my children, my in-laws, and myself she is something completely different, yet she at all times maintains each role. God interacts with us as Father, Son, and Spirit. At certain times of our life we encounter God in each of these distinct roles, but God never ceases to be all three at once. As humans, we are limited by time and space, therefore we always will remain one person. Yet God is not limited by time and space, so being three persons in one is possible, even if this is too incredible for our limited minds to understand.

In the eighth chapter of St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, he speaks of how God relates to us in all three persons in one sentence: "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God ... and joint heirs with Christ." God is Spirit, Father, and brother all at the same time. As God's creation, we need to relate to God in different ways at different times, but rest assured, God never changes.

Perhaps we have such difficulty understanding this notion, not just because it is a complicated doctrine to start, but we have not adequately reflected on the complexity of human relationships. We sometimes shout in frustration, "I can't be everything to everybody." Rather than embrace the roles we are called to live out, we sometimes want to severely limit those roles. Having a child will hinder our career or leave less time for my spouse and me. My spouse will just have to understand that the children must come first. If I spend time taking care of my aging parent my own children will be shortchanged. I can't take time off from my job just to spend time with a troubled friend.

God has created us and given us so much, including the capacity to love. Love can never be limited to one form or another. It seeks to encounter all things and everyone, each in a unique way. Our God created us in his image, and just as God relates to us on many levels, we relate to others on many levels as well. A complete person, seeking to most clearly reflect God's image in him or her, will work on being the best he or she can in each differing relationship. We should want a president that is a good parent, spouse, child, and friend. We should want to be good at those things as well. This Sunday, let us reflect on how God interacts with us on every level. Then we will find a God that not only loves us in many ways, but a God that shows us how to love others in many ways as well.

Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

PRAYER

Glory be to the Father,
Who by His almighty power and love created me,
making me in the image and likeness of God.

Glory be to the Son,
Who by His Precious Blood delivered me from hell,
and opened for me the gates of heaven.

Glory be to the Holy Spirit,

Who has sanctified me in the sacrament of Baptism,
and continues to sanctify me
by the graces I receive daily from His bounty.

Glory be to the Three adorable Persons of the Holy Trinity,
now and forever.

Amen.

—*Prayer to the Holy Trinity*

NOTICES

2015 DIOCESAN INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONFERENCE (DISC)

The 2015 DISC conference on Wednesday, June 17 to Friday, June 19 will be hosted at the Best Western of Alexandria Inn & Suites & Conference Center in Alexandria, Louisiana. This year's conference features presentations and hands-on training from industry experts and diocesan peers. Breakout sessions are offered in two conference tracks with content tailored to the needs of management and technical staff. To register, visit: <http://conference.discinfo.org/>.

CATHOLIC NEW MEDIA CELEBRATION, Atlanta, June 7, 2015

Join Catholic new media producers, clergy and religious, lay workers, and faithful of all walks of life at the Catholic New Media Celebration in Atlanta, Georgia on June 7, 2015. The CNMC provides opportunities for networking and professional development for diocesan communicators, new media producers, and Catholic laypeople interested in the New Evangelization. For more information and to register, visit <http://sqpn.com/cnmc2015/>.

CRS RESPONDS TO EARTHQUAKE IN NEPAL

As the official overseas relief and development agency of the USCCB and a member of Caritas International and the National Catholic Development Conference, CRS is leading relief efforts for victims of the recent earthquake in Nepal. To donate to CRS' efforts, click [here](#). LPi has also created a bulletin cover to promote these efforts. LPi customers can find the cover by searching Art & Media Portal for keyword "Nepal"; the cover is also available to other parishes via www.4LPi.com.

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