

Wow, what a difference a month makes! Four weeks ago we stared out that window at the bleak landscape of a winter that wouldn't go away. Today we look out on the lush green of summer. Quite the change. But you know, if someone stood on the outside of the window looking in, they would also see a drastic change. Two weeks ago, this worship space was still adorned with pastels and the bright white of Easter. Last week it was bathed in the bold red of Pentecost. Today we find ourselves back in the green of ordinary time. What would that person staring into our window make of all this? First it's white, then red, and then green. Google suggests we might be celebrating Italian heritage since those are the colors of Italian flag. I'm not sure what Alexa would say. She and I aren't that close.

Now I wonder, if someone was checking us out through the window, would they be able to tell we are Catholic? If the liturgical colors don't give it away, what would? Maybe it's the new cross here. I don't know. A lot of people, especially entertainers and sports figures, like to adorn themselves with crosses these days and I'm not even sure they are Christian. It's just a fashion statement to a lot of them. Now what would give it away to our friend peering in the window, that we are not only Christian, but Catholic? I'll give you a hint. What do the Catholic sports stars do that give it away? Better yet, if you are at a restaurant and you look over at a

family sitting across the way, what would they do that makes it almost a certainty they are Catholic? In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

When we make the sign of the cross, we are doing several things at that moment. Yes, we are marking ourselves with a symbol that reminds us of the cross and sacrifice of Christ, but when I make the sign it's more about what I say or think than what I do. It's as much about the *creed* as it is the cross. The Trinity is the most basic tenant of our faith. We profess there is a God and what's really wild is this God is three persons in one. Now we've all been taught the comparisons with the clover and such, but sometimes I think we spend more time on the three than the one. It's the unity of the three that should be the primary focus. The Jews totally understood there was one God. He called himself "I am". The Jews call him Yahweh or Jehovah or another name they hold in such high regard that they won't even say the name out loud as a sign of reverence. What is our name for the one and only God? It's "the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit". It's one name, not three. When we give or receive a blessing, it's not in the name of the father and the name of the son, and the name of the Holy Spirit. It's the name of the trinity. This unification of three divine persons is strange to us but that's what makes it so dramatic. As *human* beings we are used to billions of us walking around. Each of us is a separate person. But there is only one *divine* being, one infinite God, in

which there exists three persons. It took the early Christians a few centuries and five ecumenical councils to hash this out. What does it mean? Our one true God is a family: multiple divine persons who are one, yet a community. Why does it matter to us? Because it reveals much, both about our relationship with God and our destiny. How did God the Father reach out to us, when Israel rejected the prophets? He sent the eternal Word, His Son, to us in the form of a man. He was thus both divine *and* one of us. In that way He could reach us, teach us, and represent us in His sacrificial offering. But He was never alone. He always did the will of the Father. They were always one. And when it was time for Christ to return to the Father, He sent the Spirit, the love between the Father and Son, to give us the gifts we need to accomplish the mission of the Church: to make disciples of all nations and to baptize them in the name of ... the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That's also, by the way, how we work out our holiness.

People aren't born saints. The Church doesn't declare people saints because of their human gifts. It's not their natural gifts that make them holy; it's their connection with the Trinity... even if a person was born with the greatest compassion, was a gifted speaker, or had other extraordinary abilities. Mother Theresa didn't accomplish what she did through her own abilities; she prayed for it.

Now the greatest acts we witness on earth are probably the consecration of the

Eucharist and forgiveness of our sins. Do priests do these on their own? No. What does Father Tom do as he recites the Eucharistic prayer? He calls down the Holy Spirit to change the bread and wine into Jesus. Do priests forgive our sins in their name. No, it is in the name of our Triune God that they do this.

We become holy when we honor and praise the Father, we imitate our Savior Jesus Christ, and we use the gifts of the Spirit to do it all. In fact, the only way to be eternally in the presence of the Trinity is to be absorbed into the Trinity. When we become one with Christ *and* one another through the Eucharist, we enter into not only the Body of Christ, but also the Trinity. That's why we begin and end our prayers as we begin and end the greatest prayer, the Mass, with the brief credo: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Granted, the Trinity is heavy stuff to contemplate on such a beautiful early summer day, but it is also in some way very basic. My two-year old grand-daughter can make the sign of the cross and she's learning the words. She's certainly not comprehending anything about the trinity. But she understands we are doing something important. Something we do together that brings us together. Maybe in a few years, when she is ready to receive her first communion, she will begin to contemplate the mystery of it all: how the many can be one with God who is three in one. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.