***Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time***

***February 14, 2021***

***Year of the Eucharist and Parish (Sermon #6)***

Over the past several weeks, beginning on Epiphany Sunday, we have been presented a series of reflections regarding our Catholic faith and beliefs. We were challenged to answer the question: “Do I believe in God?”, and most recently, we reflected on “Truth.” This week, we will be looking into one of the fundamental truths regarding our belief in God—The Blessed Trinity.

As we have answered the question, “Do I believe in God?”, it follows that we must answer the question of our belief in the Holy Trinity. While the word “Trinity” cannot be found in Sacred Scripture, it is implied in both the Old and the New Testaments. Within the Old Testament, there are several references that imply the existence of the three Persons. The New Testament, also, has several references, that not only imply, but provide the names for each of the three—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus, himself, commands his apostles to “baptize in the ‘name’ of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”; notice the singular “name” versus the plural “names.”

The Blessed Trinity is the greatest mystery, along side the “Transubstantiation” of the Eucharist, within Christian teaching. This doctrine has been the cause of heresy and has been defended within the work of several Church councils throughout the history of the Church, beginning as early as 325 A.D. Many theologians—Irenaeus, Athanasius, Alexander, Aquinas, to name a few—have attempted to explain it, only scratching the surface of this mystery of faith.

Let me provide some insight for your consideration. Belief in the Blessed Trinity proclaims that there is only ONE God, but three Persons in that ONE God. By the time any of us had completed third grade, we understood some rudimentary math. As an example: 1+1+1=3. Using this logic, it might be inferred, three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—equal three Gods. However, looking at it from a slightly different perspective: 1x1x1=1—we see that each multiplied by the other two equal ONE God.

Our belief in ONE God is incomplete, unless and until we acknowledge the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. We believe that before anything was, there was (is) God the Father—the creator, the ultimate cause, Father of all that is. We proclaim each time we say the Creed (the profession of our faith), that we believe God the Son is the eternally, “only begotten,” Son of God, the very image of God himself. The word “begotten” has provoked questions in my own mind from time to time. It calls to mind creation or procreation. However, it seems to be a mis-translation from the original Greek word “monogenes.” In Greek, this word “pertains to being the only one of its kind, unique.” Also, in this same creed, we profess that the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father and the Son” and that “with the Father and the Son, he is eternally worshipped and glorified.” The word “proceeds” means “emanates from.”

Jesus himself, revealed this mystery; a mystery that far exceeded the expectation of the promised Messiah. He explicitly, proclaimed that he is one with the Father and he promised that the Father would send another, “Paraclete”, a consoler, a counselor to continue his mission after he returned to the Father; outlining for us the mystery of not a solitary God, but a unity, a communion of three persons.