

HOMILY FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY  
TRINITY

Sunday, 26 May 2024

Fr. Jim Fredericks

Part One: the readings for the day

Part Two: reflection on the readings

Part Three: guidelines for *lectio divina*

PART ONE: READINGS FOR THE DAY

Lectionary: 165

Reading 1 Dt 4:32-34, 39-40

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."

Responsorial Psalm Ps 33:4-5, 6, 9, 18-19, 20, 22

R. 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.

R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.  
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.

R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.  
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.

R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.  
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.

R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.

Reading 2 Rom 8:14-17

Brothers and sisters:

For 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.

Alleluia Rv 1:8

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

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

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Mt 28:16-20

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."

PART TWO: HOMILY ON THE READINGS

[Note to reader: this homily was written originally in Spanish and translated into English].

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity.

The ancient teaching of the Church is that the Mystery of God transcends the ability of the human mind to comprehend. In my personal experience, this is certainly true.

God is three persons, and yet only one God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

One plus One plus One is... One, not three.

This cannot be understood with the logic of the mind.

But let us understand the Church's ancient teaching correctly.

To say that God is incomprehensible does not mean that God has hidden himself from us. It does not mean that God has withdrawn into a darkness which is not accessible to us.

The incomprehensibility of God is something that has been revealed. It is a gift that God has given to us. It is something that, now, we possess. It is a revelation that God

has bestowed on us. The Mystery of the infinitely incomprehensible God has been given to us so that we might treasure it in our hearts.

God is incomprehensible. And this incomprehensibility of God is very beautiful.

The beauty of God's incomprehensibility is simply this: The Mystery of God cannot be held in our hand like something we can control. It is too great to be contained in our minds. Only the human heart is broad and deep enough to hold this incomprehensible Mystery as its treasure.

Now, we must pass this great gift on to our children. We must help our children to see that the incomprehensible God of Christian faith is not something hidden from us. Rather, it is a gift that God has revealed to us so that our hearts might possess this treasure.

Why should we teach this to our children?

We must teach it to them because the incomprehensibility of God strengthens us in our faith. We must teach our children to place their faith and their trust in the God that transcends our ability to understand.

We must teach the incomprehensibility of God to our children because, in their lives here in this world, our children will be assaulted by cruelties and challenged by difficulties. Our children will struggle with injustice, with loss and with sorrow.

And our children, like ourselves, will be tempted to give up in despair. Like ourselves, our children will be tempted to say that God has abandoned us.

And when this happens, I pray that our children will remember that there is an incomprehensible Mystery that dwells in our hearts. This Mystery has been given to us as a gift.

And this Mystery will never abandon us.

Here is the Good News of our faith: we cannot explain why God is faithful to his people. We cannot comprehend the infinite mercy of God.

Listen again to the words of Moses as he preached to the Hebrew 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?

Yes, tell the children to ask, "from one end of the sky to the other," did ever a people hear the incomprehensible voice of God speaking to us in our hardship and despair?

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Hoy celebramos la Solemnidad de la Santísima Trinidad.

La antigua enseñanza de la Iglesia es que el Misterio de Dios trasciende la capacidad de comprensión de la mente humana. En mi experiencia personal, esto es cierto.

Dios es tres personas y, sin embargo, un solo Dios: el Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo.

Uno más Uno más Uno es... Uno, no tres.

Esto no se puede entender con la lógica de la mente.

Pero que comprendamos correctamente la antigua enseñanza de la Iglesia.

Decir que Dios es incomprensible no significa que Dios se haya escondido de nosotros. No significa que Dios se haya retirado a una oscuridad a la que no podemos acceder.

La incomprensibilidad de Dios es una revelación. Es un regalo que Dios nos ha dado. Es algo que, ahora, poseemos. Es una revelación que Dios nos ha otorgado. El

Misterio de Dios infinitamente incomprensible nos ha sido dado para que lo atesoremos en nuestro corazón.

Dios es incomprensible. Y esta incomprensibilidad de Dios es una cosa muy hermosa.

La belleza de la incomprensibilidad de Dios es simplemente lo siguiente:

El Misterio de Dios no puede retenerse en nuestra mente. Es demasiado grande para contenerlo en nuestras mentes. Sólo el corazón humano es lo suficientemente profundo y ancho como albergar como tesoro este Misterio incomprensible.

Ahora debemos enseñarles esto a nuestros hijos. Debemos transmitir este gran regalo a nuestros hijos. Debemos ayudar a nuestros hijos a ver que el Dios incomprensible de la fe cristiana no es algo que se nos oculta. Más bien, es un don que Dios nos ha revelado para que nuestro corazón posea este tesoro.

¿Por qué deberíamos enseñar esto a nuestros hijos?

Debemos enseñárselo porque la incomprensibilidad de Dios nos fortalece en nuestra fe. Debemos enseñar a nuestros hijos a poner su fe y su confianza en el Dios que trasciende nuestra capacidad de comprensión.

Debemos enseñar la incomprensibilidad de Dios a nuestros hijos porque, en sus vidas aquí en este mundo, nuestros hijos serán asaltados por crueldades y desafiados por dificultades. Nuestros hijos lucharán contra la injusticia, la pérdida y el dolor.

Y nuestros hijos, como nosotros, se verán tentados a darse por vencidos por la desesperación. Como nosotros, nuestros hijos se verán tentados a decir que Dios nos ha abandonado.

Y cuando esto suceda, oren para que nuestros hijos recuerden que hay un Misterio incomprensible que habita en nuestros corazones. Este Misterio nos ha sido dado como regalo.

Y este Misterio nunca nos abandonará.

Aquí está la Buena Nueva de nuestra fe: no podemos explicar por qué Dios es fiel a su pueblo. No podemos comprender la infinita misericordia de Dios.

Escuchen, todos, nuevamente las palabras de Moisés mientras predicaba al pueblo hebreo:

En aquellos días, habló Moisés al pueblo y le dijo:  
"Pregunta a los tiempos pasados, investiga desde el día en que Dios creó al hombre sobre la tierra.  
¿Hubo jamás, desde un extremo al otro del cielo, una cosa tan grande como ésta? ¿Se oyó algo semejante? ¿Qué pueblo ha oído sin perecer, que Dios le hable desde el fuego, como tú lo has oído?"

Sí, dígales a los niños que pregunten "desde un extremo del cielo hasta el otro": ¿Alguna vez un pueblo escuchó la voz incomprensible de Dios hablándonos en nuestras dificultades y desesperación?

### PART THREE: INSTRUCTIONS FOR *LECTIO DIVINA*

I suggest that you use the readings and my reflections as an opportunity for practicing *lectio divina* ("divine reading"). This is an ancient spiritual practice that started with the great monks in the Syrian and Egyptian desert back in the early days of the Church. It is really quite simple.

Step one: calm your mind (my Buddhist friends describe the mind as "a mango-tree full of chattering monkeys"). I find that paying attention to your breath for a few minutes is a practical and effective way to do this.

Step two: read the readings slowly and attentively. Savor the words as if you were tasting a great Pinot Noir. Don't rush. You are not looking for information or instructions. You are making friends with a sacred text which will bless you abundantly if you will only open your heart to it and let it speak to you. In *lectio divina*, we are not actually

“reading” the Bible. Rather, we are “listening” to the Bible as the sacred words speak to us.

Step three: repeat step two.

Step four: read the homily on the readings.

Step five: Ask yourself a few questions:

- What particular words in the readings call out to me most forcefully?
- What is going on in my life such that these words call to me so forthrightly?
- How am I being asked to change, both interiorly and exteriorly?
- In light of this *lectio divina*, how am I being invited to be of service to the world today?