

# Feast of the Holy Trinity

Cycle A-2026

As we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Trinity, I would like to reflect on the most amazing attribute of our Trinitarian God: God's mercy. The radical nature of God's mercy is revealed through the life story of Rene Martinez. Rene had been in and out of jail most of his life because of violence and crime. He was the creator and leader of a gang called the "Latin Syndicate," for over 20 years. His life unexpectedly changed in 2013 while recording some gangster music in his garage. He had a profound spiritual experience in which Jesus provided him with a review of his entire life, with a special focus on all the ways He had protected and saved him. Deeply moved by His encounter with the Lord, he repented of his sins and began to live with the conviction that God had a purpose for his life. It wasn't until he was baptized nearly three years later, that he felt called to engage in a street ministry to lead others to Christ so that they could be saved from a life of crime and violence. He is now the head of a church that focuses precisely on that mission.

Rene's story is just one example of how God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, continually work together, to bring the joy of salvation to everyone, including the most hardened sinners. This is their ultimate delight. This is their all-consuming mission. This is the crowning jewel of their Divine Love. The Holy Trinity's attitude toward us in our sinfulness is profoundly captured in the words of Professor Charles Xavier in the X-Men movie, "Days of Future Past:" "Just because someone stumbles and loses their way, doesn't mean they are lost forever. Sometimes we all need a little help."

We have just heard how this truth beautifully unfolded in the life of Rene Martinez. His story is meant to instill within us a renewed sense of hope concerning the depth of God's mercy in our own lives. Even though we may have never embraced a life of crime and violence, many of us have embraced our own forms of darkness. The darkness of our past or present serious sins may periodically or habitually consume us with guilt and shame and lead us to a sense of alienation from God. From my priestly experience of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, extended shame and guilt, and a sense of

alienation from God is more commonly associated with serious sins such as living as though God didn't exist, involvement in occult practices, abuse, theft, abortion, adultery and other sexual sins, addiction, acts of hatred and revenge, and the serious neglect of our family and work responsibilities. In our more hopeless moments, we may even be tempted to believe that we are "lost forever." St. Augustine reminds us that: "There is no saint without a past, no sinner without a future." Nearly 1600 years later, Jesus seems to confirm this spiritual perspective whenever He revealed to Sister Faustina: "The greater the sinner, the greater their right to my mercy." Far from being a license to sin, it is invitation to trust that the mercy of our Trinitarian God far surpasses the nature and gravity of our sin.

Even if serious sin has not been an issue for us, we can feel separated from God whenever we get stuck in deeply rooted patterns of less serious sin or become indifferent toward Him. We feel unmotivated and lazy in moving towards greater intimacy and fidelity to God. Fr. Andrew Moore is a priest of the Diocese of Beaumont, Texas. He was a classmate of mine at Notre Dame

Seminary in New Orleans. Several years ago, he posted the following message on his Facebook wall: “Are you are embarrassed to confess the same sin for the 10<sup>th</sup>, 100<sup>th</sup>, or 1000<sup>th</sup> time? The devil should be embarrassed to see you back in the confessional. Despite every trick in the book, he has failed to drive you to despair and hopelessness.” Fr. Moore’s words of wisdom remind us of the importance of never giving up in our quest for a deeper union with God, while humbly acknowledging our need for His grace and mercy.

The Good News is as long as we remain actively engaged in seeking the face of God and fighting the good fight, we are not lost. We can be a people of hope because we are working out our salvation, even though we are making unequal or asymmetrical progress. Since the Lord knows our hearts and innermost thoughts, His love and mercy rushes in to bring us to a deeper communion with Him and eventually to eternal life. The contemporary singer Lauren Daigle beautifully captures this spiritual reality in her song, “You Say:” “You say I am loved when I can’t feel a thing. You say I am strong when I think I am weak. You say I am held when I am falling

short. When I don't belong, You say that I am Yours.  
And I believe."

It is our belief in the mercy of the Holy Trinity that will fill our soul with an unshakeable hope even when we are lost or we feel lost. It is our belief in the mercy of God that will enable us to live into the joy of salvation, both in this life, and in that eternal life "that God has prepared for those who love Him." I once read: "I have given God a million reasons not to love me. None of them has changed His mind." The Holy Trinity really and truly loves us with all of His divine heart.

May we never despair of God's loving mercy, or on the opposite end of the spectrum, take it for granted." Instead, may we take as our own the spiritual motto that Jesus revealed to St. Faustina: "Jesus, I trust in You." Our feast day reminds us that we can expand that and with a living faith proclaim: "O Holy Trinity, I trust in You." Ultimately, our hope will not be disappointed.

