

The Most Holy Trinity

When we open the Bishop Hogan Center in a few weeks, our staff offices will return on site, Morning Glory Ministries' emergency assistance will have a more expanded welcome area, simultaneous meetings can happen again, our gift shop will reopen in a larger room, our choir will have designated rehearsal space, and Donnelly Hall will host receptions after weddings and diocesan events. But as I told potential donors on a recent hardhat tour, the two areas people coming to the cathedral most look forward to are restrooms and parking. Even when our lot was open before construction, the number one complaint I heard about the cathedral was, "There's no place to park." Well, there are plenty of places to park within a short walk. What people mean when they say that is, "There's no place to park on your property free." Now there will be, and we will still have free overflow parking at the garage across Broadway.

I'm the same way. If I can get free parking, I'll walk an extra block or two. We all like getting things free. But, of course, everything can't be free. If you want a free parking lot, somebody has to pay for its construction. If you want free roads and streetlights, somebody has to pay taxes. If you want a free meal, somebody has to buy it for you or spend the time to grow the food. As the saying goes, "There is no such thing as a free lunch."

On Trinity Sunday we hear scriptures about the activity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the Letter to the Romans, Paul explores our relationship with the Trinity. We are children of the Father, the First Person of the Trinity. Paul says we are not God's slaves; we are God's adopted children. Slaves, Paul says, "fall back into fear." But children cry out, "Abba, Father!" We approach God with all the love, trust and joy of a child. Paul goes on: The Second Person of the Trinity inherited everything from the Father, and we do too. We possess the kingdom of God—not a material kingdom, but a spiritual one offering greater satisfaction. Paul goes on: The Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, "himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." The Holy Trinity provides our comfort. In the Holy Trinity, there's room to park.

But, it's not free. Paul says we will be glorified with Christ "if only we suffer with him." Sometimes that suffering is imposed on us by others. They outright persecute us for what we believe. Other times we accept suffering willingly: we actively sacrifice for our faith because it means more to us than any materialism. Still other times it feels as though God himself has handed us suffering: through illness, broken relationships, or an accidental occurrence that changed everything. We cannot escape suffering, but we can overly fixate on it. No one likes to suffer alone, but sometimes we take out our suffering on other people to limit their happiness—as if increasing their suffering would make us suffer less.

The best things in life are not free. They come at a cost that we are willing to pay because they bring marvelous results. According to St. Paul, if we accept the suffering that being a Christian demands, we may receive the glory that being a Christian promises.