

Trinity Sunday 2018  
05/27/18

Let me begin with a couple stories. The first is from Richard Malloy and is about an Amish family going to a mall for the first time. Everything is quite amazing: food court, music, numerous stores. The grandmother sees two shiny silver doors open and watches an elderly man enter between them. The doors close behind him. Two minutes later, the doors open and rather than seeing the elderly man who originally entered, a handsome 30-something year-old man emerges. If you haven't figured it out yet, the doors were to an elevator.

Again, the doors open and another old guy goes in. Soon after, a young, good-looking guy appears. The woman's granddaughter comes over and says, "Granny, isn't this place great!" Yes," replies the grandmother: "Quick! Go get your grandfather!"

The second comes from Fr. Joe Robinson. He relates a story about a friend of his named Don. It seems Don's first grade niece came home after school one day and told her mother she didn't understand the Trinity. They were studying it in school and were going to have a test and she couldn't figure it out. Mom tried to talk to her about faith but the little girl wasn't convinced. She said, "I'm going to look it up on the Internet." Fr. Joe then states that he realizes there's a lot on the Internet but if anyone finds the Trinity explained, he wants to know. And I guess I feel the same way. Trying to explain the Trinity is impossible, much like trying to explain an elevator to someone who has never seen one. But Fr. Joe comes up with a pretty good explanation - of the Trinity, that is, not of elevators.

He says that the mystery of the Trinity communicates that God is a family – a family so closely united that although they are three persons, they are one God. Oneness is not only an important characteristic of God, but God wants us to share that oneness with Him and one another and yet we have over 400 groups who call themselves followers of Christ who can't get along with one another.

And speaking of family, Dennis Sylva reminds us it's not always easy to be family. Good parents give their children roots and wings, a sense of security and freedom to live their lives. But achieving such a balance is often accomplished only after years of working at it. Sometimes children feel smothered by their parents, that they are trying to control their lives; at other times, children feel neglected, that they are not important, not even loved.

Monday morning, as I was watching Good Morning America, Michael Strahan was interviewing Rome Shubert, a student who had been shot in the head during the Texas school shooting last week, but miraculously he survived. His mom was also part of the interview and what struck me was her comments about the incident. She said nothing about the need for better gun control, about age limits on the purchasing of firearms, or anything even remotely connected to the issue of how and where and when the alleged shooter got the guns. Rather, she focused on what I heard as Christian values.

She said we need to address mental illness. We need to be there for our neighbor. We can't ignore those who seem like they need help. And she spoke about parenting. "Know what your kid is doing," she said. "I know what my kid is doing. He is accounted for at all times. He has friends. We do things with him. We know what he is about. We know what he's putting on social media. I am invested in my child. Parenting is a priority."

Lest you think I'm going to get into the issues surrounding the problems with school shootings in America, I just want you to think about what this mom said because I think her words fit very well with Fr. Joe's understanding of the Trinity as family. If we all do our best to help our neighbors, then we will be extending the concept of family beyond our immediate families to those in our neighborhoods, our churches, our schools and beyond. It won't be that hard. It won't take that much. We just do it one person, one family, one school at a time. And then we step back and rather than imagine the possibilities, we watch them come true.