



## CATHOLIC CONVERSATIONS ON THE SCRIPTURES

Archdiocese of Miami - Ministry of Christian Formation

May 18, 2008 Most Holy Trinity (Cycle A)

### Gospel reading John 3:16-18

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only son of God.

#### Brief commentary:

Today, the universal Church celebrates the Feast of the Holy Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity is the affirmation of God's intimate communion with us through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Christians believe that God intervenes in our lives and is involved in human history. From the beginning of creation God tried to communicate and relate with all creatures. In the Old Testament God did so through events and the prophets. And in the fullness of time, God became one with humanity in Jesus Christ, who is the visible image of the invisible God. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God continues to be present to us, seeking everlasting communion with all creatures.

The belief that "God so loved the world that he gave his Son," is usually connected to Jesus' death on the cross. This emphasis has clouded the primary gift of God in the incarnation. The birth of Jesus is the ultimate proof of God's infinite love for humanity by becoming one with us. Jesus is our model for the Beatitudes, and the norm of the new law: "Love one another as I have loved you." (*Jn 15:12*)

This passage also conveys God's love for "the world." Christians often think that the world is evil. These words from John remind us that when "world" is used negatively it refers to those things that oppose God and God's ways. God loves the world as his creation and loves us as his creatures. It is this love for "the world" that causes the Incarnation of God's Word.

#### Today's reading offers three significant messages:

- The Word became flesh so that we might know God's love for us. The Spirit within us continues to disclose the loving God to us today.
- The doctrine of the Trinity is "par excellence" a theology of relationships: God is with us, we are with God, and in God we are all one.
- Jesus came to save not to condemn, but some condemn themselves by turning from the light.

#### For our shared or personal reflection:

*After a brief pause for silent reflection share your answers, ideas or feelings.*

1. God loves me so much that he became one with me. How am I responding to that gift?
2. How are my relationships? In what areas do I need improvement? Be specific.

Suggested readings: Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraphs 219-221; 232-237; 243-244; 454; 458; 679; 705-706; 727-730.