

Sunday's

READINGS

Deuteronomy 4:32–34, 39–40
 Romans 8:14–17
 Matthew 28:16–20

Scan the code to read
 today's readings. →


 Opening
 PRAYER

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Lord, each time we begin prayer we are reminded that you are a relationship of perfect love. Help me to rest in your love. Amen.


 Thoughts for
 REFLECTION

How can your understanding of the Trinity as a relationship affect your daily life?
 How do you see each Person of the Trinity in your faith journey?

Awaken is written and edited by Jo Ann Paradise, D.Min.



What You NEED to KNOW

Scripture Background

Deuteronomy 4:32–34, 39–40

Deuteronomy tells of the Israelites' journey into the land of Canaan. Today we hear an extensive unfolding of the laws of the Covenant. It may seem that the entire focus is on the Law. But the first words of Deuteronomy put the Law in perspective. "Now therefore, Israel, hear the statutes and ordinances I am teaching you to observe, that you may live" (v. 1). The conclusion of this passage summarizes: "You must keep his statutes and commandments that I enjoin on you today, that you and your children after you may prosper" (v. 40). There was a belief among followers of early religions that obedience to their god(s) would be rewarded in this life with health, sons, land, etc. Israel's experiences in the Old Testament are an unfolding of a different understanding.

Romans 8:14–17

During a visit by my Orthodox Jewish cousin and his family, his children ran to us to share exciting news. They yelled to their father, "Abba! Abba!" I was startled. Jesus told us to call his father Abba. Why were they calling my cousin Abba? Because it means "Daddy." Abba

is not a formal word. It is closer to our use of "Dad" or "Daddy." Saint Paul expresses this truth in our reading. "but you received a Spirit of adoption, through whom we cry, "Abba, Father!" (v. 15). Paul tells us that by the power of the Holy Spirit, our union to Jesus in Baptism allows us to speak God's name in this endearing and intimate way. It signifies God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit's desire to be in intimate relationship with us.

Matthew 28:16–20

Jesus directs the Apostles to go to a specific spot in Galilee. This is the final encounter between Jesus and his followers. They have witnessed Jesus' Death and have had several encounters with the Risen Christ. Yet, Matthew tells us that they still have doubts. Despite their fears, Jesus asks them to spread the Good News of God's promise of eternal life, made possible through his own Death and Resurrection. We come to the Father through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. Living the New Covenant in Christ is our response to this gift. To live out Jesus' command we must be able to speak about and live out our faith!



Points to Ponder

Prosperity

Do not interpret the word *prosper* in the First Reading as a promise of wealth and status. The Israelites will come to understand that living in right relationship with their God is not a promise of earthly rewards. Jesus' teaching and his Death on the Cross take that thinking head on. Disciples of Christ will experience suffering and death. Belief in Christ offers the promise that God can redeem all evil, if we are open to his grace. It is not a guarantee of a trouble-free or pain-free life. Prosperity for Christians means living a life that is continually growing into complete union with God. That means our prayer needs to reflect our desire to be open to his will. While that may seem like a challenge, it is much easier when we understand that his will is always our happiness. And happiness for Christians is the consequence of living out our created purpose: to love as God loves.

- When have you bargained with God to avoid suffering?
- How do you define prosperity?



Lord Jesus, you are truly present. Amen!

In the presence of Jesus in the Holy Sacrament, we gaze upon the mystery of God's love that fills us with joy and impels us to love and serve the Lord with gladness.

—Pope Francis

Strengthen belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Visit the Pflaum Eucharist resources page.



Connecting GOSPEL

and CHURCH TEACHING

Three in One

It is such an irony that the Church teaching that is the root of all that we believe about God, the teaching about the Blessed Trinity, is the teaching we truly struggle to understand. Because of our limited human understanding, it is difficult to understand God. "The mystery of the Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and the Christian life. God alone can make it known to us by revealing himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (CCC, 261). Saint Augustine uses an image of fire to explain the

Trinity. Imagine a campfire. The Father is the fire. The Son is the light that comes from the fire, and the Holy Spirit is the warmth that comes from the fire. One cannot exist without the other two. Each element is distinct yet the three exist in oneness. The Church calls us to reflect on this mystery, and to understand that "by the grace of Baptism...we are called to share in the life of the Blessed Trinity" (CCC, 265).

➔ To learn more, refer to CCC, 232–237, 261, and 265 or go to Booklet 3, Session 1 in Growing Faith.



Closing PRAYER

Our hearts yearn for love. We search for it in so many places. In your goodness, O Lord, send your Holy Spirit to deepen our understanding of the love you made visible in Christ Jesus. Amen.

FAMILY CORNER

Scan here for parent resources. ➔



Question of the Week

When do you feel closest to God?



Family Prayer

Help us, God, to find your love in our family. Amen.