

## **Homily Holy Trinity Sunday - SFC, 2008**

Most Rev. Jose H. Gomez  
Archbishop of San Antonio

My sisters and brothers in Christ,

In the Opening prayer of today's Mass we ask, God the Father to 'help us to worship you, one God in three Persons, by proclaiming and living our faith in you'

The Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of our Christian Faith and our Christian life: The mystery of God's own inner life; the mystery of divine love.

We believe in one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in Unity: we distinguish among the Persons, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, but do not divide the Substance: "We do not confess three Gods, but one God in three Persons, the 'consubstantial Trinity'. The divine Persons do not share the one divinity among themselves but each of them is God whole and entire" (CCC 253).

God who is all powerful, uncreated, eternal, Creator of heaven and earth. At the same time, God who is kind and merciful.

Today's first reading is from the Book of Exodus. As God comes to Moses, he reveals himself as a God of mercy and kindness. God not only freed the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt, he continued to forgive them for their sins, iniquities, and infidelities. "The Lord, the LORD, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity"

In the Second reading from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Letter to the Corinthians St. Paul reminds us that God is also a God of love and peace. As Catholics we are to follow the example of love, peace, and unity which is revealed in the Trinity. St. Paul calls us to live in harmony

with the essence of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit: “Brothers and Sisters, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace and the God of love and peace will be with you”

In the passage of the Gospel from St. John’s Gospel, Jesus teaches Nicodemus about the magnitude of God’s love. The depth of the Father’s love lies within the presence of the Son. So **great** is the Father’s love that he sent the Son to save the world. By knowing Jesus, we can come to know God the Father.

Today’s Solemnity is a call for all of us to be more aware of the Presence of God in our lives: God of mercy and kindness, God of love and peace. God who’s love for us is manifested in the interaction for the Holy Trinity in our lives.

I wanted to share with you today, three different aspects of this great mystery, that came to my attention this past week.

First, the fact that it is a mystery; it is not something that we can understand rationally. We know it from Revelation. I had a Confirmation at one of our Parishes this past week and I asked the candidates about the Blessed Trinity. Do we believe in one God or three gods, I asked them. After a little hesitation they gave me the right answer. We believe in one God and Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

My next question, as you can imagine, was, How do you explain that? Yes, it is a mystery. There is nothing similar in creation. The Trinity really talks to us about the ‘inner life of God’. But, it was difficult for them and, for me, to come up with a ‘human explanation’ of the mystery of the Trinity.

The Compendium of the Catechism responds to the question talking about the relations among the Three persons of the Trinity:

“They are really distinct from each other by reason of the relations which place them in correspondence to each other. The Father generates the Son; the Son is generated by the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son” (n. 48).

It is a difficult mystery to understand and to talk about but it is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. A mystery that ‘was revealed by Jesus Christ and it is the source of all the other mysteries’” Compendium n. 45).

The second point that I wanted to share it’s a beautiful explanation of the mystery by the Papal preacher, Fr. Cantalamesa, that can help us understand the mystery better. He says that “Christians believe that God is triune because they believe that God is love! If God is love, then he must love someone. There is no such thing as love of nothing, a love that is not directed at anyone. So we ask: Who is it that God loves so that he is defined as love? ... God is love in himself, before time, because there is eternally in him a Son, the Word, whom he loves from an infinite love which is the Holy Spirit”

Today, as we contemplate the love of God in the mystery of the Trinity, let’s ask for the grace of imitating God’s love in our lives. In the words of the same Fr. Cantalamesa: “The Trinity reveals the secret to good relationships. Love, in its different forms, is what makes relationships beautiful, free and gratifying. Here we see how important it is that God be seen primarily as love and not as power: love gives, power dominates”

Finally a taught from Pope Benedict XVI that can help us to remember the central mystery of our faith every day: The sign of the cross. “In its original meaning the sign of the Cross was, each time it was made, a renewal of our baptism, a repetition of the words by which we became Christians ... Water was poured over us and, at the same time, the words were spoken: ‘I baptize you in

the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” The Church makes us Christian by calling on the name of the Trinitarian God .. (to be) a Christian really means ... believing that (God) is Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (Benedict XVI, Magnificat, 5/18/08).

So, every time that we make the sign of the Cross, we must give glory to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, admiring the magnificence of God and feeling God’s love for us.

“By the grace of Baptism ‘in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’, we are called to share in the life of the Blessed Trinity, here on earth in the obscurity of faith, and after death in eternal light” CCC, 265.

“God –the Father, Son and Holy Spirit- dwells in our soul in grace not only with a presence of immensity, as He is to be found in everything, but in a special way through sanctifying grace.... It is there, in the central depths of the soul, that we must accustom ourselves to seeking God in every one of life’s situations...” In Conversation with God, 6.40.1)

Let’s try to do everything possible to be more in the presence of God and to avoid those things that are an obstacle for that presence of God. We know that the only real obstacle is sin. Therefore we have to identify those things that are sinful in our life to get rid of them, whatever it is: pride, sensuality, laziness, etc.

There is a beautiful prayer of St. Elisabeth of the Trinity: “O my God, Trinity whom I adore ... Grant my soul peace. Make it your heaven, your beloved dwelling and the place of your rest. May I never abandon you there, but may I be there, whole and entire, completely vigilant in my faith, entirely adoring, and wholly giver over to your creative action” CCC, 260.

The marvelous reality of God who wants to be with us, God who gives us peace because He is a wonderful Father who loves us more than all the mothers of the world can love their children. From today's Gospel: "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him".

May Mary, our Blessed Mother, Daughter of God the Father, Mother of God the Son, Spouse of God the Holy Spirit, help us once again during this month of May, the month of Mary, to be more aware of God's loving presence in our daily life. Amen.