

**ECHOING GOD'S WORD**  
**in**  
**THE CATHOLIC FAITH COMMUNITY**  
**TRINITY SUNDAY**  
**May 30, 2021**

**SCRIPTURES:**

<b>Deuteronomy 4:32-40</b>	<b>The Lord is the only God of heaven and earth.</b>
<b>Romans 8:14-17</b>	<b>The Spirit brings us to God, our Abba.</b>
<b>Matthew 28:16-20</b>	<b>From a mountaintop the disciples are sent.</b>
<b>Psalms 33:4-6,9,18-20, 22</b>	<b>God the Creator cares for us who are the Creation.</b>

**READ THE SCRIPTURES:**

*Read the Scriptures carefully in your group, beginning with the Gospel. Take a few minutes in silence to hear the Lord speaking to the heart. Remember that the word of God in the Bible is primarily addressed to the Church community. What does God want the community to hear today?*

**SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:**

**Matthew:**

The Great Commission is the climax of Jesus' ministry in Matthew. Jesus began his ministry on a mountaintop in Galilee; Jesus ends his ministry on a mountaintop in Galilee, a place of revelation (Sinai)! Having been constituted as exalted Son of Man, he gives as mission to his disciples that they go out to the whole world to proclaim this Good News. All limits are now removed; they are to *teach*, a ministry up to now reserved to Jesus himself.

For Matthew, teaching is the chief ministry of the Church. Finally, Jesus commits himself to be present always and everywhere with his disciples. Presence means power.

The Church continues what Jesus has begun. We are sent from the mountaintop where he entered into the glory of the Father. That glory remains effective and active in the Church. Because Christ is glorified at the right hand of the Father, and because Christ continues to act through the ministry of the Church, the work of the Church shares in the power and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church continues his work and his mission. In Matthew's Gospel, the departure of Jesus from this world provides a model for his return: the sky, the clouds, etc. What the Church community began to see and to believe is the Lord Jesus at his resurrection and his glorification into heaven will be seen by the whole universe at the end of time. It is our privilege to know, even now, that Jesus is the Lord -- that will be made known to all when he comes for the final judgment. At that judgment, we will already have been assigned our places in his kingdom because we have known him from before.

Jesus came to the Jews in his earthly life. But he sends the Church to all the nations. It is our task to do among all peoples what Jesus did among the Chosen People. We must prepare the world for his second coming. We need to be busy, for we do not know when that will be. The whole world needs to be transformed so that it will have special access to Christ at the time of the judgment.

*"I am with you always!"* In Matthew, Jesus fulfills in himself the role that is assigned to the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts. Even now, Jesus continues to act through those who love him.

## **Deuteronomy:**

The Book of Deuteronomy (2nd Law) is the last of the Five Books of the Law. Some believe it to be the book found in the restoration of the Temple in 621 B.C.E. (2 Kings 22:3-10). Surely, it is a book of Jewish religious laws given for the renewal of the religious life of Israel, a reminder of the Law of God, a call to renewal in faithfulness to God, a book of reform. Israel is unique among the nations for having been established by God and for being cherished by God. The call to obedience and faithfulness fits the purpose of the book.

## **Romans:**

Nowhere in the New Testament do we find a fully developed theology of the Trinity. There are no explanations of the how and the why of the relationships between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. But the Scriptures are very explicit about referring to the Father as God, to the Son as Lord, and to the divine power of the Holy Spirit. In Chapter 8 of Romans, Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit as Spirit of God, as Spirit of Christ, and as Spirit of life in Christ. Without explaining what he means, he boldly asserts that the Spirit comes from God, that the Spirit is fully revealed in Christ, that Christians experience the Spirit in the body of Christ which is the Church. Paul speaks of our adoption as “children of God.” Jews generally did not adopt; adoption meant the granting of rights to inheritance. Only God could grant the right to the promises made to Abraham. Jesus is Son of God by birth; we are by “spirit of adoption.” What a unique privilege is given to us!

## **QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. They still had doubts even though they saw the Risen Lord. But they worshipped him nonetheless. What does this say to those of us who still doubt? Are we not called to *worship him*, that is, proclaim that he is Lord and Savior, even though we have not seen him in the flesh? Is it not a solution to our doubts that we proclaim him anyway?

2. What assurance do you feel when you hear the promise of Jesus to be with his disciples always? Do you believe that he is with you in all your struggles and in all your endeavors? Do you see this promise as made especially to the Church? That Jesus would always be with the Church? That Jesus would guide and govern his Church? That Jesus would teach through the teachings of the Church?

3. In the way you were catechized as a Catholic, were you made aware that you have a right to God’s inheritance? What does that mean? Do you believe you have the right to claim your place with Jesus at the right hand of the Father? Do you believe you have a right to claim salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ? That you have a right to be forgiven your sins by God through Christ?

## PRAYER

### **HOLY GOD, WE PRAISE THY NAME!**

**Holy Father, Holy Son,  
Holy Spirit, Three we name thee,  
While in essence only One,  
Undivided God we claim thee:  
And adoring bend the knee,  
While we own the mystery.  
And adoring bend the knee,  
While we own the mystery.**

## CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

Jesus has sent us into the whole world to proclaim the good news of salvation, to teach all that he has taught us. And he has promised to be with us in that task: to assist us, to teach himself through us. Proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is the primary task and mission of the Church. For every person in the Church and for every parish, nothing comes ahead of spreading the Gospel.

That is the work of evangelization. The Catholic Church did not use that word much before Vatican II (1963-65). Since then, we hear it a lot. Pope Paul VI issued a major document on evangelization (1975). He outlines all the dimensions of the Great Commission given by Jesus to his disciples. The American bishops have written an important charge to the Church in the United States in this regard, giving us a strategy for implementing the command of Jesus. Now, we also have the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as a guide for our teaching.

One aspect of evangelization consists in bringing the values of the Gospel to bear in our relationships, in our work, in our daily living, in all our contacts with the people we encounter every day. Just to live explicitly a life that radiates hope of eternal happiness is to evangelize.

Giving witness to God's love for us in the joy of our daily existence brings a powerful message to the places and persons with whom we interact. Our faithfulness to God, our keeping our promises to God and to one another, faithfulness in marriage, forgiveness of those who have done us harm, love of enemies, care for the poor, defending the rights of those who are oppressed, all these things are works of evangelization.

We teach best by the quality of our lives. That quality comes to us from God as a gift, as a grace. In prayer, we absorb the very essence of the heart of Christ. We draw close to his love and his mercy as we pray and meditate and share with others our experience of the love of God. In the community of faith, we have access to the power of the Spirit of Jesus who abides with us and assists us in the work of evangelizing. We must meet Jesus on the mountaintop of prayer and bring Jesus down from the mountaintop in the daily experience of ordinary life.

We can only give what has been given to us.

The Catechism: # 767

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