

Trinity Sunday C

June 12, 2022

St. Patrick

Our parish patron, St. Patrick, used the three-leaf clover to teach about the mystery of the Trinity. As we gather today to thank Deacon Eugene and Anna, couldn't we draw upon another image of the Trinity—Anna, Deacon Eugene, and our St. Patrick Outreach Center, the three so tied together for decades, and the Holy Spirit being the breath of oxygen which kept that ministry serving with love? Perhaps that image isn't so farfetched.

But then, we heard these words—sounds pretty farfetched—about God from the Book of Proverbs—

**“When God made firm the skies above,
when God fixed fast the foundations of the earth...
then I, (Wisdom), was...God's delight day by day,
playing before God all the while...”**

A toy bulldozer (*holding it in my hand, I show it*). I keep it on the small table next to my prayer chair in the rectory—a tiny, toy bulldozer.

You can ask it: What does a toy have to do with Trinity Sunday?

Seventeen years ago a mother gave me one of her son's toys after his funeral Mass. This young family from Pennsylvania was a wonderful part of my life, and that of many others, during the almost two years that Zachary was a patient at St. Jude's Hospital. He died at the age of four.

His mother has given permission for me to talk about what happened shortly before his death.

Zachary loved to play. I can still see that time I took the elevator with him and his parents at St. Jude's, his mother holding him. He pushed the elevator button with his big toe, saying, “I want to go to the playroom.”

Ten days before Zachary's death, his main physician, his parents and I had the responsibility of letting him know that he would probably be dying soon.

A few weeks prior to that, his closest friend at St. Jude—named Daggan—had died. All during their stay there, those two small boys loved playing in the playroom...with toy bulldozers, trucks, and—especially!—trains. In that meeting, informing Zachary that he would die soon, his mother gently reassured her son that Daggan and the train would be in heaven, and that they would play together. I have to admit: I'm clueless if heaven has any trains, but what the loving mother shared with her son—well, it was right on target that *there's a lot of playful delight in God's presence*.

Did you hear what Proverbs teaches us on Trinity Sunday? **“Then I, (Wisdom), was God's delight day by day, playing before God all the while.”**

Ah, St. Patrick's: **“Wisdom...playing before God all the while.”** Not a somber, gloomy God. Instead, we are drawn into the life of the Trinity who delights in play.

A handful of days before he died, after the last Mass he took part in, Zachary told me: “Father Val, Jesus is going to be my best friend in heaven!”

This Trinity Sunday, wouldn't it be a grace that we see God as truly our best friend...and, as St. Paul encourages us today, that **“God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us”**? Then, heaven wouldn't be a boring, melancholy experience. *We* can play before God all the while, enjoying God's love !

General Intercessions

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Your glory encompasses all: deepen our sense of trust in your loving care for us, O God; we pray to you, O Lord—

With you is joy and hope: be with Deacon Eugene and Anna Champion in their retirement and in their ministry with us; we pray to you, O Lord—

Your Word is true: open our hearts to receive and live your life-giving word; we pray to you, O Lord—

You are justice and solace: empower us to work against bigotry and violence in all its forms; we pray to you, O Lord—

You delight in play and intimacy: help our families and all of us to enjoy these summer weeks, and find closeness with you in prayer; we pray to you, O Lord—

