

- “And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” It’s hard to find any words in the Gospels more consoling than these words of our Lord from the very end of Matthew’s Gospel.
- In the moment before His glorious Ascension into Heaven, Jesus gives the disciples the great command to go and make disciples of all nations, to baptize in the name of the Trinity, and to teach His commandments.
- But Jesus was also keenly aware of the feeling of loss His disciples would very naturally experience at His Ascension, and so He reassures them that, even though He will no longer be present to them physically, He will still be with them for all time.
- And thus these words, which we were spoken not only for the benefit of the apostles but for the whole Church in perpetuity, are another sign of the tremendous love the Creator bears for us, His creation.
- God loves us so much that He dwells not just with us, but through the power of the Sacraments He dwells *within* us. Even as weak and willful as mankind has always proven to be, our Lord still desires to dwell in our souls.
- Just as surely as our Lord dwells in the Heavens, so too does He dwell within the souls of all the baptized who remain in the state of grace.
- He dwells within us in order to make us His very own children, “joint heirs with Christ, . . . so that we may also be glorified with Him.” In other words, He dwells within our souls now so that one day we will dwell with Him in the glory in Heaven.
- Last Sunday on Pentecost I mentioned that we often speak only of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit because it is to the Holy Spirit that we attribute all works that reflect God’s love and our union with Him.
- However, our faith teaches us that it is not only the Holy Spirit Who comes to dwell within us at Baptism, but that all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, dwell within us through the grace of Baptism.
- It is an amazing thought that our Trinitarian Lord dwells within the souls of His children. But He does, and He does so quite happily! So each of us is, in a way, a walking tabernacle – a living, breathing temple of God.
- But as I mentioned last Sunday, our Lord’s supernatural presence in our souls is maintained only when we avoid all mortal sin and remain in a state of grace.
- While all sin is an obstacle and hindrance in our relationship with God, those seriously grave sins that we freely and knowingly commit actually rupture our relationship with God to such a degree that we forfeit His supernatural presence within our souls.
- Mortal sin robs us of the sanctifying grace we first received at our baptism, and it places us at risk for eternal damnation. Mortal sin destroys the charity within our soul, and it turns us against God.
- Of course this rupture with God can be repaired through the grace of a good confession.
- In His love and mercy, our Lord can never refuse a repentant heart. He will always forgive us and resume His supernatural presence in our souls if we repent and go to confession.
- But as I mentioned last Sunday, our sinful actions are habit-forming. Every time we commit a sin, the easier it becomes to commit that sin again in the future. And if the sin is mortal, then the easier it becomes for us to forfeit God’s presence within us.

- Thus, my dear brothers and sisters, the life of the Christian must be a constant striving to keep our souls free of any spot or blemish of sin so that we might be a worthy dwelling place of God and His very own children.
 - St. Augustine once wrote that, “the depths of man’s conscience lie exposed before God’s eyes” (cf. *Confessions*, Book X).
 - As the One who created us and Who sustains our existence, God knows us through and through, even more than a parent knows his or her child. As the One who dwells within us, our Lord knows even those innermost thoughts that we try to hide from ourselves.
 - There is nothing that we can possibly hide from God. And so we must never believe that we can ever get away with a sin. Nothing goes unnoticed by God.
 - So in the face of this remarkable truth of the Trinity’s indwelling within our souls, we must remember that God is both omniscient and omnipotent. He knows all things; He has power over all things.
 - But even more importantly, as we consider this remarkable truth of the Trinity’s indwelling within our souls, we should see how much God loves us and desires our salvation.
 - And as the blessed people He has chosen to be His own, we should abandon ourselves to Him and trust in Him, just as children willingly and confidently throw themselves into the hands of their father!
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- Abandonment and trust: this is what the Trinity asks of us. This is precisely why our Lord deigns to dwell within us.
 - Our Lord desires to dwell within us by grace so that we might know Him all the more intimately, and in this intimate knowledge come to trust Him and love Him enough to give ourselves fully to Him.
 - He dwells within us and makes us His temple so that we might become accustomed to living in His presence now, and thereby be well prepared for dwelling with Him eternally in Heaven.
 - My brothers and sisters, today we celebrate the central truth of Christianity: that our one God mysteriously exists as a Trinity of Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - But as mysterious as our one God existing as three Divine Persons may seem, our Trinitarian Lord is not unknowable. No, my brothers and sisters, our Trinitarian Lord is closer to us than we are to ourselves, for He has the power to dwell within us.
 - Each of the baptized is a temple of God, as long as we remain in a state of grace. If you are concerned that you may not be a state of grace because of some serious, unconfessed sin, then repent and come to confession! Don’t be afraid.
 - And do not rob yourself of the gift of our Trinitarian Lord dwelling within your soul, and do not leave your soul at risk of forfeiting eternally dwelling with Him in Heaven. Confess your sins humbly, and allow our Lord to come back into your soul!
 - May we never take for granted the great gift of God’s indwelling within our souls, but rather may we be quick to resist and flee any spot or stain of sin.
 - May the Blessed Trinity remain with each of us always, until the end of the age.