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### The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

How differently might each of us live our lives if we began and ended each day with these words of Moses: "If I find favor with you, O LORD, do come along in our company" (Exodus 34:9). What changes we would make!

From these words of Moses we see that the Lord dwells with those who follow his ways, who walk in his paths (cf. Micah 4:2). We might well say that the Lord dwells with those who believe because believing in the Lord requires that we keep his commands; no one can truly believe in the Lord and yet live completely apart from him. By keeping his commands we find favor with him and are counted among his friends (cf. John 15:14).

If we are to live with these words on our minds, on our lips and in our hearts, we must first understand who it is that we seek to join our company and how to find favor with him.

The Lord with whom we hope to find favor is not distant from us; he does not dwell in some far off fortress, waiting for us to stumble blindly upon him. He is not a god of detachment, but a God of Love. And because he himself is Love (cf. I John 4:8), he longs to share and communicate his love - himself - with us.

The Lord first revealed himself to Abraham and formed a people for himself through Abraham's descendants. He later revealed his name - his essence - to Moses, and through whom the Lord saved his people from slavery in Egypt and led them to freedom, giving them a land of their own. All this he did so that his chosen people might know him better, yet his people continually turned away from him. Even so, the Lord never abandoned his people.

Indeed, in the fullness of time, "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" (John 3:16). The Lord does not sit back aloof from our concerns, but seeks us out and offers us his friendship!

But what of the warning, "whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God" (John 3:18). We must first consider the name of God the Father before considering the name of his only Son.

When the Lord revealed his name to Moses, he gave a name that roughly translates, "I am who I am."

His name makes him utterly incomparable. "I am who I am" - this means closeness, power over the present and over the future. God is not the prisoner of what happened "before all eternity;" he is always presence: "I *am*." He is contemporary with every time and antecedent to every time.

I can call on this God here and now: he belongs to the "now" and responds to my "now."<sup>1</sup>

Out of respect for his Divine Majesty, the people stopped using the name God revealed to Moses long before the time Jesus, replacing his name with the title, "The Lord."

The name of the Son of God, Jesus, means, "the LORD saves," that is, "I am the one who saves you."<sup>2</sup>

When thinking of him who died for us, how could we not believe? In light of such generous love, who are we to ignore this priceless gift? When considering such love, how could we ever turn away from him? Yet we do, and so we return to the words of Moses: "If I find favor with you, O LORD, do come along in our company."

The Apostle Paul rather plainly sets out the path that leads to the Lord's favor. He says, "Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you" (II Corinthians 13:11). The way to find God's favor is to live as one body, united in Christ our head and shepherd.

If we live in this way we imitate the Lord, "the God of love and peace," and he will dwell among us, the people he has chosen as his own.

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ: Meditations on the Triune God*, trans. Brian McNeil (San Francisco, California: Ignatius Press, 2008), 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

The longer the Lord dwells among us and we with him, the more we will come to realize that we are indeed a "stiff-necked people," unwilling to yield to the will of another, even to the will of God (Exodus 34:9).

We want to do things our own way, simply to be left alone. Yet the longer that we are alone the more we realize that we are not, in fact, alone. Precisely in our solitude we come to know that we are known.<sup>3</sup>

We ignore God's will for us, or at least we shy away from it, because we do not truly know him who it is that we ask to dwell among us. But even if we cannot know the Lord fully, at the very least every person "knows that he is known." Who is this one who knows us?

It is he who is the God of love and peace. It is who is one and yet three, who is Triune, the Blessed Trinity. Saint Paul makes no mention of three different gods, but of one God. At the same time he is able to say, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you" (II Corinthians 13:13). Amen.

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

The Lord has revealed his glory as "three Persons equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, yet one Lore, one God, ever to be adored."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Roman Missal*, Preface 43.