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Cycle C
Trinity Sunday
Proverbs 8:22-31
Romans 5:1-5
John 16: 12-15

Good morning. Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Trinity. Again, every year we do the something. The Trinity, to define it, is one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God the Father is not greater than God the Son, God the Son is not greater than the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not greater than God the Father. They are three equal in majesty, in glory, in power, and yet one God in three Persons. Again, the way Saint Ignatius of Loyola described, its as hitting three keys on the piano at the same time- one sound, three different keys, but one sound. Or, many, many different ways. Saint Patrick used the shamrock, and there have been different things throughout the history of the Church to explain it. But ultimately, it's a mystery. By us trying to even define the Trinity, it's beyond any definition. God is much bigger than anything that we could ever do. And sometimes, we try to take God and contain Him and say this is who God is. But we always got to know that God is always MORE.

But what we can say about God is that God, by definition, is always love. The religious (we only have two religious among us today, the two sisters) take three vows, poverty, chastity and obedience. And these three vows traditionally are caught up into worship of the Trinity, or devotion to the Trinity. The vow of poverty focuses on God the Father, and trusting of God the Father. The vow of chastity focuses on following Jesus, who lived a chaste life. And the vow of obedience focuses devotion to the Holy Spirit, who we are all called to listen to. So what we need to do, of course, is to take those three things, if you will, that traditionally religious order people take (I didn't have to take those three vows, poverty, chastity and obedience. I never had to take poverty, I have to live it, you know.) But the reality is that the three vows we're all called to enter into. And by living these vows in our own life, we show our devotion to the Trinity, by first of all learning to trust the Father in all that we do. By following the example of the Son, Jesus Christ. And by always listening to the Spirit of God in our life. We take the devotion to the God of love and Trinity and we bring Him into our daily life by the way we live and we make devotion to the Trinity very practical.

Let's look at those three things. First the vow of poverty. Every one of us has a poverty of spirit. Meaning that you can't even take your next breath without God saying OK. Now, the devil tries to get into our lives and say, hey, you're in control of life. You're not in control of squat, and the faster you know that the holier on the road to holiness you'll be. You and I can't

even take our next breath. If God wanted to this very moment a plane could be going overhead going to the airport and all of a sudden, boom. It could crash here in the middle of us and kill us all that fast. You can't sit there and say, "Hey, I'm in control of my life." No, you're not. I was once talking with someone who believed in scientology. Scientologists believe you're in control of your destiny. And I'm talking to this person, we're going back and forth, and she's arguing with me that we're in control of everything. And I say if I take a gun and point it next to your brain and I pull the trigger, as much as you think you're not going to die, sweetheart, you're going to be dead. It's that simple. You and I are NOT in control of reality. We try to think we are, but we're not.

Original sin was when Adam and Eve and the devil said to them, "you will be like God." No, you won't. You won't. God is God, and we are his creatures. We are dependent. And so the first thing I've got to do is realize my own poverty. And then, in that poverty, take it and turn it into a great virtue. My Father, I trust in you. To trust in God the Father, to trust Him in all things. And when you say the Our Father today, you say what? "Give us this day our daily bread." That knowing even though I work, even though I might have a lot of money in the bank, it could all be taken away from me today. That I know that I need to trust. So that poverty of spirit is realizing who we belong to and realizing the reality that I am a poor person. I didn't ask to come into the world, and I won't ask to leave it. I am one who is dependent upon God. So the first thing is living a life of poverty.

And the second thing is to live a life of chastity. Chastity is not just called to live a life like us. Here I am, 41 years old and living a celibate life style. And the sisters – how long as it been Sister? Fifty-one years! Ohhh. Fifty-one years being a religious and being chaste all those years. But Father, I have ten kids, how am I called to live a chaste life? Chastity is the core of love. It means loving people for who they are, and not trying to claim them for your own. We need to do that with our children. We need to do that with our spouses. We need to do that with our parents. Chastity is living a life of love and loving people for not what they do for you, or not how they increase your name, or not how they give you pride, but loving them because they are creatures of God. And not wanting to embrace them and say "you're mine." It goes back to that first thing of poverty. Nothing is mine. It's all God's. And to live that kind of chaste life means I live a life of love and that I will love you no matter what you do for me. I will love you no matter how. And that's the way Christ lived. He gave us an example of how to live that chaste life. A chaste life is a life of love, and that is the best way we enter into the Community of Love. We enter into that Community of love - God the Father has always loved the Son, God the Son has always loved the Father, and their love is so real it's the Holy Spirit. And when we're caught up in love we're caught up into the mystery of the Trinity. We make the Trinity on earth. We incarnate, if you will, the Trinity into our daily lives, into our work and into our families by living lives of chastity. Not sexual chastity in itself, because 99% of you are not called to that, but living love chastely. Loving for who they are, not for what they give you or what they do for you.

And finally, we get caught up into the Trinity through devotion to the Holy Spirit and the vow, if you will, which we talked about last week, which was – obedience. To have an obedient heart. And an obedient heart comes down to a listening heart. A heart that listens to God. Real Christianity does not begin, I believe, until we can look at God and say, "Whatever You want I

will do. Tell me what You want of me.” Because most people, even those who go to weekly Mass, some people even go to daily Mass, are still living live their way. You know, you go to Mass because you don’t want to go to hell someday, or you want God’s blessings in your life, or you want God to be nice to you. So what happens is we try to control God, if you will. Say OK God, here I am and I’ll do all this stuff now jump through my hoop and give me what I want. It’s still about me.

Christianity happens, truly, when we look at God and say, “God, it’s not about me anymore. It’s about You. What do you want me to do? Your will be done.” And then we have that listening heart. The only way to embrace and be embraced by the Trinity, the only way to truly come to know God in reality is by having a heart that’s listening. And that has to happen in the classroom of silence. You and I need to be people who everyday spend time in silence. And in that silence we confront God, He confronts us, we confront ourselves. We come to know the love of God. We come to experience Him. And then, slowly in our lives, we can come to listen to Him. You know, the problem, again, so often, I believe, is that people always talk in God’s name, including me sometimes. They do things because this is what God wants. And yet, if I ask them how much time do you spend in silence every day? Oh, none. **THEN DON’T SPEAK IN GOD’S NAME IF YOU’RE NOT LISTENING TO HIM.** You and I cannot listen to God without daily silence. Don’t ever proclaim to be a prophet if you’re not silent. Don’t ever proclaim to use any of God’s charismatic gifts if you’re not silent because you’re not listening. It’s a farce. It’s a lie. Unless you and I are spending quality time in silence every day, God cannot teach us, we will live Christianity in our way, we’ll live our version of Christianity instead of being who God calls me to be and listening and doing what HE wants me to do.

So today, we’re called to get caught up into the mystery of the Trinity. And the place we do that is in silence. And so the first thing I have to ask you today is do you have quality time in silence every day? At least five minutes of silence. At least five minutes of silence, of not talking, of listening to God and saying, “God, what do you want me to do?” And then to try to develop into our own lives those three vows, traditionally in the Church, poverty, chastity and obedience. Living a life in trust of God. And if you and I are in silence every day and knowing His love and being embraced by Him and learning to trust Him. And living a life of chastity – the only way I can live a chaste life is to know that I am loved so that then I don’t have to go around getting people to fill my needs. I can go around and fill other people’s needs, because God himself will fulfill mine, living a chaste life. And living a life of obedience, where I learn to listen to God in my daily life. Where I say, “God, it doesn’t matter what I want. It only matters what You want, and I’ll live my life for You in your will today.”

You got it? Get it? Good. May each of you know His love, today and forever. Amen!!!