



Sunday's Readings: (R3) Jn. 3:16-18. (R1) Ex. 34:4-6, 8-9. (R2) 2 Cor. 13:11-13.

Perhaps one of the greatest definitions of God was St. John's three-word definition: God is love. It says everything.

If God is love, whom did He love? There had to be a Beloved. If there is a Beloved, He could not be loved, unless He first were known. For no one can love what he does not know. A boy and a girl who have never met cannot fall in love with each other. There had to be a knowing. Thus from so simple a definition as God is love, we can almost arrive at the need of a trinity of persons in God: a lover, the beloved, and knower.

The great revelation of the Old Testament was monotheism. Perhaps that was why the Jewish religion was not missionary. Pagans could not accept that there was only one God.

"How could a one God be a happy God?" they rightfully asked. "A one God is alone, and an alone God is a lonely God!"

If it were not good for man to be alone, how much more for his God. Pagans, therefore, would have nothing to do with monotheism. Hence they peopled their Olympus and their Pantheon with gods and goddesses.

The great revelation of the New Testament was the Trinity, first revealed to Mary at the An-

nunciation. Such a revelation was necessary for a missionary religion. It answered the objection to the aloneness of God and therefore made Christianity palatable to polytheists.

The doctrine of the Trinity does not mean that there are many gods, but many Persons in the one God. Scripture names these Persons as Father, Son or Word, and the Holy Spirit. They live in a community of love of which married love is but the faintest reflection.

In the first Reading Moses records a description of the Father. "The Lord, the Lord," God cried out to Moses, "is a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity." What a beautiful description it is! And a true one, for it was given by God Himself.

After God had freed the Hebrews from Egypt with such power, whoever would have thought that they would have rebelled against Him. And yet the exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land chronicles one long list of rebellion after rebellion against their saving God. Even Moses confessed, "This is indeed a stiff-necked people." The whole Old Testament is a narrative of man sinning and God forgiving, of man fleeing and God pursuing. How fatherly was the Lord to them, slow to anger, kind and merciful.

The Father, to give full expression to His love and forgiveness, sent His Son as savior. The Son incarnated the mercy, graciousness, kindness and fidelity of His Father. His great revelation to us was that "My Father is your Father, My God is your God." When the Son returned to His Father both He and the Father sent the Holy Spirit, the God of love. And He came to forge men into a community of love.

Mass begins with the words of Paul in the second Reading: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." At Mass that is not

merely a greeting, but also a prayer that our life be like that of the Trinity: a life of harmony and peace. To answer this prayer, Christ becomes present to the Christian community at Mass. And why? That all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ (the Sacrament of Love) may be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit (the God of Love). Hence St. Augustine's dictum: "The Church makes the Eucharist, but the Eucharist makes the Church,"—a community of love in the image of the Trinity.

THE BIRDS?

Being a long-term booster of the Courier-Journal, I am glad to make the following report: One day last week a bird repeatedly flew into one pane of glass in the front second floor rectory window, banging away at it all through the day until we tried an experiment. We fastened a copy of the Courier inside the window. The bird took one look and flew away. Thus scotching an allegation that the Courier is for the birds.

Reprinted from Pastorized, Father Raymond Heisel's weekly column in the St. Margaret Mary Bulletin.



Bicentennial Plan

Julie Brand, Patricia Horn and Mary Ksczanowicz, all eighth graders from Holy Cross School, recently took part in a play, Kingdom or Country, written and produced by the pupils to note the nation's bicentennial.

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