

Angelus Address on Trinity Sunday

Address given by Pope Francis before praying the Angelus on the feast of the Most Holy Trinity. “Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace,” the Holy Father said, citing Saint Paul.

06/12/2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

The biblical Readings this Sunday, feast of the Most Holy Trinity, help us

to enter the mystery of God's identity. The Second Letter presents the words of greeting that Saint Paul addresses to the community of Corinth: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 *Corinthians* 13:13). This—let's say—"blessing" of the Apostle is the fruit of his personal experience of God's love, that love that the Risen Christ revealed to him, which transformed his life and "drove" him to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. From this experience of grace, Paul was able to exhort the Christians with these words: "Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace" (v. 11). The Christian community, despite all its human limitations, can become a reflection of the communion of the Trinity, of God's goodness and beauty. However this—as Paul himself attests—passes necessarily

through the experience of God's mercy, of His forgiveness.

It is what happened to the Jews on the way of the exodus. When the people broke the Covenant, God appeared to Moses in the cloud to renew that pact, proclaiming His Name and its meaning. He says thus: "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (*Exodus 34:6*). This Name expresses that God is not far away and closed in Himself, but He is Life that wills to communicate itself, He is openness, He is Love that rescues man from infidelity. God is "merciful," "compassionate," and "rich in grace" because He offers Himself to us to fill our limitations and our failings, to forgive our errors, to bring us back to the way of justice and of truth. This revelation of God reached its fulfilment in the New Testament, thanks to the work

of Christ and His mission of salvation. Jesus manifested to us the face of God, One in essence and Triune in Persons; God is altogether and only Love, in a subsistent relationship that creates, redeems and sanctifies all: Father and Son and Holy Spirit.

And today's Gospel "puts" Nicodemus "in the scene," who, although occupying an important post in the religious and civil community of the time, never stopped seeking God. He did not think: "I've arrived," he did not cease to seek God; and now he perceived the echo of his voice in Jesus. In the dialogue at night with the Nazarene, Nicodemus finally understands he has *already* been sought and awaited by God, has been personally loved by Him. God always seeks us first, waits for us first, loves us first. He is like the flower of the almond tree; so says the Prophet: "It flowers first" (Cf. *Jeremiah* 1:11-12).

In fact, that is how Jesus speaks to him: “God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (*John 3:16*). What is this eternal life? It is the unbounded and free love of the Father that Jesus gave on the cross, offering His life for our salvation. And, with the action of the Holy Spirit, this love has radiated a new light on earth and in every human heart that receives it—a light that reveals the dark corners, the hardness that impedes bearing the good fruits of charity and of mercy.

May the Virgin Mary help us to enter ever more, with all our being, in the Trinitarian Communion, to live and witness the love that gives meaning to our existence.

[translation by Zenit]

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