

- Today we come to the end of the marvelous Octave of Pentecost, and it seems fitting that, as we do, we should celebrate such a magnificent feast: Trinity Sunday!
- This beautiful feast calls us to turn to God in His Three-fold majesty and glory, to praise and honor Him, for doing so leads us to loving him all the more, and loving Him helps secure our salvation.
- And the final words of our epistle should be the anthem that we carry within us today: “For of Him, and by Him, and in Him, are all things: to Him be glory for ever.”
- In our Gospel today we hear the story of Our Lord instructing His apostles to go out and baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, inaugurating for us the Trinitarian formula that we use so often as Catholics.
- But even more consolingly, the Gospel today reminds us of how our Lord is with us always, even to the consummation of the world. And how true this is: God *is* always with us, always available to us, always ready to save us.
- Yet our Lord is not the only who remains with always! In His great love for mankind, and in His desire to save us from our sins, our Lord sometimes allows His Immaculate Mother to serve as His ambassador to us.
- This coming week on Tuesday, the Church celebrates the 100th anniversary of the 2nd of six apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary to three shepherd children at Fátima, Portugal, in 1917.
- It was the Feast of St. Anthony, which is a huge feast in Portugal because, even though we refer to him as St. Anthony of Padua, St. Anthony was born in Portugal. Like every other parish in the country, there were lots of festivities at the parish church in Fátima.
- The parents of the 3 shepherd children: Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta, had hoped that the festivities for St. Anthony’s feast would distract the young seers from going to the place of the apparition that day, but that was not the case.
- In fact, when the children arrived at noon in the Cova, the place where the 1st apparition took place, there was a small crowd of people waiting for them.
- Just as had happened on May 13, there was a reflection of light that preceded the appearance of the Virgin Mary on the holm oak tree.
- In this 2nd apparition Our Lady stated that she wanted the children to continue praying the Rosary every day, and she taught them the prayer that so many of us commonly pray at the end of each decade: “O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.”
- I don’t know about you, but this prayer always sticks out to me when I pray the Rosary. While I find it easy to lose myself in the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and *Glory Be* when I pray the Rosary, this prayer always grabs my attention.
- This prayer is not just an urgent request for mercy and salvation, especially for sinners. It’s a statement of faith in Jesus’ power to save us. Implicit within it is the humble belief that our Lord wants to save us from our sins, which of course He does.
- As well, I find that this prayer has a way of recalibrating my outlook, reminding me that God’s mercy is what’s most important in this life.
- One of the interesting aspects of this 2nd Fátima apparition is that in it we begin to see how Lucia’s mission will be different than that of Francisco and Jacinta.

- When Lucia asks Our Lady if they will all go to Heaven, she responds that she will take Francisco and Jacinta to Heaven soon, but Lucia will have to remain on earth longer.
- In fact, both Francisco and Jacinta died in 1919, while Lucia lived until 2005.
- Our Lady goes on to reveal that Jesus wishes Lucia to live longer so that she can make the Blessed Virgin Mary known and loved on earth, and to establish devotion in the world to her Immaculate Heart – a feast we'll celebrate this year on June 24th.
- Knowing that being separated from Francisco and Jacinta will be sad for Lucia, Our Lady told her that she would be with her always, and that her Immaculate Heart “will be [her] comfort and the way which will lead . . . to God.”
- Interestingly, Our Lady revealed her Immaculate Heart to the three children, and it was encircled with thorns that pierced it, which the children understood to symbolize the sins of man by which Mary is offended, and for which she desires reparation.
- Our Lady's Immaculate Heart suffers, as does our Lord's Sacred Heart, because of our sins. Both are hearts that have been pierced by man's callous cruelty, but hearts that remain completely open to us and ready to take us unto themselves.
- Moreover, the children understood that Our Lady's Immaculate Heart craves reparation for sin; she desires reparation intensely because she knows that our sins separate us from our Triune God.
- Thus, reparation is a means of being reconciled to God. Doing penance and taking on sacrifices for our sins and those of whole world helps restore the balance of justice between God and us that we disrupt by our sins.
- Our Trinitarian Lord is omnipotent, all-knowing, incomparable, and incomprehensible. He made us and He sustains us in being; all that we have and all that we are belongs to Him.
- God owes us nothing, but we owe Him everything, especially our obedience and love.
- In our sinfulness we can be like a disrespectful teenager who has disobeyed and ruptured his relationship with his father, provoking him to anger.
- But Our Lady, being the good mother that she is, suffers when the relationship between her child and the Father is broken, and she seeks to mend it by encouraging the son to make amends, and by begging the Father to have mercy.
- As our mother in the order of grace, Our Lady wants all of us to be reconciled to God. She desires our salvation so much more than we do, and she suffers especially for those who turn away from God's mercy and provoke His wrath by their terrible sins.
- Our Lady told Lucia that her Immaculate Heart would be both Lucia's comfort and the way leading to God, and the same is true for us. When we turn to Mary's Immaculate Heart, she consoles us in our sorrows, but she always turns us to our Lord.
- She obtains for us the grace of conversion and repentance, and encourages us to make reparation for our sins by worthy acts of penance and sacrifice. Most importantly, Mary teaches us to know, love, and serve our Trinitarian Lord.
- On this Trinity Sunday, as we give proper honor and worship to our Lord, may we do so with Our Lady's help.
- May Mary's Immaculate Heart, which suffers for the sins of mankind, help remove the obstacles that keep us from God so that we can be fully reconciled to our Triune God and honor Him as we should. In particular, may we always be quick to make reparation for sins – both our own, and those of the whole world.

- Our Lady of Fátima, pray for us!