

Deacon Steve Moses – Homily given on Trinity Sunday 2004

Earlier this year, Dan Brown's book *The Da Vinci Code* dominated *The New York Times* bestseller list for several weeks.

The book touched on some favorite themes for the American reader:
our love for a good puzzle,
our enduring interest in conspiracy theories,
and the perennial favorite: What is really wrong with the Catholic Church.

The book stretches some limits of credibility, but it has made many people sneak another look at some revered paintings by da Vinci, especially the *Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper*.

Relentless pursuits of one puzzle within another drives the action in the book. The satisfactions of solving a long series of puzzles are part of the rewards to the reader.

This Sunday, we celebrate the Holy Trinity. One of the lessons of this Sunday is that we have to put aside our taste for a puzzle and develop a mind for Mystery.

Today's feast presents us with a higher level of enigma, the revealed truth about God as triune, which we call a Mystery, not a puzzle or problem.

You may ask, what's the difference between a mystery (in the theological sense) and a puzzle? How does it relate to the Trinity?

I would answer it this way:

The Trinity is a mystery to be lived, not a problem to be solved.

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We have to surrender any hope of laying this Mystery to rest; it will continue to confound and entrance us for our entire life.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not suggesting that we don't need to put any energy, guided by the Spirit of truth, into what the Mystery of God is all about.

But thankfully we don't have to be masters of abstract theological thought to appreciate the Trinity in our spiritual lives.

St. Paul suggests that we can live the mystery rather than define it.

How many here are baptized? Go ahead and raise your hands.

Then most of you have experienced, and continue to live today, with the Mystery of the triune God.

When you were baptized, the priest or deacon blessed the water by calling upon the Holy Spirit, and he baptized you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

When you came into Church today, many of you dipped your finger in the bowl of Holy Water, and blessed yourself in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

When the priest consecrates the bread and wine, he calls upon the Holy Spirit, and blesses the elements in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And they become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I was privileged last weekend to be present at the Ordination of our six newest priests at the Cathedral of Saint Paul. I was invited by the class to be the Deacon of the Mass.

It was a very profound and awe inspiring experience. Just to be a part of something so

special, to experience a Mystery of our faith that has been lived through generation after generation since the time of the Apostles.

By the laying on of hands by the archbishop, and a calling upon of the Holy Spirit, and then sharing of the most holy Eucharist, those of us present in the Cathedral were witness to the lived mystery of our faith.

But we should never use the word mystery lightly.

Mysteries can be invoked as an excuse from the effort of thinking deeply about God or living deeply the implications of our Christian mission.

I was saddened to read about those who attempted to disrupt Mass the very next day at the Cathedral.

We are warned by Jesus himself not to judge others.

Jesus makes a promise to the community of believers that echoes what Paul verifies for us: The community will receive a guiding Spirit of truth with a new revelation.

The community of believers will mirror the Mystery of the Trinity by living a life of love. I ask, where was that love?

We are called upon to be imitators of Christ. Not to be walls keeping others out.

"See how they love one another" was the phrase that pointed to the God of love.

Our second reading today from Romans teaches us about God and about being Christian.

God the Father through his incarnate Son has given us faith and grace. This is all due to the gift of the Holy Spirit who pours divine love into our hearts and enables us to hope

for eternal glory.

Because of God's gifts, Christians are able to endure the difficulties of life. Through these difficulties we grow in character, we allow God's love to govern our lives, and we have confidence that our hopes will be realized.

Central to our Faith is the Eucharist.

We are taught it is the source and summit of who we are as Catholics.

The Mass should never ever be used politically, or for publicity.

In the Eucharist we share, there is an invitation into a community of love through the triune God.

May Jesus' Body and Blood that we share in today's Eucharist summon this community into a clearer image of the Trinity.