

Statement for Website
From Fr. Michael Basque

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First, a few things you should know:

- The protocols for re-opening Roman Catholic Churches in the Province of Ontario have been approved by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario. A meeting to establish Diocesan guidelines to implement these protocols is being held at the Catholic Center on June 10. When this document is completed it will be distributed to Parishes for implementation. What I think this means is that Holy Rosary Parish will likely be re-opening for regular services in the near future although I would advise people not to get too excited until we have a firm date.
- Bishop Bergie is pleased to announce the Financial Campaign to pay for the renovations to the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Alexandria has surpassed its goal of \$1.2 million. Thank you to all parishioners who donated to this campaign.

Within any human relationship there are bound to be differences. Spouses will disagree on matters such as finances, household chores and how to raise their children. Parents will have disagreements with their kids about issues like expected behaviour, curfews and the use of the car. Siblings will fight over control of the television, use of the bathroom and who gets the last of the desert. Yet, these same relationships often also exhibit a strong sense of unity. Husbands and wives will unite when a crisis occurs. Fathers, mothers and children will come together to attain a common goal. Siblings will defend each other against external threats. While the distinctions between individuals in such relationships are easily seen, it is the unity between them which is more important.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells Nicodemus "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son". These words might have made the Jewish leader a little uncomfortable. As I have mentioned in previous posts, monotheism (belief there was only one God) was a core element of Judaism. This distinguished them from other Ancient Near Eastern religions who usually had a pantheon of gods and goddesses. Jews were prepared to die rather than worship another god. The idea God could send his only begotten Son would seem to challenge belief in a single God. Yet, as Jesus continues his discourse, he highlights the unity between God and His Son through their plan to save all people and enable them to gain eternal life. Although a distinction existed, it was overshadowed by a single intention and action. Over time, this idea evolved into the Doctrine of the Trinity: the belief there is one God who shares a single nature, will and mission but exists in three distinct and unique persons. Since it appears impossible for human beings to hold these two truths about God in their minds at the same time, this teaching is a mystery which can be known only through divine revelation.

Catholics and other people of faith realize God is a mystery which is beyond their limited understanding. For Christians, belief in the Trinity is simply part of this mystery. However, there is something profound about the fact that at the core of God's existence is a relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is a reminder distinctions are hard-wired into God's plan. Every part of Creation is made different and has a unique purpose. In doing so, it mirrors the image and

likeness of God. Yet, all these things with diverse natures, wills and missions fit together into a single divine plan. This truth should remind Catholics and other Christians of how relationships whether with God, other humans or Creation are at the core of their faith practice.

During this Covid-19 pandemic, Catholics and other people of faith have the opportunity to re-examine their relationships with others. Class, gender, race, religion, politics and numerous other things make human beings different from one another. These distinctions can be perceived as a reason for competition which leads to tension and conflict. They could also be considered as signs of complementarity which results in concord and cooperation. Belief in a Trinitarian God should inspire Catholics and other Christians to opt for the latter course. This means not allowing differences with others to block efforts to work together to care for the sick, vulnerable and poor. It means remembering we are all members of a single human family struggling to overcome the effects of this pandemic.

By his very Trinitarian existence, God reveals how unity is much more important than difference.