

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 28:16-20

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

A REFLECTION BY POPE FRANCIS

Today, the Sunday after Pentecost, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, a celebration for contemplating and lauding the mystery of the God of Jesus Christ, who is one in the communion of three Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. To celebrate with ever new wonder God-Love, who freely offers us his life and asks us to spread it throughout the world.

Today's Bible readings help us understand that God wishes to show us not so much that he exists but rather that he is the 'God with us', close to us, who loves us, who walks with us, is interested in our personal life story and takes care of each one, beginning with the least and the neediest. He "is God in heaven above" but also "on the earth beneath" (cf. Dt 4:39). Therefore, we do not believe in a distant entity, no! In an indifferent entity, no! But, on the contrary, in the Love who created the universe and who engendered a people, became flesh, died and rose for us and, as the Holy Spirit, transforms and leads everything to fulfilment.

Saint Paul (cf. Rom 8:14-17), who experienced first hand this transformation brought about by God-Love, tells us of God's desire to be called Father, indeed, 'Dad' — God is 'Our Father' —, with the total confidence of a child who abandons himself in the arms of the one who gave him life. Acting in us — the

Apostle again recalls — the Holy Spirit ensures that Jesus Christ is not reduced to a character of the past, no, but that we feel he is near, our contemporary, and feel the joy of being children loved by God. Lastly, in the Gospel, the Risen Lord promises to remain with us forever. And thanks precisely to his presence and to the power of his Spirit we can serenely carry out the mission that he entrusts to us. What is the mission? To proclaim to all and witness to his Gospel and thereby expand our communion with him and the joy that comes from it. God, walking with us, fills us with joy and in a way, joy is a Christian's first language.

Thus, the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity leads us to contemplate the mystery of God who unceasingly creates, redeems and sanctifies, always with love and through love, and enables every creature that welcomes him to reflect a ray of his beauty, goodness and truth. He has always chosen to walk with mankind and forms a people who may be a blessing for all nations and for each person, excluding none. A Christian is not an isolated person; he or she belongs to a people: this people that God forms. One cannot be Christian without this membership and communion. We are a people: the People of God. May the Virgin Mary help us to joyfully fulfil the mission of witnessing to the world, thirsty for love, that the meaning of life is precisely the infinite love, the tangible love of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In the reading, when the disciples saw Jesus, some fell down before him and some hesitated. How do you think you would react to Jesus standing before you? Why?
- Jesus referred to God as, "Father" and "Dad". How do you see God?
- Do you feel comfortable referring to God as "Father"? Why or why not?

PRAYER

*Spend some time in prayer
with one another*

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/ describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. "Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray")
3. Move to prayers of thanks and praise to God.
4. Pray for each others' prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps reciting the 'Glory Be' or similar prayer.