



Stained glass in the Church of Tervuren, Belgium, depicting the Holy Trinity

Today's Gospel reading tells us of Jesus' revealing himself to the disciples in Galilee after his resurrection. Normally in the appearance stories, there is an element of non-recognition which alerts us to the message that Jesus is now different from how the disciples remembered him.

In some ways, this passage functions as a summary of the main themes in Matthew's account: Jesus is the risen Lord, whom the disciples approach in an attitude of worship as they "fell down before him"; Jesus has been presented as the teacher, and now commissions his disciples to carry on his teaching mission; the Son of Man has been given all authority, like the figure in the book of Daniel; the Gentiles, "all the nations", are to be baptised, something very important to Matthew's mainly Jewish-Christian community; the Emmanuel theme, revealed to Joseph in the Infancy Narrative, returns with Jesus' declaration that "I am with you". The disciples also are no longer referred to as being "of little faith"; they are now entrusted with carrying on the work of Jesus, helped by his presence, which is Matthew's equivalent of the Holy Spirit. Thus the First Gospel, as it is commonly known, ends on a high note, with the Gospel reaching out to the ends of the earth. ■

REFLECT

The Easter season came to an end on the feast of Pentecost. Today we celebrate the feast of the Most Trinity, one God in three equal persons. Many preachers and catechists take comfort in the story concerning St Augustine, which tells of the great theologian walking along the beach, wrestling with the problem of how to understand the mystery of the Trinity. He came upon a little child, who had dug a hole in the sand and was going to and from the sea, filling a bucket and emptying the contents into the cavity. "What are you doing?" asked the

scholar. "I'm going to empty the sea into this hole," replied the child. Augustine smiled and said, "You'll never manage to do that!" to which the other retorted, "I'll empty the sea into this hole before you manage to understand the Holy Trinity!" Out of the mouth of babes...?

The discussions on the relationship of the persons of the Trinity began after the New Testament was completed. It may seem like avoiding difficult questions to say that, in the end, we have to admit that it is a mystery. However, mystery, in this sense, is not a puzzle that we cannot

SAY

Holy! Holy! Holy!
God in three persons,
blessed Trinity!
 (Reginald Heber – adapted)

DO

Make the Sign of the Cross slowly: pronounce carefully the names of the persons of the Trinity.

LEARN

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) was a bishop in North Africa and has been a great influence on Christian thought in the Western Church.

He was baptised by St Ambrose in Milan in the year 387.

A mystery is a truth of our faith that we can explore, but never fully understand.



The statue of Augustine of Hippo on the Charles Bridge in Prague

work out: it is, rather, something so deep that we will never fully comprehend it, but that is no excuse for not trying as best we can to understand what it means.

The doctrines of our faith do not simply tell us something about God: they tell us something about ourselves as well. In the Trinity, we celebrate God: Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. These are all aspects of God's love for the world and ourselves, something we will never fully comprehend – at least not in this life. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Blest be God the Father,
and the Only Begotten Son of God,
and also the Holy Spirit,
for he has shown us his merciful love.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

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,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.
Moses said to the people: "Put this question
to the ages that are past, that went before
you, from the time God created man on
earth: Was there ever a word so majestic,
from one end of heaven to the other? Was
anything ever heard? Did ever a people hear
the voice of the living God speaking from
the heart of the fire, as you heard it, and
remain alive? Has any god ventured to take to
himself one nation from the midst of another
by ordeals, signs, wonders, war with mighty
hand and outstretched arm, by fearsome
terrors – all this that the Lord your God did
for you before your eyes in Egypt?"

"Understand this today, therefore, and
take it to heart: The Lord is God indeed, in
heaven above as on earth beneath, he and
no other. Keep his laws and commandments
as I give them to you today, so that you and
your children may prosper and live long in
the land that the Lord your God gives you for
ever."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 32

Response:

Happy the people the Lord has chosen as his
own.

1. The word of the Lord is faithful
and all his works to be trusted.
The Lord loves justice and right
and fills the earth with his love. (R.)
2. By his word the heavens were made,
by the breath of his mouth all the stars.
He spoke; and they came to be.
He commanded; they sprang into being.
(R.)
3. The Lord looks on those who revere him,
on those who hope in his love,
to rescue their souls from death,
to keep them alive in famine. (R.)
4. Our soul is waiting for the Lord.
the Lord is our help and our shield.
may your love be upon us, O Lord,
as we place all our hope in you. (R.)

SECOND READING Romans 8:14-17

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Romans.

Everyone moved by the Spirit is a son of
God. The spirit you received is not the spirit
of slaves bringing fear into your lives again;
it is the spirit of sons, and it makes us cry out,
"Abba, Father!" The Spirit himself and our
spirit bear united witness that we are children
of God. And if we are children we are heirs
as well: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ,
sharing his sufferings so as to share his glory.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to
the Holy Spirit,
the God who is, who was, and who is to
come.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 28:16-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
(all bow during the next three lines)
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Sanctify by the invocation of your name,
we pray, O Lord our God,
this oblation of our service,
and by it make of us an eternal offering to you.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Since you are children of God,
God has sent into your hearts the Spirit of
his Son,
the Spirit who cries out: Abba, Father.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May receiving this Sacrament, O Lord
our God,
bring us health of body and soul,
as we confess your eternal holy Trinity and
undivided Unity.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Behold O kind and most sweet Jesus, I
cast myself upon my knees in your sight
while with deep affection and grief of soul
I mentally contemplate your five most
precious wounds, having before my eyes the
words that David the prophet spoke about
you, most sweet Jesus: "They have pierced
my hands and feet, and I can count everyone
of my bones."

*Traditional prayer before a crucifix to be said
after Communion.*

