

# **TRINITY SUNDAY**

## **THE NINTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME**

- .....
- Sun.      **The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity**  
May 30   **IN GOD IS EVERY KIND OF LOVE**  
            From Revelations of Divine Love by St. Julian of Norwich
- Mon.      **The Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary**  
31         **AT THE CENTER OF GOD’S PLAN FOR REDEMPTION**  
            Reflections developed from texts of Carlo Cardinal Martini
- Tues.     **The Memorial of St. Justin the Martyr**  
June 1   **Christ Touches the Heart of those who Seek Him**  
            From a “Dialogue with Trypho” by St. Justin the Martyr
- Wed.      **A Day for Remembering our Dead**  
2         **CONFRONTING THE MYSTERY OF DEATH**  
            From Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini
- Thurs     **Memorial of St. Charles Lwanga and Companions**  
3         **HOMILY AT CANONIZATION OF UGANDAN MARTYRS**  
            Pope St Paul VI
- MONASTIC DESERT DAY**
- Fri.      **Friday the Ninth Week of Ordinary Time**  
4         **WISDOM IN DEALING WITH GOD’S GIFTS**  
            A reflection taken from a sermon by St. Bernard
- Sat.      **Memorial of St Boniface**  
5         **HELPING EACH OTHER KEEP FAITH**  
            A reflection developed from a Letter of St. Boniface to  
            Pope Zachary

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

## **AT THE CENTER OF GOD'S PLAN FOR REDEMPTION**

### **Reflections developed from texts in Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini**

At the center of God's redemptive plan, we find a woman, Mary. She is the first in the human chain of believers from which the Church is born. As Mother of the Church, she is our mother and a model for all believers. We see what this means in the stories of the Annunciation and of her Visitation to Elizabeth. We repeat her "Fiat" and her Magnificat, and so we hear our call in hearing hers.

When Adam and Eve fell their first reaction was fear. But St. Paul tells us that we are now free from fear: "*Before the world was made, God chose us in Christ, to be holy and spotless and to live through love in his presence*" (Eph. 1:4). We see this in Mary, who hoped in God in a way that cast out all fear. We have been predestined as was Mary and so we can be freed from fear if we believe as she did. She makes us proud to be human persons and she shows us our life and mission, as they are in faith. We have only to imitate her in saying "*I am the servant of the Lord*". As the Lord's servant Mary goes to Elizabeth in love.

The Magnificat is the joyous hymn Mary proclaims at her encounter with Elizabeth. Feeling herself welcomed by her kinswoman, and welcomed in faith, she feels herself understood in the secrete of her maternity through the Holy Spirit. So she breaks into a song of joy, exulting in God's saving works through human history and in her. God's Plan is being accomplished through her and she invites us to allow that to happen through us—through our actions mirroring her deed in coming to Elizabeth in loving help.

In the canticle we see that the joy in Mary's heart depends on the achievement of the plan of salvation that is the coming of God in human form. "*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my savior*". She speaks as an individual person immersed in God's creation of saving history and shows us her own and our destiny in and through that history. She speaks individually but ends the song with a reference to all God's People. "*God has come to the help of Israel, his servant, mindful of his mercy.*" We are Israel exactly because we have chosen to be God's servants.

Mary has become the servant of God's People in serving its destiny. That is what we too are called to become. That is what makes the Magnificat a prophesy of the coming of the Church. Mary aims at the perfect completion of God's Plan in the realization of the Kingdom of God and invites us to imitate her. We do this whenever we step forward to help another to fulfill her or his part in God's plan. That is what she was doing by helping Elizabeth fulfill her role as John the Baptist's mother. If we knew the part that each person, we lovingly help is to play in realizing this Plan we would see how our loving and living parallels Mary's. We do know it in faith and collaborate in working for peace, to put aside resentments and realize God's mercy? When we renew faith that God works through us, we join Mary in the Magnificat. We are doing it now in intention. Let's do it all day long.

*Tuesday*

## **Christ Touches the Heart of those who Seek Him** **From a “Dialogue with Trypho” by St. Justin the Martyr**

One day as I was walking along the beach, a respectable looking old man seemed to be following me. I stopped and stared at him and he asked me if I knew him. He explained he was worried about some missing members of his household and was looking for them. He then asked me what brought me to the beach. I answered: “I take great delight in such walks; I converse with myself. Places like this are most suitable for philosophy.” He asked: “As a philosopher are you a lover of deeds and of truth? Do you strive to be a practical person?” I replied, “Could one do a better deed than to prove that reason rules all and that becoming a person ruled by reason one is sustained and can despise all the errors of others, and so be sure to do nothing unreasonable or displeasing to God.” Interrupting, he asked: “Does philosophy, then, produce happiness?” “Absolutely”, I replied, “and it alone does so.”

“How”, he mused, “can a philosopher speculate or speak truly about God when they have no knowledge of God, since they have never seen nor heard him?” “But the Deity”, sir, cannot be seen by the same eyes as other living beings, I answered. God is to be perceived by the mind alone, as Plato affirms, and I agree with him”.

“Does our mind”, he asked, “possess such and so great a power, or doesn’t it perceive that which exists through the senses? Is the human mind capable of seeing God, if not aided by the Holy Spirit?” “I do concede”, I said, “that souls can perceive that there is a good and that justice and piety are praiseworthy. If philosophers do not know these truths, what teacher or method should one follow?” “A long time ago”, he replied, “before the time of the philosophers, there lived blessed persons who were just and lovers of God and they spoke through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We call them “the prophets” and they alone knew the truth and communicated it to mortals. They exalted God, creator of all, and made known Christ, God’s Son, who was sent by God. Ask God to open to you the gates of light, for the human mind cannot perceive or understand these truths unless it has been enlightened by God and his Christ.”

After saying this, and much more, he went away, advising me to meditate on what he had told me. My spirit was immediately set on fire about the prophets and those who are friends of Christ. Pondering on their words, I became convinced that this was the only sure and useful philosophy. Thus, it is that I am now a philosopher for Christ and it is my wish that everyone would be of the same mind as I and never turn away from our Savior’s words. Rather I seek to share them whenever I can.

Wednesday

## **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

*Thursday*

## **HOMILY AT CANONIZATION OF UGANDAN MARTYRS Pope St Paul VI**

These African martyrs add to the register of the victorious, which the martyrology is, a tragic and magnificent page, truly worthy of being added to those marvelous ones of ancient Africa, which we moderns, people of little faith, thought would never again have a worthy continuation. Who could have supposed for instance that to the most moving story of the shining martyrs, of the Carthaginian martyrs, of the martyrs of the “Massa candida” of Utica of which St Augustine and Prudentius wrote, of the Egyptian martyrs, of whom we preserve the elegy by St John Chrysostom, of the martyrs of the Vandal persecutions, there would be added new stories no less heroic, no less splendid, in our own times?

Who could have foreseen that to the great historical figures of the holy African martyrs and confessors, such as Cyprian, Felicity and Perpetua and the great Augustine, we would one day have associated the names of Charles Lwanga and Mattia Mulumba Kalemba, along with their twenty companions? Nor indeed, do we forget the others who, belonging to the Anglican confession, confronted death in the name of Christ.

These African martyrs open a new epoch; oh! We don't wish to think of persecutions and religious quarrels but of Christian and civil regeneration. Africa, bathed with the blood of these Ugandan martyrs the first of a new era (may it please God that they may be the last, so great and precious their holocaust has been), rises again free and redeemed.

The tragedy which devoured them is so unheard of and expressive as to offer representative elements sufficient for the moral formation of a new people, for the foundation of a new spiritual tradition, to symbolize and to promote the passage from a primitive civilization, not lacking in magnificent human values, but infected and weak and almost a slave of itself, to a civilization open to the superior expressions of the spirit and to superior forms of social life.

Charles Lwanga and his companions intercede for Africa. Intercede for us all.

Friday

## **WISDOM IN DEALING WITH GOD'S GIFTS**

**A reflection taken from a sermon by St. Bernard**

There are things having to do with Christ that are unknown or not understood by us. Take his divine generation from the Father. Isaiah says, "*Who shall declare his generation?*" But there are also things that are known, such as Christ's divine works. The same is true of the Holy Spirit. How the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son is not known or how the Spirit is co-equal and coeternal with them. That the Spirit teaches us and works within us by grace is known.

The work of the Spirit has two dimensions. The Spirit works within us for our own sake and works with us as well for our neighbors' sake. The first work is well-known but we cannot know the second. Yet we seem to know something about the Spirit's work as it is, both within us and within our neighbor. The Spirit works compunction in us and so burns away sin. The Spirit works devotion by anointing and our healing spiritual wounds. The Spirit creates understanding, as though nourishing and encouraging and strengthening us and others as with a spiritual food. The Spirit causes these gifts to increase in many ways, especially by pouring love into hearts. This makes us feel as high as drinking much wine. All these gifts are for the sake of those who receive them but the Spirit also gives gifts like wisdom, knowledge and counsel for the benefit of others. St. Paul notes that to one wisdom is given through the Spirit, and to another knowledge, and adds that the wisdom and knowledge are given on account of others as much as for our own benefit.

This requires that we be careful. We must beware of trying to share with others gifts given us for our own sake and we must not keep for ourselves gifts given for the sake of our neighbor. If we reserve for self what is meant for others we fail in charity. St. John says, "*Wisdom that is hidden and treasure that is not seen, what benefit is there in either of these?*" So if you make known God's gifts to yourself then you lose humility. As St. Paul says, "*What have you got that you didn't receive?*" Now to make progress in the spiritual life we must lose neither charity nor humility. We must first strive to be made more perfect by the gifts given us for our own benefit—such as compunction and like virtues and pray that wisdom and knowledge increase through them. Then we have compunction and humility and charity.

*Saturday*

## **HELPING EACH OTHER KEEP FAITH**

### **A reflection developed from a Letter of St. Boniface to Pope Zachary**

When Pope Gregory II, of revered memory, consecrated me bishop and sent me to preach the word of faith to the Germans, he bound me by oath to support by word and deed all bishops and priests who were canonically elected and of blameless life. By divine grace I have tried to do this. However, false priests and hypocrites misleading people I was either to convert to the way of salvation or to reject and so refrain from associating with them. This I have in part accomplished. Yet in part I have not been able to avoid them. In spirit I have kept my oath because I have not agreed with them nor taken part in their counsels but, literally speaking, I couldn't avoid contact with them. When I went to the Frankish court on urgent church matters, I found such persons there and I would rather not have met them but could do not otherwise if the business were to be taken care of.

Situated in the territories of the peoples to whom I have preached I have found a wooded place, in the midst of a wilderness, where I have gathered a community of monks living under the rule of St. Benedict and had a monastery built. These monks live an ascetic life, abstain from meat, from wine and spirits, keep no servants but are content with the work of their own hands. Among such a community it is easy to keep my oath. The Spirit dwells among such people.

I acquired this place through the help of pious and God-fearing people, especially Carloman, formerly King of the Franks. I have dedicated it to our Holy Savior. With your permission I will retire there to rest my worn and ancient body for a little while, and be buried there when I have died. As long as I live, I will serve, with your support, the poor people who dwell in that region and to whom, as all know, I have preached the Word of God. I ask that you sustain me by your prayers and help me to continue my close relationship with you and remain in your service among the German people to whom I was sent.

I seek to live by the Scripture which reads, "Hear the judgment of your father, O my children, and so act that you may be saved. He that gives glory to a father shall have length of days. In deed and word, honor your father that a blessing may come to you, for the blessings of fathers establish the houses of their children". God is our father and Christ is our brother and the Spirit they send us keeps us faithful. May it always be so among those who have received God's Word.