

(John 14:15-21)

There is much that could be said about today's gospel, but I would like to focus on what Jesus' words teach us about the nature of God, as a Blessed Trinity of Persons. 'The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself.'⁽¹⁾ In Jesus' farewell discourse however, from which today's gospel comes, 'the highest point of the revelation of the Trinity is reached.'⁽²⁾ Jesus' penetrating description reveals the intimate nature of the relations enjoyed by the three Divine Persons.

'It is a characteristic of the text of John that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are clearly called Persons, the first distinct from the second and the third, and each of them from one another...and at the same time, throughout the farewell discourse, he reveals the bonds which unite the Father, the Son and the Paraclete to one another.'⁽³⁾

The intimacy shared by the Blessed Trinity is such that each Person indwells the other two, 'Because of that unity the Father is wholly in the Son and wholly in the Holy Spirit; the Son is wholly in the Father and wholly in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is wholly in the Father and wholly in the Son.'⁽⁴⁾

For this reason, St. Paul teaches: "the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For... no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God." (1 Cor 2:10-11) For this reason also Jesus declares: "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father," (Jn 14:9-10) and: "No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." (Matthew 11:27)

'Christ's whole earthly life – his words and deeds, his silences and sufferings, indeed his manner of being and speaking – is Revelation of the Father.'⁽⁵⁾ In his Person, Jesus is both the revealer and the revelation of God. In the Divine plan of salvation, Jesus reveals the face of God, and is also our, 'advocate with the Father... the atoning sacrifice for our sins.' (1 John 2: 1-2) He is the first Advocate,

‘being the first bearer and giver of the Good News,’⁽⁶⁾ but he is not the last, for, ‘The Holy Spirit comes after him and because of him, in order to continue in the world, through the Church, the work of the Good News of salvation.’⁽⁷⁾

Jesus’ promise of another advocate, who will be with us forever, reveals a further dimension of the Godhead: ‘the Father sends the Holy Spirit in the power of his Fatherhood, as he has sent the Son; but at the same time he sends him in the power of the Redemption accomplished by Christ—and in this sense Holy Spirit is sent also by the Son: "I will send him to you."’⁽⁸⁾

What bearing, we might ask, does the inner life of the Trinity have on us?

Today’s gospel reveals that, in a mysterious way, the life of the Trinity is the beating heart of discipleship, ‘After Jesus,’ return to the Father, the Holy Spirit made room in men’s hearts for the transfigured Lord. Now he is in us and we in him—again in the Holy Spirit. Through grace we participate in Christ’s loving relationship with the Father. Through Christ we know the Father and are known by him; we are containers and reflectors of his light and truth.’⁽⁹⁾ Through a life of discipleship we come to know God and to be known by God “this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (John 17:3)

I am reminded here, of the parable of the ten bridesmaids, five of whom were wise and five were foolish. The five foolish bridesmaids, being slothful, ran out of oil. Then leaving, in search of more oil, they missed the bridegroom’s arrival, and were punished by being excluded from the wedding feast. In this parable, we are represented by the bridesmaids, and the measure of oil in our lamp, is the measure of how closely we follow the Will of Christ “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” (Jn 14:15) If we keep the Lord’s commandments, our flasks will be full of oil, and our lamps will burn brightly. If we fail to keep his commandments, our flasks will run dry, our lamps will fade, and eventually our light will be extinguished. We will either join the wedding feast, or hear

the bridegroom's fearful words: "Truly I tell you, I do not know you." (Matthew 25:12) Only those who have followed his commandments truly come to know Jesus, and be known by him.

The relationship between the disciple and Jesus should mirror the relationship between Jesus and the Father. Jesus said: "I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (Jn 6:38 ;15:10) As the Son revealed the fullness of his love by freely submitting to the Father's Will, so too the disciple reveals the fullness of their love in freely submitting to the Will of the Saviour. By freely submitting to his Will, the disciple becomes open to the indwelling presence of Christ who, 'From there (within)... founds the new existence of the believer; from there he penetrates, saturates, renews him; directing his deeds and his destiny.'⁽¹⁰⁾

And the end to which all of this energy is directed is nothing less than our own transfiguration '... the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God. Might become, "partakers of the divine nature,""⁽¹¹⁾ We are God's work of art, (Eph 2:10,) moulded like clay, into the image and likeness of Christ. (Rom 8:29) And, for this infinite blessing we offer praise and thanksgiving. Amen.

Notes:

- (1) Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 234
- (2) J.P.II, Dominum et Vivificantum, No.9
- (3) J.P.II, Dominum et vivificantum, No.8
- (4) Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 234
- (5) Catechism of the Catholic, No. 516
- (6) J.P.II, Dominum et vivificantum, No.3
- (7) J.P.II, Dominum et vivificantum, No.3
- (8) J.P.II, Dominum et Vivificantum, No.8; CCC: 244
- (9) Romano Guardini, The Lord, 1954, loc.592-593
- (10) Romano Guardini, The Lord, 1954, loc.589
- (11) Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 460