

TRINITY SUNDAY

THE TENTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME

Sun. **The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity**
June 7 **IN GOD IS EVERY KIND OF LOVE**
 From Revelations of Divine Love by St. Julian of Norwich

Mon. **Monday of the Tenth Week in Ordinary Time**
8 **CONFRONTING THE MYSTERY OF DEATH**
 From Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini

Tues. **Tuesday of the Tenth Week in Ordinary Time**
9 **JOY**
 St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Wed. **Wednesday of the Tenth Week in Ordinary Time**
10 **THE DIVINE TRINITY & THE HUMAN TRINITIES**
 A reflection developed from a sermon of St. Bernard

Thurs. **Memorial of St Barnabas**
11 **HOMILY ON FEAST OF ST. BARNABAS**
 Fr. Ken Bartsch OFM

Fri. **Friday of the Tenth Week in Ordinary Time**
12 **Encountering God in the Divine Office**
 Fr. Anthony Delisi OCSO

Sat. **Memorial of St. Anthony of Padua**
13 **PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER**
 Dom Eugene Boylan OCSO

Sunday

IN GOD IS EVERY KIND OF LOVE

A reflection from Revelations of Divine Love by St. Julian of Norwich

“The eleven disciples made their way to Galilee, to the mountain to which he had summoned them. At the sight of him, those who had entertained doubts fell down in homage” (Mt. 28: 16-20). I saw the blessed Trinity working. I saw that there were three attributes: fatherhood, motherhood and Lordship—all in one God.

In the almighty Father we have been sustained and blessed with regard to our created, natural being from before all time. By the skill and wisdom of the Second Person we are sustained, restored, and saved with regard to our sensual nature, for he is our Mother, brother and Savior. In our good Lord, the Holy Spirit, we have, after our life and hardship is over, that reward and rest which surpasses forever any and every thing we can possibly desire, such is the Spirit’s abounding grace and magnificent courtesy. Our life too is threefold. In the first stage we have our being, in the second our growth, and in the third perfection.

The first is nature, the second mercy and the third grace. For the first I realized that the great power of the Trinity is our Father, its deep wisdom our Mother, and its great love our Lord. All this we have by nature and in our created and essential being. Moreover, I saw that the Second Person, who is our Mother with regard to our essential nature, that this same dear Person has become our Mother in the matter of our sensual nature. We are God’s creation twice, in our essential being and in our sensual nature. Our being is that higher part which we have in our Father, God Almighty, and the Second Person of the Trinity is Mother of this basic nature, providing the substance in which we are rooted & grounded. He is our Mother also in mercy, for he took our sensual nature upon himself.

Thus, the phrase “Our Mother” describes the different ways in which he works, ways which are separate in us but held together in him. In our Mother, Christ, we grow and develop; in his mercy he reforms and restores us; through the passion, death and resurrection he has united himself to our being. So does our Mother work in mercy for all the children who respond to him and obey him.

Grace works with mercy too, and especially in two ways, in the work of the Third Person, the Holy Spirit. He works by rewarding and giving. The reward is the generous gift of truth that the Lord makes to the one who has suffered and the gift is the magnanimous gesture he makes freely by his grace. It is perfect and far beyond the deserts of any creature. Let us rest in all these Divine loves.

Monday

CONFRONTING THE MYSTERY OF DEATH

A reflection from Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini

It is in regard to death that the human condition is most shrouded in doubt. Thus said the Second Vatican Council in its Constitution "Joy and Hope" in describing the anxiety and poverty of humanity as it faces the mystery of death. But we are not called to approach this mystery as an abstraction, for it is the cause of painful breaks in our human relationships and in each person's life.

How do you remember the dear ones who have entered into eternal life? Names, persons, faces and kind words are the sort of things that come to mind. They fill us with the memory of days passed in the company of those who are now gone. We recall places animated by their wonderful and loving presence. This is something that great saints too lived with, due to the agony of such separations. Recall how St. Augustine describes what he endured in the death of his mother. "As I closed her eyes an immense sadness pressed heavily upon my heart and became a flood of tears. But what was it that hurt me so terribly within? It was the raw wound caused by the sudden end of our sweet and dear life together. We had grown so accustomed to it."

If even saints can feel such separations so deeply that their hearts break can things be any different for us? How can we fail to feel pain as we relive moments of sorrow and separation? Yet, the saints also show us the way which is opened before us when we confront the mystery of death in faith. It is the way of Christ's own Passover. Christ by his death has destroyed our death and by resurrection has given us the gift of life everlasting. He shows us that death is more than sadness and separation and should be seen as a door into the gladness of resurrection. In Christ our dead live and will live forever. They are with us even now and they live in our presence. We sense they are united with us because of our prayer and faith. They speak to us in Jesus' words and they want to share with us the consolation the Lord offers.

What we, and all the world, most need is what may be called a "culture of holiness". When the Second Vatican Council emphasized the universality of the call to holiness it said something new. We are called to the kind of holiness that can be found in the streets, so to speak. It is a quiet and unacclaimed holiness but a luminous one for all that. It radiates in a quiet fashion the Spirit of life and of hope. It is filled with the faith that this life lasts always and is always an active sharing of life with others. That is what those we remember with love teach us. Love brings life, and holiness of life shows us what life can mean in times of sorrow and times of joy. Our memories of our beloved dead renew the sweetness of this kind of quiet and steady sharing. They are, then, still doing for us what they did when we lived together. Sharing it opens us more and more to the life God calls us to in the Heavenly Kingdom. That is what this day of remembrance works within us, by the gift and grace of the Holy Spirit.

Tuesday

JOY

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Joy is not simply a matter of temperament. In the service of God and souls, it is always hard to be joyful- all the more reason why we should try to acquire it and make it grow in our hearts.

Joy is prayer; joy is strength; joy is love; joy is a net of love in which we catch souls. God loves a cheerful giver. She gives most who gives with joy. If in the work you have difficulties and you accept them with joy, with a big smile- in this like any other thing- they will see your good works and glorify the Father. The best way to show your gratitude is to accept everything with joy. A joyful heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love.

Joy is a need and power for us, even physically. A sister who has cultivated a spirit of joy feels less tired and is always ready to go on doing good. The devil is a carrier of dust and dirt- he uses every chance to throw what he has at us. A joyful heart knows how to protect itself from such dirt: Jesus can only take full possession of our soul only if it surrenders itself joyfully. St. Teresa was worried only about her sisters when she saw any of them losing their joy. God is joy. God is love. A sister filled with joy preaches without preaching. A joyful sister is like the sunshine of God's love, the hope of eternal happiness, the flame of burning love.

In our society, a cheerful disposition is one of the main virtues required for a Missionary of Charity. The spirit in our society is total surrender, loving trust, and cheerfulness. This is why we are expected to accept humiliations readily and with joy; to live the life of poverty with cheerful trust; to imitate the chastity of Mary, the cause of our joy; to offer cheerful obedience from inward joy; to minister to Christ in his distressing disguise as the poor man or woman, and all with cheerful and joyful devotion.

Wednesday

THE DIVINE TRINITY AND THE HUMAN TRINITIES

A reflection developed from a sermon by St. Bernard

The blessed and eternal Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is the highest power, the highest wisdom and the highest loving good will. In creating us it created a vestige of its own Trinitarian character that consists in our memory, reason and will. God thus created us so that if we remain firm in remembering our God, in contemplating the Divine Wisdom and by living in love we shall participate in the very divine life. But since we turned away from God everywhere human kind is wretched.

The created trinity that we are chose to fall by a movement of self-will instead of standing firm in a free choice of God and God's gifts to us. But if I summarize all that follows from our creation and fall and salvation it will be easier for you to remember.

There is the creating Trinity, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, from which has come to us a created trinity of memory, reason and will. And this created trinity has fallen. This fall took place through suggestion, pleasure and consent, as we seen in the story of Adam and Eve. It fell into a kind of anti-trinity: impotence, blindness and dirtiness. Memory, reason and will each have a threefold fall.

Memory falls into thoughts that are affection-driven, laborious, and idle. Reason falls into a triple ignorance: Ignorance of what is good and evil, of what is true and false and of what is beneficial and harmful. Will falls into concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes, and worldly ambition.

When God's Son came and was made human, he showed us, like a good physician, how to recover health. He showed us the triple gift of faith, hope and love. By this trinity he leads us back from the mud hole into which we had fallen. The certainty of faith renews reason, hope renews memory and love cleanses the will. Jesus gave us these teachings in order to restore us to our lost health. To help us believe that this is possible he showed us signs of power and healing. To persuade us that his teachings are indeed useful and healing he promised us blessedness and then showed it to us in his resurrection.

We are given a faith by which we direct our belief to God and that is hope. There is a faith by which we believe God's teachings given us in Christ and by signs God shows us that they can lead us to health. And there is the love that leads us to believe "in" God, in living as humans the life that is revealed to us in Christ. Through this faith we believe that God will fulfill every promise given us. From the first faith comes the hope of pardon, and through the second hope for grace, and from the third the hope of glory.

Through this triune reality of faith, and hope and love, each with three effects, you are restored. Over and guiding and governing them all is the love coming from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. What is our task? It is to begin anew each day to love with this love and so observe watch the transformation of our memories, our reasonings and our choosings. Accept this gift from our living and loving Lord Jesus Christ.

Thursday

HOMILY ON FEAST OF ST. BARNABAS

Fr. Ken Bartsch OFM

Although he was not one of the 12 apostles, the New Testament and the Church honor him as an apostle. We are grateful for him, if for no other reason that he recognized the talent of the brilliant young Saul of Tarsus and led him into the inner circle of the Church. We can say that Barnabas is a John the Baptist to St Paul's Jesus. The Baptist's concluding remark was "He must increase and I must decrease". In the same way, Barnabas took Paul in hand, instructed him in the new way, mentored him on their missionary journey, and then stepped out of the way as Paul took charge of the venture. In the Acts of the Apostles we can see this development in Luke's careful language. The group was led first by Barnabas, and then by Barnabas and Paul, next by Paul and Barnabas, and finally by Paul.

As so often happens between a mentor and a protégé, their relationship was not always easy; it finally ended abruptly. Barnabas disappears from the Acts of the Apostles narrative when he and "John called Mark" – perhaps the same Mark who wrote the Gospel- separate from Paul. For whatever reason Paul did not want to work with Mark. But Mark reappears in Paul's letter to the Colossians; apparently, they were reconciled.

The beauty of the New Testament is that the writers and evangelists make no effort to hide the shortcomings of the disciples of Jesus. They were saints not because they were perfect but because they kept the Word and followed the Spirit. Eventually we realize that if we are open to conversion God will have to do the work in his own time; in the meantime, we are called like Barnabas to work to spread the Gospel in collaboration with the fellow disciples he sends us. Barnabas teaches us the value of that collaboration.

Friday

Encountering God in the Divine Office

Fr. Anthony Delisi OCSO

A fundamental “Flame” to pass on to future generations is the belief that God is looking for you and me. St Benedict in his Rule offers us a valid and authentic way of living the Gospel. It is he who teaches us the value of early rising in imitation of Jesus in order to commune with our Heavenly Father. What do we do when we rise early in the morning for Vigils? We proceed at once to gather as a community for the major work of the monk: the praise of God through the Liturgy of the Hours.

Benedict teaches that the Divine Presence is everywhere and in every single place the eyes of the Lord watch the good and the bad. But he tells us that beyond all doubt this is true when we celebrate the Divine Office. So, we gather in the early hours to encounter the Divine Presence. God is there and we are invited to encounter Him. What does this mean for you and me? Are we willing to call this a value that needs to be passed on to future generations?

Why does Our Father look at us? Because He sees in you and me the continuation of that prayer of His Son, Jesus, who also rose early and went to quiet, lonely places to pray. As monks we are called each day to continue that prayer. What a dignity, what an honor.

St Benedict outlines in detail the psalms that are to be recited or sung at the Divine Office, although he allows for local flexibility. I have heard monks on occasion complain that there is not enough of Jesus in the Liturgy of the Hours. My answer is that the psalms are a part of what makes a Cistercian monk. The psalms are the prayer book of the church inherited from the synagogue. If one feels that the psalms are not Christocentric, then I suggest he ponder the commentaries on the psalms by St Augustine, St Jerome and St Athanasius.

The psalms were an integral part of the prayer of Jesus and of every practicing Jew. We find the psalms on the lips of Jesus as he was dying on the cross. So, in the way that the psalms are the prayer of Jesus, so the psalms are the songs of the monk and a great part of who he is.

Saturday

PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER

Dom Eugene Boylan OCSO

Let each of us renew our hope and intention of persevering in prayer. First, we must resolve with determination, never under any circumstances to give up our attempts to progress in prayer. Let us take up prayer as we would take up the whole of the spiritual life, as a quest for Jesus, a striving for close union with Jesus. Let us meditate as long as is necessary-during spiritual reading if needs be- but let us proceed to talk to Our Lord in our own words as soon as we can and as often as we can. Let us not be afraid to talk to God without words whenever we can, and so all the time we are coming nearer to Jesus. Let us throughout the day make frequent aspirations to Jesus; they should not be long; they need not be verbal; a sigh or a smile of the heart is sufficient. Let us seek Jesus in all things; let us unite ourselves to Jesus by doing what pleases him: by doing the will of God. This is the way to lay hold of Jesus. When the time comes, when we feel Jesus near, let us make full use of it; But we must not be so attached to the sensible presence of Jesus as to refuse to let him go when the Master decides it is expedient for the soul that he should deprive it of his sensible presence and send another Comforter.

If all power of prayer seems to be lost, if the time of prayer becomes a period of distraction and aridity, let us not lose courage, nor change our resolution. Our prayer then is made by submitting to the will of God as completely and generously as we can. Let us not be afraid to make use of any expedient to help us fight distractions. Many get great help by using a book, but this must not be done in such a way as to turn prayer into spiritual reading; one must stop frequently and turn one's heart to God, and listen to what he has to say to us. Perseverance under this heavy trial has a great reward, and touches the heart of God. Our chief aim must be humility. The kingdom of God is already within us, but we make it our own by poverty of spirit. This is our title to union with God and it is the first principle of the spiritual life that Jesus taught in public.

We must never therefore, trust in ourselves alone and never cease to trust Jesus absolutely; God became man to save sinners, to give life to those who are dead in sin, to give strength to the weak and weary, and to give himself to the humble, to the poor in spirit. Let us submit to him in obedient humility and loving confidence so that we can say with Mary "be it done to me according to your word". It is then that we shall be filled with Christ.