

ctkAlive! Scripture Study Trinity Sunday 2021—B Cycle



"Most Holy Trinity"
Szymon Czechowicz (1756–1758)

Gender usage in writing: We are conscious of gender references to God in the Scripture texts. Often, attempts to rewrite these passages result in awkward sentence structures. We have left the biblical translations as they are but do our best to be inclusive in all other parts of the reflection.

Opening Prayer

(edited and abridged for use here)

Prayer to the Holy Trinity

Glory be to the Father,
who created me by divine power and love,
making me in God's own image and likeness.

Glory be to the Son,
who by his Precious Blood opened for me the gates of heaven.

Glory be to the Holy Spirit,
who sanctified me in the sacrament of Baptism
and continues to bless me daily
with the graces I receive from the Spirit's bounty.

Glory be to the three persons of the Holy Trinity,
now and forever. Amen.

Source: [Catholic Online](https://www.catholic.org/prayers/1000_trinity.htm)

Pentecost Sunday Readings

Feast of the Most Holy Trinity

Deuteronomy 4: 32-34, 39-40 “Fix in your heart that the Lord is God.”

Psalm 33: 4-6, 9, 18-22 “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made.”

Romans 8: 14-17 “Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons and daughters of God.”

Matthew 28: 16-20 “Go, make disciples of all nations.”

Before launching into the readings and reflections, do yourself the favor of watching/listening to [Bishop Barron's](#) 9-minute discussion on “[Meaning of the Trinity](#).” This will help to ground you in this mystery most of us can only hope to grasp in our own minimal way. Barron's presentation may help you approach the Scripture readings with deeper appreciation of this central tenet of Christian faith.

— *What insight did I gain from Barron's attempt to “unscrew the inscrutable” mystery of the Holy Trinity? Would I say that I have a deeper insight than before or am I even more confused?*

A Reading from the Book of Deuteronomy (4: 32-34, 39-40)

Moses said to the Israelites in the Sinai desert . . . “Ask of the times past. Inquire from the day when God created man on earth. Ask from one end of the world to the other: ‘Has there ever been anything as extraordinary as this? Has anything like this been heard of before? Has there ever been a people who remained alive after hearing as you did the voice of the living God from the midst of the fire? Never has there been a God who went out to look for a people and take them out from among the other nations by the strength of trials and signs, by wonders and by war, with a firm hand and an outstretched arm. Never has there been any deed as tremendous as those done for you by Yahweh in Egypt, which you saw with your own eyes.’

“Therefore, try to be convinced that Yahweh is the only God of heaven and earth, and that there is no other. Observe the laws and the commandments that I command you today, and everything will be well with you and your children after you. So you will live long in the land which Yahweh, your God, gives you forever.”



*“Moses”
by Michelangelo
1513-15*

Personal Reflection

Biblical faith demands our firm belief that God chose a ragtag band of Israelite slaves for a unique mission in the world—to maintain that God is the *only* God and chose Israel giving it the mission to live in the world as unique among all nations as keepers of faith in the one and only God. Our faith falls short if we think Scripture teaches us simply “to believe in God.” Biblical faith demands more than just believing Yahweh exists and is all-powerful, or that our God can “help” us.

“Never has there been any deed as tremendous as those done for you by Yahweh.”

— *What tremendous deed has God done for me . . . in my childhood . . . in my teens . . . in my adult life?*

“Observe the laws and the commandments that I command you today, and everything will be well with you and your children after you.” Sadly, that one request proved too

difficult for the Israelites, as it does for each of us at times.

— *Why is that one condition, which still exists today, so hard for me to live by?*

— *If I have watched my grown children drift away from their Catholic faith, how do I account for that? What—if anything—might I have done more, better, or differently during their formative years?*

Responsorial Psalm 33 (4-6, 9, 18-22)

A joyful song to the Creator: a national hymn of thanksgiving.

Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.

Upright is Yahweh's word
and worthy of trust is his work.
Yahweh loves justice and righteousness;
the earth is full of his kindness.

Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.

For he spoke and so it was, he commanded,
and everything stood firm.
But Yahweh's eyes are upon those who fear him,
upon those who trust in his loving kindness;
to deliver them from death and preserve them from famine.

Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.

In hope, we wait for Yahweh,
for he is our help and our shield.
Our hearts rejoice in him,
for we trust in his holy name.
O Yahweh, let your love rest upon us,
even as our hope rests in you.

Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.

Personal Reflection

Unfortunately, the psalm verses chosen for today's liturgy skip over the most joyous verses of praise. The omitted verses express strong emotion, proving that God gave us the power to shout no less than to whisper. David and the Hebrews understood how to express strong emotions in their spoken and sung prayers. They understood that the breadth of human emotion allowed all creation to express its ultimate delight in the Lord. How else could they pray than with a joy that expressed itself in both humility and triumph.

If the language of this psalm seems simplistic to us, it might reveal a problem with modern expressions of Christian faith—my own Catholic faith. Perhaps from our fear of excess emotionalism, the clamorous joy of Psalm 33 seems suspect in mainstream religious expression. While faith does not allow us to view the modern

world through rose-colored glasses, a faithful vision of human history and the cosmos calls for optimism and generates a response of full-throated joy and trust. (Suggestion: read the entire psalm.)

— *When have I ever felt like “jumping for joy” at some favor or blessing granted to me by the Lord? Did I jump and shout? If I didn’t, what held me back?*

“O Yahweh, let your love rest upon us, even as our hope rests in you.”

— *To what extent does my hope rest in God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit? If I answer, ‘Not much,’ where else do I look for and find hope in my life? In my spouse or significant other? Someone or something else? Why?*

A Reading from St. Paul’s First Letter to the Romans (8: 14-17)

“All those who walk in the Spirit of God are sons and daughters of God. Then, no more fear! You did not receive a spirit of slavery, but the spirit that makes you sons and daughters, and every time we cry, ‘Abba (Daddy)! Father!’ the Spirit assures our spirit, that we are sons and daughters of God. If we are children, we are heirs, too. Ours will be the inheritance of God, and we will share it with Christ; for, if we now suffer with him, we will also share glory with him.”

Personal Reflection

The Spirit that makes us sons and daughters (v. 15). An alternate translation of the Greek text reads: “As sons and daughters, we inherit all the rights and riches of our father.” Paul would not approve of the use of adoption in the sense that Jesus is the only Son, and we are merely the Father’s *adopted children*. In this sense, “adoption” places a barrier between God and us. Yes, life is demanding, but the desire of the Spirit animates our life, making us truly children of God. So, each day we need to go further, putting to death everything that makes us cling to this world and loosen our hope in Father, Son and Spirit.

— *How do I experience myself as son/daughter of God the Father? How seriously do I take my familial status within the blessed Trinity?*

Proclamation from the Gospel according to Matthew (28: 16-20)

“As for the eleven disciples, they went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told



Image found on [Fide Post](#)

them to go. When they saw Jesus, they bowed before him, although some doubted. ‘All authority has been given to me 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 and teach them to

observe all that I have commanded you. I am with you always, even to the end of the world.’”

Personal Reflection

With this final apparition before the ascension, Matthew sums up Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. This apparition arrives in a simple way. The words Jesus spoke gave his followers enough assurance to go on without his physical presence. As we have seen over the past weeks of the Easter Season, not all of Jesus' disciples (the remaining Eleven and the rest) believed so quickly in the resurrection of Jesus. And yes, some still had doubts and questions (v. 17), as we still do today.

In verse 18, Jesus commissions the disciples to go to all nations. He had gathered this group of disciples. The teacher knew his disciples and the disciples knew their teacher, sharing as they did his everyday life. He commissioned them to baptize new believers in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (v. 19).

Jesus promised his disciples both his presence and his guidance as they began to spread the faith. St. Paul's letters indicate that some of these "first generation" Christians thought their master would not delay in returning for them. However, by the time the gospels appeared in the mid-to-late first century, most Christians appeared to understand that life would continue on into the future, rather than end altogether as some had thought.

"When they saw Jesus, they bowed before him, although some doubted."

— *How disturbing or comforting is it to hear that, even after all the disciples had witnessed and heard since Jesus rose from the dead, "some still doubted"?*

"I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

— *In my daily life, how do I experience Jesus "with me"? What do I do when Jesus seems distant or "to have left the room"? What do I need to do to make sure Jesus has open access to my life?*

The Week Ahead

Journaling Prompts

— *Based on this weekend's Scripture readings, what are the Risen Christ, his Father, and Holy Spirit asking me to do TODAY regarding . . .*

*(1) the quality of the love I bring to my personal relationships . . . and
(2) my life as an emissary of the Trinity, committed to bringing God's love to the people with whom I interact in person and on social media?*

— *Who this week needs to hear from me some expression of love?
Who needs to receive from me a moment of laughter and personal concern?
Why do I hesitate?*

Take some time to write about your experience and feelings about events occurring in your life today and what you see happening in the world.

For Inspirational Listening

Music:

["Trinity Song"](#) by Fr. [Frank Andersen](#), M.S.C.

["How Great Thou Art"](#) sung by [Jackie Evancho](#)

Swedish preacher Carl Boberg's [inspiration](#) for the poem, "How Great Thou Art," came from a visit to a beautiful country estate in southeast Sweden. He got caught in a midday thunderstorm with awe-inspiring moments of flashing violence, followed by a clear brilliant sun. Soon afterwards he heard the calm, sweet songs of the birds in nearby trees. Later, Boberg's lyrics were matched to an [old Swedish folk tune](#).

Preview of Next Week's Scriptures

Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

Exodus 24: 3-8 "Moses took the blood (of a bull) and sprinkled it over the people, saying, 'This is the blood of the covenant. . . .'"

Psalm 116: 12-3, 15-18 "Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones."

Hebrews 9: 11-15 "Christ came as high priest of the good things that have come to be."

Mark 14: 12-16, 22-26 "While they were eating he took bread . . . and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body.'"

Closing Prayer

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Holy Trinity Invocation

O Blessed Trinity,
free me, save me, fill me with life.
Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty,
you are, you were, and you are coming.
Yours is the honor and the power;
yours the glory and force forever.
Yours is the praise and the glory.
To you be thanksgiving in all ages.
O Blessed Trinity,
Holy God, mighty and immortal,
have mercy on me. Amen.

Source: [All Powerful Prayers](#)

Questions?

Send any questions or comments you might have to algarrotto@comcast.net

The Sunday readings are from [Christian Community Bible: Catholic Pastoral Edition](#)

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Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

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