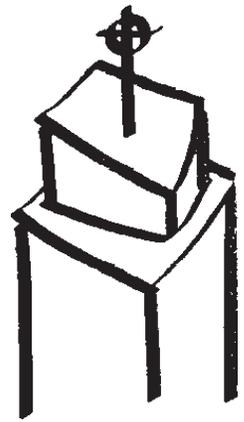


# OUR FAMILY



# NEWS

For Oblates of St. Bede Abbey, Peru, Illinois



Summer, 2017



## THE SOLEMNITY OF THE HOLY TRINITY

On the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity, we celebrate the Church's understanding of who God is: three unique, equal, divine persons in one God. Our celebration is not just a celebration of a doctrine of the Church, but even more so a celebration of the Church's lived faith experience, a faith experience that the Church has attempted to put into words. We need to turn to the witness of the scriptures for a fuller understanding of this experience and for the ability to share this experience of God in our own lives.

Although a specific teaching of the Trinity does not appear in the scriptures, we do find many places where Trinitarian formulae are used, particularly in the New Testament, and where the biblical experience of God is rich that it cannot be expressed in a simple monadic notion, that is, in a concept of God who is a single all-powerful person.

We can begin to see this threefold pattern in the first reading of the Mass for the solemnity this year, Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9, one of the passages in which God reveals himself to Moses. In making himself known to the prophet, God appears in his essential being, then goes out of himself, so to speak, in self-communication, and then, further, creates in Moses' heart the response to his communication.

The New Testament witness in the Mass readings is, as would be expected, more explicit. At the very end of his second letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul uses a Trinitarian formula: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you." The important thing to notice is that Paul does not give his readers a dogmatic statement *about* God; rather, he offers them what is a reflection of the experience that the early Church had *of* God. The order itself reflects Christian experience: it is because of the *grace* of Christ that we know the *love* of God, which leads to our *fellowship* in the redeemed community which the Spirit makes possible.

The passage from the Gospel according to John reveals that our salvation originates in the love of God for a disobedient world, made manifest in God's gift of his very Son to and for that world. Elsewhere in his Gospel, John speaks of the gift of eternal life as the gift of the Spirit. In his reflection on the visit of Nicodemus to Jesus (Jn 3:16-21), John does not provide a complete description of how our redemption is accomplished, but simply ponders the mystery of grace by which law and judgment have been replaced by gospel and forgiveness—by new life.

The doctrine of the Trinity is a summary of our faith in the God of Jesus Christ. Christ is the visible icon of the invisible God, making the mystery of God tangible to us. An early Christian hymn from the opening of St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians (1:3-14) expresses this beautifully. It is, in fact, a trinitarian account of God's plan, ending with the giving of the Holy Spirit. The Church's doctrine is but an effort on her part to express the richness of God, in no way exhaustively,

but on the basis of what we have experienced in the economy of salvation, of what we have experienced of Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

Since the truth and love, the self-communication, of the triune God are a given of our faith, it is incumbent upon us believers to maintain a “posture” of welcome, so that whatever, whenever, and through whomever God chooses to continue to be revealed, we shall be listening and ready to become involved in the dialogue. Without the continued experience of Father, Son, and Spirit in salvation history, in our lives, humankind will be incapable of conceiving the mystery of the Trinity. And the Church’s doctrine will become disconnected, nothing more than a dead-lettered, philosophical definition of God. On the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity, we are privileged, not merely in commemorating a doctrine, but in celebrating and entering into a communion of Persons who have loved us into being, redeemed us from ourselves, and continue to call us each day to a fuller experience, a deeper lived knowledge, of themselves.

— Fr. Patrick Fennell, O.S.B.



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We welcome your submissions to this publication, either instructive or reflective, whether prose or poetry. They should in some way relate to the **Rule of Benedict**, Benedictine spirituality, and/or the oblate program. The editor reserves the rights to choose material for publication and to edit as necessary.

God our Father, who by sending into the world  
the Word of truth and the Spirit of sanctification  
made known to the human race your wondrous mystery,  
grant us, we pray, that in professing the true faith,  
we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory  
and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty.  
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.

## UPCOMING EVENT

The annual oblate picnic is set for

**Sunday, July 16,  
from 12:00 Noon to 3:00 P.M.,**

in the shelter across from the academy.

Please bring a dish to pass and your own  
table service and beverage.

Feel free to bring a lawn chair, a deck of  
cards, or anything else that you think  
might be enjoyable for yourself  
or for the group.



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## Abbey Prayer Schedule

Visitors are welcome to join the monks for Mass and for the hours of the Divine Office. Conventual Mass is celebrated on the first level of the abbey church, the hours of the Divine Office on the second level. During the school year, the monks' schedule is as follows.

5:45 A.M. Morning Prayer\*  
7:45 A.M. Conventual Mass\*\*  
12:00 Noon Midday Prayer  
5:30 P.M. Evening Prayer\*\*\*  
\* on Sunday, 7:00 A.M.  
\*\* on Sunday, 10:00 A.M.  
\*\*\* on Saturday & Sunday, 5:00 P.M.

