

May 30, 2021
Most Holy Trinity
Matthew 28:16-20

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

Background:

Matthew devotes only twenty verses (chapter 28) to the resurrection. It would be worth reading the chapter in its entirety, but here is a summary of the events as they are recorded by Matthew.

Both Mary and Mary Magdalene went to the tomb as dawn arrived on the first day of the week. They witnessed an earthquake and an angel rolling back the stone from the cave. The angel instructed them to go to the disciples and tell them, "He has been raised from the dead, and he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him." (Matthew 28:7) The two Marys left the tomb fearful yet overjoyed and ran to the disciples. On their way they encountered Jesus himself who told them, "Do not be afraid, go tell my brothers to go to Galilee and there they will see me." (Matthew 28:10) They were frightened but ran to tell the disciples. Soldiers who had been guarding the tomb told the high priests what had happened. The chief priests and the leaders met and decided to bribe the soldiers to say that Jesus' disciples had come in the night and carried off the body. The soldiers took the money and did as they were told. The people of Judea still tell this story. The remainder of the chapter is the text for this Sunday's gospel.

The gospel text for today demonstrates that the two Marys were faithful to what they were commissioned to do: go tell the disciples. Despite being caught up in the two emotions of joy and fear, they acted. The opening of the text reminds the reader that the disciples were also faithful to what was asked of them. They were instructed to go to Galilee to meet Jesus. They too were caught between two emotions: doubt and worship. But they were still commissioned "to make disciples of all the nations," to baptize, and to teach. (Matthew 28:19-20) Jesus' earlier instructions to the disciples not to enter a pagan or Samaritan area have now been set aside. (Matthew 10:5) They were to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It was not until the end of the first century that the Christian community baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but Trinity was implied even when it was not explicitly stated.

The fact that we will gather to celebrate this feast is evidence that the disciples were also faithful to the commissioning they received from Jesus in today's gospel. They were faithful, just as all those who came after them have been faithful in passing on their relationship with God. Because of this faithfulness passed on by generation after generation, we continue to gather as a Church to celebrate our relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Reflection Questions:

1. How do you experience God as Father, God as Son, and God as Holy Spirit in your personal life?
2. How do you understand your relationship to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit?
3. When you enter into times of personal prayer, do you find you pray to one person of the Trinity more often, or even exclusively? Has that changed over the years?
4. When the disciples saw Jesus, they worshiped and they doubted. Do you find that there are times when you worship and yet doubt in your relationship to God?
5. What significance do you find for yourself that the earliest disciples both worshiped and doubted?

6. Jesus' command is that we are to make disciples of people of every nation, to baptize, and to teach everything that Jesus taught. How are you responding to what you have been asked here?
7. Can you take some time to talk with God about how you are feeling as you listen to this gospel, and as you celebrate the feast of The Trinity?

The gospel background and reflection questions are written by Fr. Paul Gallagher, OFM. They are edited by Sister Anne Marie Lom, OSF and Joe Thiel. The excerpts from the Sunday readings are prepared by Joe Thiel. To be added to the distribution list, send your name and email address to annemarie.lom@gmail.com

Our Gospel Reflections are hosted by the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity. Their homepage is <https://fscclalledtobe.org/>. One link there is labeled Franciscan Gospel Reflections. A click on the icon will take you to the Gospel reflections for the upcoming Sunday. By following this link, you will be able to blog or comment on the reflection questions. The material will be posted on Fridays and will be available until the following Friday when the new material is posted.

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, second typical edition © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. Used with permission. All rights reserved. No portion of this text may be reproduced by any means without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

Please include this information when printing or forwarding.

From Joe:

Friends,

Here are the gospel background and reflection questions for May 30th (the Feast of the Trinity), as prepared by Franciscan spiritual director Fr. Paul Gallagher. The Gospel is from Matthew, for the first time in the first six months of this year B of the liturgical calendar, (when the gospels are typically from Mark). Fittingly following the close of the Easter season, this reading is the last five verses of Matthew's gospel. In his last words to his disciples, Jesus tells them to "Make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them all that I have commanded. I am with you always, until the end of the age." The other readings also refer to the wonders of our God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the first reading from Deuteronomy, Moses asks the people, "Did anything so great ever happen before? Fix in your heart that the Lord is God. Keep his commandments that you may have long life on the land which your God is giving you forever." Psalm 33 proclaims, "The eyes of the Lord are upon those who hope for His kindness, to deliver them from death and preserve them." The second reading, from the letter to the Romans, says, "Those led by the Spirit are sons of God. You received a Spirit of adoption, through whom we are children of God, joint heirs with Christ."

Excerpts from the Readings for May 30, 2021, The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

Moses said to the people: "Ask now of the days of old, before your time, ever since God created man upon the earth; ask from one end of the sky to the other: Did anything so great ever happen before? Was it ever heard of? Did a people ever hear the voice of God speaking from the midst of fire, as you did, and live? Or did any god venture to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by testings, by signs and wonders, by war, with strong hand and outstretched arm, and by great terrors, all of which the Lord, your God, did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? This is why you must now know, and fix in your heart, that the Lord is God in the heavens above and on earth below, and that there is no other. You must keep his statutes and commandments that I

enjoin on you today, that you and your children after you may prosper, and that you may have long life on the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you forever."

Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own. Upright is the word of the Lord, and all his works are trustworthy. He loves justice and right; of the kindness of the Lord the earth is full. By the word of the Lord the heavens were made; by the breath of his mouth all their host. For he spoke, and it was made; he commanded, and it stood forth. See, the eyes of the Lord are upon those who fear him, upon those who hope for his kindness, to deliver them from death and preserve them in spite of famine. Our soul waits for the Lord, who is our help and our shield. May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us who have put our hope in you.

Brothers and sisters: Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a Spirit of adoption, through whom we cry, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they all saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

Excerpts from Deuteronomy 4:32-40; Psalm 33:4-9, 18-22; Romans 8:14-17; and Matthew 28:16-20