

Homily  
Trinity Sunday  
May 27, 2018  
St. Bernard Church  
Deacon Tim Sullivan

We're going to start the homily today with a pop quiz. What new feast day was celebrated for the first time this past week, on this past Monday, to be more precise?

Well, in case you missed it, which could have happened very easily, because it didn't get a lot of publicity, the new feast is the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary as Mother of the Church. It is to be celebrated on the first Monday after Pentecost from now on.

This Sunday we are celebrating the solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. We're going to spend a few moments this morning focusing on why Mary has received the title "Mother of the Church," and how through the life of Mary we can have a better understanding of the Trinity.

We know that the Catholic Church is the Body of Christ on earth. Since Mary gave birth to the body of Jesus, she is therefore the mother of the Body of Christ, the mother of the Church.

Without Mary, Jesus would not have come to earth in His human form. Mary and the disciples of Jesus would not have known Him. Likewise, without the Church, we would not know about Jesus, either. The Church, like Mary, gives birth to Jesus by revealing Him to us and to all humanity.

And, just as Mary nurtured Jesus, fed Him, cared for Him and taught Him, the Church nurtures our faith, teaching and guiding us so that we can grow and mature in our faith. It is the primary work of the Church to build up the Body of Christ just as Mary did.

Before He died on the cross, Jesus looked at His apostle, John, and His mother, Mary, and He said to John, "Behold your mother." In saying this, it was the intention of Jesus to make a gift of His mother to all of humanity. He wanted Mary to be an active mother, to help people for all ages to know Jesus, to love Him and to follow Him. The primary way Mary does this is through the Catholic Church.

Mary serves as a model for all of us in how to relate to each member of the Trinity. As proclaimed by the angel Gabriel, even before Mary conceived Jesus, she was full

of grace and had found favor with God the Father. In response to the grace given her by God the Father, Mary herself exclaimed:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
My spirit exults in God my savior.  
For He has looked with mercy on my lowliness,  
And my name shall be forever exalted.  
The Mighty one has done great things for me.

Mary obviously had a great love for Jesus. She was immersed in every detail of His life. Jesus spent 30 years of His life in her company. He obeyed her in all things, even when she ignored his objections and directed him to turn water into wine at a wedding.

It is almost impossible for us to understand what was communicated between Jesus and Mary when, as He was carrying His cross up Calvary, He looked up and His eyes met hers. As the Bible says, the sword that pierced the side of Jesus pierced the heart of Mary as well.

From the time Mary agreed to carry the Son of God in her womb, she was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, which means that she was filled with the Holy Spirit. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit prepared Mary and the Apostles for the mission then entrusted to them. Mary has carried on that mission even after her death. She has been the most active and most effective human evangelizer throughout history, bringing hundreds of millions to Christ.

As for all of us, we can be most like Mary in her relationship with the Trinity when we participate fully and consciously at Mass. But before we even enter the church, we have to answer a question that Mary had to answer, too.

The question is this: Are you going to let God do what He wants to with you? If the answer is “no,” we might as well turn around and go home. If the answer is “yes,” here’s what can happen.

If we answer “yes,” the bread and wine being placed on the altar represent our lives. We put our lives on the altar and, like Mary, we are saying, “Lord, here’s my life. Do with it what You will.”

Then when the priest asks the Holy Spirit to come upon the bread and wine and make them holy, the Holy Spirit overshadows each of us just as He overshadowed Mary, and our lives become sacred. And, just like Mary, we are united with the Body, Blood, Soul and Divine Nature of Jesus. We become one with Him.

And finally, the priest will offer our lives, united with the life of Jesus, to God the Father, the supreme gift any human being could possibly be part of. And then we all pray that the Father will accept this gift and pour out His graces on us so that we have the power, the strength, to do what He wants us to do.

If we do all this, thoughtfully and intentionally, we, too, will find favor with God. We will experience the depth of His love and grace, to the point that someday, we will say:

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
my spirit exults in God my savior.  
For He has looked with mercy on my lowliness.  
The Mighty One has done great things for me,  
And holy is His name.”