

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



News You Can Use...from Fr. Steve

Pentecost, Holy Trinity, Body and Blood of Christ... what do they all have in common?

The Feast of Pentecost completes the Liturgical season of Easter. This great feast is then followed by two other significant solemnities: the Holy Trinity and the Body and Blood of Christ. We have just finished celebrating these three feasts before returning to Ordinary Sundays of the year. But before we leave Pentecost, Trinity and Body and Blood, I want to offer one reflection that represents their significant interdependence and majesty for our Catholic Faith. As you know, Catholic Christianity is one of the three great Monotheistic faiths in the World: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. These three Faith Traditions share many things: they are all Abrahamic in origin; they accept divine revelation coming through sacred written "Scriptures;" they believe that there is One God [meaning of monotheism] who watches over the human race, cares for us, and offers us a place in heaven, and that human beings in response to God's goodness and love must live their lives with some moral code that gives glory to God and offers human beings the possibility to live in peace and community.

Of course, there are significant differences – apparently enough that for most of the past 2000 years, these differences have manifested themselves in serious misunderstandings and have erupted into strife, suspicion and war among these religious factions. But I want to point out three dramatic differences in Catholic Revelation that is unique to Catholicism and stands out poignantly among these other faith traditions, which are life-giving for Catholics and represents the core beliefs of our faith.

Perhaps it is good to start at the beginning: Our God is a TRINITY: a loving community of persons. How else can we understand that God is love, if God is not a community of persons? What sense would it make to say God is love and understand God as a single all powerful monad, living a singular existence, alone? Creation for a Trinitarian God is a natural consequence of love spilling over, in new life, as it does in any loving family. Also, because God is a Trinity, no one individual, no matter how holy, could possibly represent God, because God is a community of Persons. To try to witness to God's presence and love, we need to dedicate ourselves to becoming a truer community of people and nations. Furthermore, the difficult doctrine of personal salvation is simplified if you understand God as Trinitarian love. Salvation is God's invitation to us to join His own intimate love-life, His Trinitarian love life that has existed from the beginning and will continue infinitely. Neither Judaism nor Islam has an understanding of God as a Trinity of Persons.

The BODY AND BLOOD – The invitation to become part of God's love-life comes through, with, and in Jesus. This invitation is not something we can earn or merit by any action on our part. It is a pure gift of God's love which is made manifest and incarnate in Jesus and brought to the highest visible and salvific intensity in His gift of Himself to the father for us, on the cross. This is how we understand the Body and Blood of Christ. Christ's Body and Blood, given for us,

This Week at St. AJ

Saturday, June 12

9:00AM Mass *Pro-Life Liturgy and Vigil*
NO 4:00PM Confessions for Summer – By Request or Appointment
NO 5:30PM Vigil Mass for Summer – Resumes Saturday, Sept. 4

The Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, June 13

10:00AM Mass *Intentions of Parishioners and Benefactors of St. AJ*
No Catholic Forum in June – Resumes in July in Newman Center
11:30AM Mass *Safe Traveling this Summer for St. AJ Community*
5:00PM Mass *The Intentions of all Graduates of area Universities*
NO 10:00PM Mass for Summer – Resumes Sunday, September 5

Monday, June 14

NO 7:30 AM Mass for Summer – Resumes Tuesday, September 7
12:05PM: Mass *In Thanksgiving to St. Anthony*

Wednesday, June 16

12:05PM: Mass *Gail Carney*
12:30PM to 2:00PM Church is open today. Please ring Rectory bell.

Saturday, June 19

9:00AM Mass *Holy Souls in Purgatory*

once and for all, on the Cross, is made available through all time under that sacrament's signs of Bread and Wine. Through table fellowship with Christ at the altar, we have access to Trinitarian love and salvation.

PENTECOST. The coming of the Holy Spirit means "indwelling." Jesus Christ, the second person of the Blessed Trinity in His human, incarnate presence dwelled AMONG us, so that we could see His Glory. Jesus Christ in His Spirit Presence, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity dwells WITHIN us. So that same spirit who guided Jesus through His life, who anointed Him as God's beloved, is the same spirit given to us as our helper and guide, who through his indwelling means that it is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me. This indwelling spirit wants to raise us also from the dead as He did Jesus, the first born Son.



Playboy or Jesus

Sometimes we can learn a great deal about Jesus and Christianity from people we would least expect. In this case Hugh Hefner, founder of "Playboy Magazine" and icon of the sex for pleasure culture. Consider this quote from an interview where Hugh proclaimed: *If Jesus Christ were here today and had to choose between being on the staff of one of the joy-killing, pleasure-denying churches, he would, of course, immediately join us.*

This statement cries out for a response, but oh, where to begin? First of all, since Mr. Hefner is wondering what Jesus would do if He were alive today, he obviously has missed the most important fact in human history – that Jesus is risen and is, in fact, "alive" today. Secondly, it is therefore no surprise that Hugh Hefner knows nothing at all about Jesus, who is not concerned at all about getting all you can get, but with giving all you can give. Poor Hugh knows only the pleasure principle which is literally only skin deep and nothing about the treasure principle, which is the source of the soul's deepest joy and ecstasy.

And thirdly, if I were faced with only the either/or choice of being a member of a joy-killing, pleasure denying church or the "Playboy" culture, I would surely choose playboy too. Who wants to be part of a joy-killing, pleasure denying church, which, of course, could not really be a church of Jesus Christ anyway. Joy-killing and pleasure denying would constitute the "anti-church." So there would really only be one choice.

Lord, forgive the wrong I have done. Psalm 32