

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY
15 June 2025

Fr. Jim Fredericks

Part One: the readings for the day
Part Two: reflections on the readings
Part Three: guidelines for *lectio divina*

PART ONE: READINGS FOR THE DAY
Lectionary: 166

Reading I Proverbs 8:22-31

Thus says the wisdom of God:

The LORD possessed me, the beginning of his ways,
the forerunner of his prodigies of long ago;
from of old I was poured forth,
at the first, before the earth.

When there were no depths I was brought forth,
when there were no fountains or springs of water;
before the mountains were settled into place,
before the hills, I was brought forth;
while as yet the earth and fields were not made,
nor the first clods of the world.

When the Lord established the heavens I was there,
when he marked out the vault over the face of the deep;
when he made firm the skies above,
when he fixed fast the foundations of the earth;
when he set for the sea its limit,
so that the waters should not transgress his command;
then was I beside him as his craftsman,
and I was his delight day by day,
playing before him all the while,
playing on the surface of his earth;
and I found delight in the human race.

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

R: O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars which you set in place –
What is man that you should be mindful of him,

or the son of man that you should care for him?
R: O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

You have made him little less than the angels,
and crowned him with glory and honor.
You have given him rule over the works of your hands,
putting all things under his feet:
R: O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

All sheep and oxen,
yes, and the beasts of the field,
The birds of the air, the fishes of the sea,
and whatever swims the paths of the seas.
R O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

Reading II Romans 5:1-5

Brothers and sisters:
Therefore, since we have been justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
through whom we have gained access by faith
to this grace in which we stand,
and we boast in hope of the glory of God.
Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions,
knowing that affliction produces endurance,
and endurance, proven character,
and proven character, hope,
and hope does not disappoint,
because the love of God has been poured out
into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Alleluia Cf. Revelation 1:8

R. Alleluia, alleluia.
Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;
to God who is, who was, and who is to come.
R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel John 16:12-15

Jesus said to his disciples:
"I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now.
But when he comes, the Spirit of truth,

he will guide you to all truth.
He will not speak on his own,
but he will speak what he hears,
and will declare to you the things that are coming.
He will glorify me,
because he will take from what is mine
and declare it to you.
Everything that the Father has is mine;
for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine
and declare it to you."

PART TWO: REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

Happy Father's Day.

This last week, I have been thinking about my dad.

I borrowed money from him, once, when I needed it. He told me that I didn't have to pay him back. But, in fact, my dad gave me lots of things throughout my life that I have never been able to pay back.

When we were small, my dad would sit with us in a hammock strung between redwood trees in a canyon full of stately redwoods in Rio Nido, near Guerneville. With his sons and nephews piled atop him, Dad would tell us stories about submarines. Why submarines? I don't know. Maybe he had read Jules Verne. I don't remember the stories, but I vividly remember swaying with him and my brother and my cousins in the hammock in the silence and serenity of those redwoods.

You may have noticed, over the years, that I like telling stories. This is a gift from my father that I can never pay back.

Some time ago, someone pressed a few bucks into my hand after mass.

What's this for?

It's for you Father.

Later that day, I was chatting with Torn down on Watmaugh. I was buying strawberries at the strawberry stand Torn and his family run down there. A lady came up to buy strawberries and she didn't have enough cash to buy three baskets. She was five bucks short. So, I dug into my pocket and found the money you gave me after mass and gave it to the lady.

What? I live in Oakland. I can't pay you back!

"That's alright," I said. "I'm sure you can find someone who can't pay you back down in Oakland."

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord urges us to lend to those who cannot pay us back.

If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount.

In that hammock, in that cathedral of redwoods out in Rio Nido, my dad was giving a gift of incomparable value to a scrum of cousins who could not hope to pay him back.

I have no doubt that, if we had pointed this out to him at the time, my dad would have said,

That's alright. Someday, I'm sure you will find someone who can't pay you back. Pass it on to them.

Happy Father's Day.

PART THREE: INSTRUCTIONS FOR *LECTIO DIVINA*

I suggest that you use the readings and my reflections as an opportunity for practicing *lectio divina* ("divine reading"). This is an ancient spiritual practice that started with the great monks in the Syrian and Egyptian desert back in the early days of the Church. It is really quite simple.

Step one: calm your mind (my Buddhist friends describe the mind as "a mango-tree full of chattering monkeys"). I

find that paying attention to your breath for a few minutes is a practical and effective way to do this.

Step two: read the readings slowly and attentively. Savor the words as if you were tasting a great Pinot Noir. Don't rush. You are not looking for information or instructions. You are making friends with a sacred text which will bless you abundantly if you will only open your heart to it and let it speak to you. In *lectio divina*, we are not actually "reading" the Bible. Rather, we are "listening" to the Bible as the sacred words speak to us.

Step three: repeat step two.

Step four: read the homily on the readings.

Step five: Ask yourself a few questions:

- What particular words in the readings call out to me most forcefully?
- What is going on in my life such that these words call to me so forthrightly?
- How am I being asked to change, both interiorly and exteriorly?
- In light of this *lectio divina*, how am I being invited to be of service to the world today?