

26 May 2024 - Solemnity of the Trinity "B

[Dt 4, 32...40; Rm 8, 14-17; Mt 28, 16-20](#)

Homily

Jesus' public ministry began with his baptism in the waters of the Jordan. And in his last appearance to his disciples after his Resurrection, he commanded them to go and teach all nations, to make disciples of them and to baptise them "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit".

Jesus' baptism in the Jordan was the moment of the first clear manifestation - in the New Testament, and therefore in the whole of Revelation - of the God who is Father, Son and Spirit.

When Jesus went down into the waters of the river to be baptised by John, as the crowds from Jerusalem were doing, the Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove, and He heard the voice of the Father saying, "You are my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

And in today's Gospel, as He was leaving His disciples, Jesus told them to baptise the nations and to do so "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit".

Throughout His teaching, Jesus bears witness to the fact that God is His Father and that His whole being is expressed in this relationship between Son and Father. The Father expresses Himself entirely in His Word; and when the Incarnate Word says: "Abba, Father", He expresses in that simple word His whole being as Son. He is nothing else. Jesus also teaches us throughout the Gospel that He and His Father are one, united by the Spirit of love that is common to them. And, finally, He reveals to us that we too are called to live the same relationship. This call becomes a reality through the baptism we have received.

So there is an essential relationship between the mystery of the Trinity, which we celebrate today, and baptism. Through baptism we become sons/daughters of the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit of love that is given to us. The Spirit then descends upon us and the voice of the Father says to us too: "You are my beloved son/daughter in whom I am well pleased".

The use of baptism was an important part of religious culture at the time of Jesus, in the Middle East and not only in Judaism. In line with the Incarnation, Jesus took on this custom and transformed it into the sacrament of baptism, just as He took on the

rite of the Passover supper and transformed it into the sacrament of the Eucharist.

However, baptism was not an isolated ritual. The person who baptised always had a message, a teaching to pass on; and the person who received baptism agreed to live in accordance with that teaching. They were therefore also agreeing to undergo a conversion. Jesus preserved this dimension of baptism. That is why, when He commanded His disciples to baptise the nations, He also commanded them to teach them "to keep all the commandments" that He had given them.

What's more, in the time of John the Baptist and Jesus, baptism was also linked to a tradition of ascetic living. There was normally a community that lived with the Baptist, that is, with the person who baptised, practising an ascetic life with Him. Many of the early Christians, when they received baptism, adopted a similar form of life, striving to put into practice Jesus' calls to various forms of radical renunciation. And it was this tradition of ascetic living, gradually adopted into Christianity, which, after a few centuries of purification and integration, gave rise to what was later called the "monastic life", and which we strive to live here at Scourmont.

Like all forms of Christian life, monastic life is essentially linked to baptism, and for that reason it is also essentially linked to the Trinity. It is an effort to respond to Jesus' call to renunciation and conversion, so that his Spirit can rest on us and we can hear the Father's voice saying to us: "You are my beloved son/daughter in whom I am well pleased".

If we keep well this word of love that has been given to us, then Jesus' promise to his disciples will be fulfilled in us: "And I am with you always".

So let us enter ever more deeply into this baptism that is our Christian life and our monastic life, in order to experience ever more intensely and constantly the presence in us of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Our life will then become a continual prayer, because, as Paul says in the second reading (taken from the letter to the Romans), the Spirit of God will unite with our spirit to say "Abba", that affectionate word in which the whole nature of the Son is expressed. This is the prayer of which Paul speaks in chapter 8 of Romans: "We do not know how to pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with ineffable groanings.

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