

MAY 30, 2021

MOST HOLY TRINITY

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Office staffed T, W and Th, as we are able.

We continue to offer three masses each week to enable people to attend while maintaining appropriate social distancing. The Sunday 9:30 am mass continues to be live streamed on our Facebook page. We are also offering a Saturday 5:00 pm mass and a Sunday 12:00 pm (noon) mass.

Although state capacity restrictions have been lifted, we must still maintain six feet of physical distancing between groups, which means that our attendance is still limited. The 9:30 mass is the most popular. When your schedule allows, please consider attending one of the other two services.

Attendance at mass is still NOT required. Please make choices that keep you and the community safe.

Fr. Joe and the staff hold you all in our prayers, and ask that you pray for us and for all the essential workers who are striving to keep things running.

We support the quality, faith-based K-8 education at

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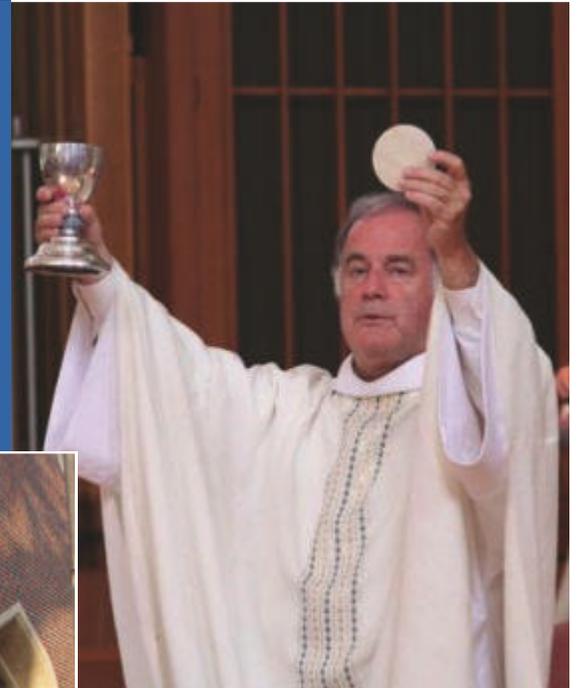
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love and peace.
Amen! Alleluia!



This week at St. Albert's

(masses and intentions are in **BOLD** type)

*During the pandemic, we are offering **three** masses per weekend to help attendees maintain social distancing. Fr. Joe is still celebrating private daily masses for the intentions below.*

Saturday, May 29 –

5:00 pm mass Genevieve McCarr †

Sunday, May 30 –

9:30 am mass – For the Parish

12:00 pm mass – Mary Brown †

Monday, May 31 – Sr. Peggy Brennan †

Tuesday, June 1 – James Rose †

Thursday, June 3 – John Roban †

12:00 to 3:00 pm Crafters in the Social Hall

Friday, June 4 – High School grad Adia Arndt

Saturday, June 5 –

5:00 pm mass Frank & Richard Pink ††

Sunday, June 6 –

9:30 am mass – Genevieve McCarr †

12:00 pm mass – Antoinette Micko †

In our prayers

We remember those who need healing, including Michael Callaghan, Joan Ellison, Curt Huovie, John Fink, Ben Wilkie, Steve Bach, Marianne Green, Copper Schadow, and Janeen Gault.

Please add a prayer for those who have died, including Rose Holland and in memory of John Roban.

Due to HIPAA privacy standards, hospitals and care centers cannot notify us of your need for our prayers or visits unless you direct them to call.

If you or someone you know would like to be included in our prayers, or have the Sacrament of the Sick, or communion brought to you, please let the office know at 612-724-3643. Messages are checked regularly.

A request for mass-goers:

Because the 9:30 am Sunday mass is getting so popular, we ask that those who arrive first fill in the MIDDLE designated spots in a pew. This will help keep all available spots accessible. Please cooperate with ushers who may ask this of you. Thanks!

To request that the Eucharist be brought to you at your home, please contact Fr. Joe at 612-245-3345, or Jim Curran at 612-483-1546. Volunteers will mask and safely deliver communion to you.

As you consider returning to in-person mass:

- * **We are continuing to offer three Masses** each weekend for those who wish to attend in person at 5 PM Saturday and at 9:30 and noon on Sunday. We encourage those who are age 65 or older or who have underlying health conditions to stay home and view the 9:30 AM livestream. Anyone with symptoms or recent exposure to COVID-19 must remain at home.
- * **ONLY Front center church doors are open, along with the elevator entrance. (One household at a time in elevator.)**
- * Although we have previously asked that people separate themselves alphabetically by last name, you may attend the service that is convenient for you. The 9:30 AM Mass is the most popular, and we have recently come close to capacity limits. If you have the flexibility to attend at 5 PM Saturday or noon on Sunday, we invite you to do that. We have not yet had to turn anyone away due to overcrowding, but we will regretfully do this if we run out of space at any liturgy.
- * **Thank you for wearing your masks!** This important health measure is still *required* in the city of Minneapolis until we reach vaccination targets. Please remember that your mask must cover both your nose and mouth and that you should keep it on for the entire time you are in church except when receiving communion. If you need a mask, we have disposable ones available.
- * As appealing as our music is at masses with cantors, we ask you **NOT to sing, even while masked**. This is a precaution the Archdiocese recommends, as even when we keep six feet apart, viruses can still travel further through the air when propelled by speech or singing.
- * **Please sit in marked spaces with members of your group only.** A group can consist of people from the same household or from two households that are part of a pre-existing “pod.” It can also include any number of individuals who attend together and have been fully vaccinated, which means that it has been at least two weeks since the final vaccine dose. We have marked three spaces in each open pew which are spaced out to ensure that people remain six feet apart. Please sit at one of these spaces. Larger groups may need to occupy two spots. *Do not sit in an available spot if you cannot maintain six feet of separation from people who are already seated in that pew.*
- * We have been blessed recently with all kinds of weather, as Minnesota IS the “theater of seasons.” **Please dress appropriately** for a church that will have its front door and all of its windows open even when we would normally be running the air conditioning. Also, please do not close or adjust the windows.
- * **We have resumed the distribution of communion during its proper place in the liturgy.** You may return to your seats after receiving communion. If you are not comfortable with this, you may also leave immediately after reception.
- * Please **exit the church immediately after the dismissal** and move away from the front doors to ensure a path for other people to exit. The only people remaining in church will be staff and volunteers who are cleaning the church in preparation for the next service. You are welcome to have conversations outside with appropriate physical distancing.

“It was a dark and stormy night.”

The popular comic strip Peanuts featured a dog-named Snoopy. An aspiring author often seen typing on the top of his doghouse, Snoopy always began his novels with the phrase, “It was a dark and stormy night.”

The often mocked and parodied phrase comes from the opening sentence of an 1830 novel entitled Paul Clifford. English novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton, a highly popular Victorian writer, began his “purple prose” with: “It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents, except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets, rattling along the housetops, and fiercely agitating the scanty flame of the lamps that struggled against the darkness.”

At the risk of being overly melodramatic, I was repeating this “opening line” as I was driving in a blinding rainstorm in response to an urgent sick call I had received from Twin City Hospice. The hospice had a request for a Catholic priest to offer the “Last Rites” to a dying patient at the Minnesota Veterans Home. Always known as the “Old Soldiers Home” when I was a child, the Gothic style buildings set on the bluffs of the Mississippi River provided ample material for ghost stories that might begin with “It was a dark and stormy night.”

As I arrived at midnight in a rainstorm, the thunder and lightning seemed to announce my presence as a security guard materialized from nowhere and escorted me through the labyrinthine like corridors of Building 17. Entering room 374, I found the dying patient being comforted by his wife of sixty-one years. In the dimly lit room, I initiated the traditional ritual for the dying with the phrase, “We gather here in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

When I finished the anointing, I began the Lord’s Prayer just as a lightning bolt flashed in the window followed by a loud clap of thunder that echoed throughout the tiny room. I held hands with Jerry’s wife Dorothy, and we both held the dying patient’s hands to form a circle of life in the face of death. With the violence of nature raging outside, indeed, “it was a dark and stormy night.” Oddly enough, all fears seemed to be warded off by our mutual faith and the understood presence of the “Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

The mystery of the human heart is found in relationships, both living and dead. Struggling to find the language of the heart is no easy feat, especially when fears and regrets get in the way. God’s grace is manifested in the human relationships that surround us. And, on this Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, we are once again presented with the ultimate paradigm of human intimacy from a divine perspective. The overshadowing mystery of God’s presence in the world reveals itself not only in the creation that surrounds us, but also in the redemptive acts of love and forgiveness that sustain us.

Our God is not distant, except when our anger, confusion and doubt cloud our vision. During crises, our faith is often challenged by the unexpected and unthinkable absence of God’s protection. In a recent interview with a woman devastated by the calamitous tornado sweeping through parts of Oklahoma, she asked the question, “Why does God hate us?” Fortunately, the television reporter was not a theologian and simply said, “But you have neighbors who love and care for you.”

In Scripture, the Trinity is revealed in the language of human relationships. Even when there are “dark and stormy nights, the sustaining presence of God is found in the random acts of kindness of those who care for us. Whether in a hospital room or in the wreckage of the aftermath of a tornado, human hands reach out to us and consistently reflect the helping hand of God made flesh. In today’s reading from Paul’s letter to the Romans (8:14-17), he reminds them (us) that, “*We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to*

the grace in which we stand.”

The revelatory presence of God’s grace is understood in the redemptive work of Jesus and in the sustaining presence of the Holy Spirit. Having just experienced the Feast of Pentecost, the Church and the world were offered the grace of hope. Simply stated, Paul’s theology of hope claims: “*We can boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our heart through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.*”

Today we are celebrating Trinity Sunday, a feast that officially found its way into the liturgical calendar of the Western Church in the year 1334. Evolving from the theological disputes of the Councils of Nicaea (325), Chalcedon (451) and the Fourth Lateran Council (1250) the feast commemorates a theological doctrine rather than any unique moment in salvation history. While vestiges of early celebrations of the feast resulted from theological conclusions found in the writings of St. Augustine and St. Athanasius, the actual formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity would assert that One God exists as three distinct Persons and that salvation history is understood in the revelatory work of God the Father as Creator, Jesus Christ as Redeemer and the Holy Spirit as Sustainer.

While the doctrine of the Trinity as a theological concept remains oblique in both the Old and New Testaments, perhaps the most explicit Trinitarian prayer is found in Matthew 28:16-20 where Jesus commissioned his disciples: “*Full authority has been given to me both in heaven and on earth; go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to carry out everything I have told you. And know that I am with you until the end of the world.*”

Given the assurance that we have been created in the Image of God, it would stand to reason that our lives ought to reflect the multiple manifestations of a triune God. How do our lives parallel the roles of creator, redeemer and sustainer? How do we truthfully reflect the presence of the Trinity as good stewards of creation who actively seek ways to reconcile our differences while sustaining hope in a world filled with war, violence, injustice and indifference? As elusive and indescribable as the Trinity might be as a theological concept, I can easily reflect on my experience in the hospital room at the “Old Soldiers Home” as a living reflection of the human presence of God in action. That night in a hospital room, we gathered together “on a dark and stormy night” in the presence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As people of a living faith, we could easily discover hope in the face of death. Holding hands, we three became one in a connected circle of love. The highlighted intimacy of a God made flesh seemed evident in the holding of hands and in the powerful flashings of lightning and the booming of thunder.

When I emerged from the Old Soldiers Home at 1 A.M., the rain had stopped, and the air was refreshingly cool. While the darkness remained, the storm had passed, and I found myself inhaling the fresh air with the gusto of one thankful for life. Walking across the parking lot, I looked down at the majestic Mississippi River and marveled at God’s creation. Crossing myself in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I prayed for those both living and dead who have sustained my life by their Trinitarian expressions of faith, hope and love.

*Peace,
Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.*

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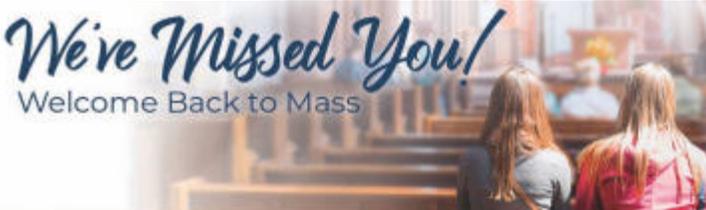
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