

## Trinity Sunday

God is Good – Although the Archbishop last week once again allowed public Masses I would like to welcome all of you as we are once again blessed to come together to worship the one true God – But who is this God who revealed Himself to Moses in the first reading? **Who is this God** who is about to take the Israelites, a broken and unruly people and make them new again? This is the God who chooses to be with them, despite their own unworthiness. – Nevertheless how shall **they name Him**

But are names important as we celebrate Trinity Sunday – St Augustan wrote 15 books about the Blessed Trinity and then said he did not even scratch the surface of what the Trinity is all about – So how can I make any sense in 10 minutes – So let's talk about the importance of names - Names throughout history have always meant something - **When I was born most Catholic** babies were named after a beloved relative or a favorite saint (the heroes of our faith) – In 1980 when **my** first child was born, times had changed and there must have been **dozens of books** with baby names to choose from – While most names were still traditional many babies were named after entertainers or sport personalities (the new heroes of the modern culture) – Our first born was to be named Michael till we realized our neighbors toddler was named Michael was a little brat which ruined that name for us – But luckily God had another plan - our first born was a girl – So we named her Michelle – And today there are many more baby books than 40 years ago with some of the oddest names imaginable which have no meaning

In the bible, names meant something – It told others who you were - Knowing a person's name established a connection with that person – At times **knowing** a person's name even gave influence over them – Names also told a story about that person – Who they were – Where they were from – Their profession – Their heritage - And one sign of God's omnipotence was when He changed a person's name – Abram was changed to Abraham, Jacob to Israel, Simon to Peter and Saul to Paul – When God spoke people

listened

If the human name contained the power and significance of that person, how much more significance is God's name – Today we here God referred as Lord – To know God's name is to know his nature – Earlier in the book of Exodus God revealed himself to Moses as YAHWEH – I AM WHO I AM – His name is so sacred people were even forbidden to say it out loud – For fear of being stoned to death - They would say “Adonai,” which means “My Lord,” – We could **learn a lot from them** the way most people today throw God's name around in vain - To say God's name is to invoke it and make him present – Invoking God's name without thought is a crime against God's nature

God is merciful, gracious, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity – The very nature of God is what we are celebrating today in the feast of the Holy Trinity – Father – Son – Holy Spirit – Even in our responsorial psalm today we proclaim God as Holy when we say “Blessed are you, O Lord, the God our fathers, praiseworthy and exalted above all forever, and blessed is your holy and glorious name praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages” – This is how you say God's name – With reverence

If you notice this psalm is not a psalm but a canticle from the book of Daniel – The story about the fiery furnace when King Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage and tried to do away with Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. – Moses God whom we celebrate in our first reading – He is not a God of abstraction or locked away in theological treatises - **No, these three** young men had a very concrete experience of their God: They had faith in God and through this faith they were saved from imminent death

These young men were willing to die rather than to worship an image of a godless power placed before them – How many sitting here today are willing to do the same – How many are willing to die to defend God and his holy name – If you hear someone saying God's name in vain do you challenge that person or let it be - What is more important to us our physical well-being or our spiritual well-being - Sure we may try to keep faithful in whatever fiery furnace we find ourselves in but will people know our names

2500 years from now like those in the furnace – The God we worship today whom Jesus defines quite clearly as our God of exceptional love – Is the same God whom Moses met on Mt Sinai and is the same God in the Book of Daniel – The same God who so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life

Today we praise God in the Trinitarian formula in which we were baptized – In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit – Gods name has power all we have to do is invoke it with love and reverence – But God's name said in vain has consequences - We remind ourselves of this as we bless ourselves as we enter the church with water – At the beginning and end of liturgies we are reminded of Gods reality

I once read an article by Theologian John Shea reminding us that the essence of the mystery of God, is a self-giving love completely dedicated to human fulfillment – **This mystery of Gods love** is what drives everything – God created us to love – How is that going – People hating each other and killing each other - All you need to do is look at all the violence, anger and rioting - I believe as we look out into the world many have forgotten this love – Is God any part of their angry lives - I think not

So as we celebrate our feast today we don't get a new definition of the Trinity – Instead we hear proclaimed once again the true nature of God who so loved the world – This is the God who sees us in our weakness – He sees us in chaos – He sees us worshiping false gods, worshiping ourselves and still our God in all this reaches out, through Jesus, to save us – He doesn't love us because we have earned it but through his grace all we have to do is accept it – If our experience of human love has been based on achievement, appearance and hard work then we don't truly know what the love of God is – and will not have a clue what today's celebration - or God's love – But if we have ever been surprised by love's free gift then we just might get some insight into today's feast – So when we say G is G do we do so with reverence - So in the end we have to ask ourselves, what does God's name mean to me – For you see he knows your name and there will be

consequences