

# Read



Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9

Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

John 3:16-18

## LIVING THE WORD

# Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

June 7, 2020



## REFLECTION

People sometimes attempt to portray God as an angry, vengeful being. Today's Gospel, however, clearly shows a God who is nothing but love. God loves the world so much that God gives the world God's only Son so that all may live and have life.

- ✧ God does not want to punish. Rather, God loves.
- ✧ God does not demand sacrifice. Rather, God loves.
- ✧ God does not force people to believe in him or worship him.
- ✧ God like some sort of tyrant. Rather, God loves.
- ✧ God loves and loves and loves.

People might also try to claim that God's love is reserved only for those whom God specifically chooses. Again, this passage reminds us that God does not love any particular country or ethnicity, and God does not love people who are good any more than God loves people who choose to turn away from God. John makes this quite clear: God loves the world.

Too often we are the ones who create these false images of God. We are the ones who build the divisions and distinctions that God does not. We must each recommit ourselves to the true image of God and work to dispel any images or ideas of God that are not love.



## ACTION

God's intimate love is revealed through relationship, as is celebrated in today's solemnity. How does relationship allow you to more fully experience the living, loving God? Take time today to thank God for the relationships in your life that reveal God's love to you. Then, thank each of those people for sharing God's love with you through their friendship.

*"Love God, serve God:  
everything is in that."*



— St. Clare of Assisi

## ? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ How can you work to create a relationship-centered life in a culture that seems to promote isolation and individualism?
- ❖ What role do you play in the relational love of the Trinity?



# Introduction to **ORDINARY TIME** during Spring and Summer



## **The Season**

The Gospel accounts in Ordinary Time during the spring and summer draw us deeply into the life of God and the life of the Christian disciple. Ordinary Time resumes following the fifty-day season of Easter Time, with the Solemnities of the Most Holy Trinity and the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*). These pivotal Sundays focus our attention on the inner life of God as we can perceive it, and the impact this life is to have on our lives. With the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, we are reminded that God's way is the way of self-giving love. Reflecting on these mysteries is a fitting way to transition into Ordinary Time, in which we explore the demands of discipleship and the impact a life of discipleship is to have on us and on all whom we touch.

In these weeks of Ordinary Time, we hear familiar stories of people who encounter Christ, and we are asked to consider how the people we meet may encounter Christ through us. This is an eternal story of the ongoing life of the Church, and a story that is very personal for each of us. Our regular reflection on the Sunday Gospel accounts helps us remember that our call is not a once-and-done but rather always-and-everywhere invitation to live as Christ's people. Our reflections each week encourage us to consider the circumstances of our lives, the lives of people whom we know and those whom we do not, and how Christ's love, forgiveness, mercy, and compassion will have a lasting impact on us all. These reflections help us remember that while Ordinary Time is time that is counted, it is never ordinary, since the life of the disciple is anything but that!

## **Celebrating Ordinary Time during Spring and Summer with Teens**

The weeks following Easter are often filled with special moments in the lives of teenagers: dances and social gatherings; graduations and plans for life beyond junior high or high school; awards recognition and the close of spring athletic teams; summer plans. Giving Sunday Mass and the Gospel the priority they deserve may be a challenge for some of your teens in this time of the year. Be aware of the many things vying for their attention, and encourage them to prioritize their time well. Acknowledge your youth's presence at Mass and your gatherings as a sign of their commitment to Christ.

## **Preparing the Liturgical Environment**

The green of Ordinary Time returns with this season and mirrors the green and new life of spring. Include in your prayer environment various shades of green, along with the Lectionary or *Book of the Gospels*, open to the Gospel for Sunday. Consider establishing an environment that has elements that the teens may take with them as you conclude your sessions for the summer, such as small flowers, personal crucifixes, or holy cards.



June 7, 2020

# SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

## LECTIONARY #164A

Exodus 34:4b–6, 8–9

Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55

2 Corinthians 13:11–13

John 3:16–18

## Prepare for the Word

*The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.*

### Leader's Context

Father, Son and Holy Spirit—the Blessed Trinity exists in the individual personhood of these three unified in the holy Triune God. The three form the one Godhead, unified in all they do, and unified in love. John's Gospel illustrates the mission, love and unity of the Father and the Son in today's reading.

**Q FOCUS:** *Three persons in One God, our God exists in relationship and love.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

After finding the date on the liturgical calendar, show the students that next Sunday is the Body and Blood of Christ. Note that St. Norbert was remembered this past Saturday. This eleventh century saint was someone who experienced deep conversion and committed his life to living out the Gospel after experiencing God in prayer and self-examination.

### Church Teaching Connection

“For if we continue to love one another and to join in praising the most holy Trinity—all of us who are children of God and form one family in Christ (see Hebrews 3:6)—we will be faithful to the deepest vocation of the church and will share in a foretaste of the liturgy of perfect glory” (*Lumen gentium*, 51).

## Hear the Word

*Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.*

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

### Gospel

John 3:16–18

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

*All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.*

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

In the Gospel reading today we hear verses from the third chapter of John's account of the Gospel. John, which was the last canonical Gospel written, has a very high Christology, which means that it focuses on the divinity of Christ. In these opening verses, this high Christology can be clearly perceived by the reader. John tells us who Jesus is—he unambiguously identifies Jesus as God's only son, given by God into the world and for the world. This mission was one of salvation, not condemnation. Clearly, Jesus was sent out of the love and care of our Father, and out of that love, Jesus made his mission on earth. John makes very clear that the world was in need of a savior and that God's son Jesus Christ brought salvation.

However, today is Trinity Sunday, and a question arises in the choice of reading—why focus on a Scripture passage that is mostly about identifying and explaining the person of Jesus, who is only one member of the Trinity? Despite not mentioning the Holy Spirit, this reading clearly illustrates personhood existing in unity. The Church teaches that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three persons in one God, and that these three persons exist in the unity of the Blessed Trinity.

This Gospel reading is a beautiful example of the Father and the Son existing together, and how these two persons work together for the good of humankind. While the Holy Spirit isn't mentioned in these verses, we know that he too exists in union with the Father and the Son. In this reading we see that God gave his son for us, a reality that means salvation for us. Jesus, however, was in unity with the Father. He was not sent here complaining about

God's mission for him, nor did he refuse his mission on earth. Jesus took on the mission, coming willingly to Earth, and completing his salvific mission. Jesus and God are shown to be existing in unity with one another by their action in Jesus' mission—they are illustrated as individual persons who each carry out their role in salvation, God as the giver and sender, Christ as the one willingly sent.

To further explain the identity of the Trinity, it is important to understand what we believe about the Trinity. In the Creed we say that the Father and the Son are consubstantial. This word means that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are made of the same essence or substance, sort of like how water, ice and steam are the same physical material. The three are one God. The Father is not more divine than the Son and the Spirit because he is the Creator, and the Son and Spirit are not less divine because they are not the Creator. Likewise, the Son isn't more divine than the Father or Spirit because of his role in the salvation of the human race.

In full unity we see the Father, Son and Holy Spirit existing together. May we live in peace in our relationships with the example of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

### Wrapping It Up

*Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 210.*

**What questions do you have about the Trinity? How has your understanding of the Trinity changed as you mature?**

**What does the Trinity teach us about human relationships? How do we look to God for help with our friendships and family relationships?**

**How does God bring us into the unity of the Trinity?**

## Act on the Word

### Charity and the Trinity

*Type or insert direction text here.*

St. Augustine stated, “If you see charity you see the Trinity.” Certainly we are called to act in charity to feed the hungry, and shelter the homeless. Caring for the poor and the marginalized in our communities is a very basic part of living out Christ’s mission in our own lives. Acts of charity in our families and in our school relationships are also part of living out our faith. Choose to serve your community in a way that benefits the poor or the marginalized, and decide how you will serve your family and school community this week.

### The Blessed Trinity Portrayed in Art

*Type or insert direction text here.*

Observe artwork and visual depictions that feature the Trinity, and include modern infographic type material. How is the Trinity depicted? Are they near one another? Is their consubstantial nature illustrated? Do the members of the Trinity interact with each other in the depiction?

### Closing Prayer

O Most Holy Trinity,  
one God, yet three Persons,  
you are the mystery in which we live.  
Teach us to be faithful witnesses to you,  
proclaiming the Good News in many ways  
throughout our day.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the  
Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

### For Next Sunday

*To help teens prepare for next Sunday’s Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.*