

## SOLEMNITY OF THE MOSY HOLY TRINITY - A

With the conclusion of the Church's celebration of the saving work of God during Easter-tide we return now to ordinary time with the celebration of the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three persons in one God. The gospel reading from John's gospel is part of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus. Jesus tells him, 'For this is how God loved the world: he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.' The first reading is from the book of Exodus when Moses speaks to God on Mt Sinai, the God of the Old Testament. The second reading is the concluding section of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians ending with the familiar 'grace' which mentions Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The **First Reading** is from the book of Exodus, the second book in the Bible and the second book of the Law. This book has two main themes: the birth and call of Moses and the deliverance of the Israelite people from Egypt, and the Covenant God made with the Israelites at Mt Sinai through Moses, and the laws that flow from the Covenant itself, the two are connected by the journey through the desert. Like the book of Genesis, Exodus is a compilation of three earlier documents the Yahwist (J), the Elohist (E) and the Priestly document (P).

The reading, 34.4-6,8-9 is part of a longer story. In our reading Moses is returning up Mount Sinai. On the previous occasion Moses was along time coming down from the mountain and the people under Aaron's direction fashioned the golden calf offering sacrifices before the calf. On coming down Moses sees what has happened in his absence and throws down the tablets of the Law and breaks them. The reading begins with Moses carrying two tablets of stone going back up the mountain as God commands and God descends in the form of a cloud. Moses stands there with God. He calls on the name of the Lord and the Lord passes before Moses who prays: 'Lord, Lord, a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in kindness and faithfulness.' We do not read about the actual terms of the covenant instead we read how 'Moses bowed down to the ground at once and worshipped' and he pleads for his people. We must follow Moses example and pray for God to adopt us as his heritage.

The **Responsorial Psalm** is not from the Book of Psalms, it is from the third chapter of the Book of Daniel, the song of the three young men in the furnace who refused to worship the golden statue. Each line is in praise of God to which the congregation suitably respond, 'To you glory and praise for evermore.'

The **Second Reading** is from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. Paul evangelised the church at Corinth between A.D. 50 and 52. His policy was to establish the Christian faith in a centre of population, and here he chose the great and populous port of Corinth, so that the faith could spread to the whole of the province of Achaia. The Christian community grew strong composed mainly of poor people, but Corinth was a centre of Greek life, philosophy and religions. It was also a notorious centre of immorality which was to cause problems for the newly converted. In 2 Corinthians Paul is able to say that the abuses dealt with in his earlier letter had been corrected. In the first part of this letter he writes magnificently about the dignity of the apostle's mission. Chapters 8-9 deal with collecting money which he illuminates with the ideal of union between the churches. The final section is in the form of an apologia when he is accused of weakness and ambition.

The reading, 13.11-13, comes from the conclusion of the letter. Paul wishes the Corinthians happiness and peace by helping one another and being united. He ends with what is now known as 'the grace'. He prays for grace, love and fellowship which are found in God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Such should be our pray for ourselves today.