

The Indwelling Trinity

and Humility:

“To Be Plunged into Humility is To Be Plunged into God”



In the biography of Elizabeth of the Trinity, a Carmelite contemplative whose life centered on the Indwelling Trinity, as did the life of Sr. Mildred Mary Ephrem Neuzil of the **Our Lady of America®** devotion, Elizabeth describes the ascent to holiness as a “praise of glory” of the Most Holy Trinity, Whom she refers to lovingly as “my Three.” She states that a person’s degree of glory in heaven will depend on the degree of grace, that union with Eternal Glory, which is the Divine Indwelling Presence of the Most Holy Trinity, at the time of death. It is she who said, “to be plunged into humility is to be plunged into God.” We know well that the one human person who best understood and lived that kind of humility was Mary, our Queen, our Mother, the Immaculate Virgin, Patroness of our beloved land. In Elizabeth’s own words we hear:

There is one who knew this gift of God, one who did not lose one particle of it, one who was so pure, so luminous that she seemed to be the Light itself: “Speculum justitiae [Mirror of justice]. One whose life was so simple, so lost in God that there is hardly anything we can say about it. “Virgo Fidelis”: that is, Faithful Virgin, “who kept all these things in her heart.” She remained so little, so recollected in God’s presence, in the seclusion of the temple, that she drew down upon herself the delight of the Holy Trinity: “Because He has looked upon the lowliness of His servant, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed!” The Father bending down to this beautiful creature, who was so unaware of her own beauty,

willed that she be the Mother in time of Him whose Father He is in eternity. Then the Spirit of love who presides over all of God's works came upon her; the Virgin said her fiat : "Behold the servant of the Lord, be it done to me according to Your word," and the greatest of mysteries was accomplished. By the descent of the Word in her, Mary became forever God's prey.

(Jennifer Moorcroft, HE IS MY HEAVEN, The Life of Elizabeth of the Trinity, ICS Publications [Institute of Carmelite Studies], Washington, DC, 2001, pg. 147)

Both nuns, Elizabeth of the Trinity and Sister Mildred, had a great deal in common in understanding the role of humility in the life of the Virgin Mother of God and of its role in their own lives and in each of our lives if we are to imitate Our Lady and The Master, the All Holy One, the Divine Humanity who humbled Himself far more than any creature ever could in laying aside His Divinity to assume our sinful, corrupted flesh in the Sacred Humanity, precisely to deliver us from the wretchedness of sin. Both nuns understood the awesome mystery and grace of the Divine Indwelling Presence of the Most Holy Trinity as the "secret of secrets," the way to holiness, which is an *interior* engagement and *espousal* with the Living God. Look at the above description of Mary from Elizabeth of the Trinity and then at that of Our Lady of the Divine Indwelling as communicated by Our Blessed Lady to Sister Mildred on November 22-23, 1957:

Our Lady showed herself to me in a special way....This vision of herself is very important, as it reveals Our Lady as she really and truly was, the Immaculate Tabernacle of the Indwelling God.

Our Lady was standing on a globe, her right foot resting on a crescent or quarter moon, the left on the snout of a rather small and very ugly looking dragon. I saw fire come out of his huge jaws, but not very much, as he could not open them wide enough because of Our Lady's foot. At times he seemed to be somewhat black, again of a shade of green. Our Lady was all in white. Her veil was so long that it seemed to envelop the globe halfway. Sometimes the veil appeared so transparent that Our Lady's hair could be seen through it, and the hair seemed to be sparkling with the light of many glittering stars. At times the edges of the veil, sleeves, and garments seemed to be outlined in light. The veil was held about her head by a wreath of white roses. Her feet were bare.

The previous day Our Lady had appeared with her hands outstretched. At this second visit she slowly raised them, then crossed them on her breast close to her waist. While doing so, she bent her head slightly forward, and it seemed that her eyes were closed, not just lowered. On her breast, as though through a veil, the Triangle and the Eye, which is often depicted as the symbol of the Divine Indwelling, could be visibly

seen. I said that Our Lady's feet were bare, that is, devoid of any kind of footwear, but on each foot was a large white rose. The roses, both on the feet and on the crown, were of such dazzling whiteness that the outlines of the petals could barely be seen, sometimes not at all. It seemed that a strong beam of light streamed from the Divine Presence within Our Lady onto the globe at her feet. Than halfway around the figure of Our Lady above her head appeared a scroll on which were written in letters of gold the words: "All the glory of the King's daughter is within."

Though it did not appear that her lips moved, yet I heard these words quite plainly: "I am Our Lady of the Divine Indwelling, handmaid of Him Who dwells within." (Diary, Our Lady of America®, pgs. 22-23)

How beautifully both descriptions mirror the passage in the Book of Revelations, chapter 12, so often used to refer to Our Lady, "the woman clothed with the sun, with the moon at her feet, and on her head a crown of 12 stars." Indeed, she who bore into our world the very Light of the World should fittingly be effulgent, permeated and transparent with that very Light Who is Jesus, our Lord. Does not the image of Our Lady of the Divine Indwelling also reflect back on Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Virgin pregnant with the Divine Humanity, cloaked with the stars of the heavens, the moon at her feet, the radiance of the Sun flaming all around her! How magnificent is our God! How precious is the favor bestowed upon this Lady, and upon all of us through her!

Humility is the way to holiness, union with the Divine Indwelling Most Holy Trinity. Our Lady knew it. Elizabeth of the Trinity knew it. So many saints knew it. Sr. Mildred knew it, too. In a letter to Father Paul Leibold, her spiritual director, she says, "*Pride must be the great sin of our times, or at least one of the great ones, for Our Lord speaks so often about humility.*" Then she relates Our Lord's words to her as He calls her His little white dove and tells her **purity and humility are necessary for Him to make a dwelling place within us.**

My Heart speaks to the humble. It is they who hear My Voice. Be humble My children, be humble and pure of heart. Then will I come and dwell with you. My little white dove, how humility and simplicity are despised by the proud of this world. Oh what a loss they suffer. For despising the humble Christ will judge them.

In another 1954 letter to Father Leibold, Our Lord speaks that same admonition to Sister Mildred with respect to her and her spiritual director:

I seek always the humble and lowly of heart and since I have found two such, so I have entrusted to them a great mission, but become not vain, for I have chosen him and you only because of your unworthiness and lack of virtue. Let this thought be with you always, that you may remember that it is I working through you, Who sanctify you for His glory and the salvation of your souls. You are poor instruments in My hands, but through you a Great Work will be accomplished. I am the Great Sculptor of souls. With hammer and chisel I form them that they may glorify My Father by their beauty and perfection. Be pliant in My Hands, oh My two lowly ones, My chosen priest and My little white dove, and then will you be formed into My likeness and through you I will be formed in souls.

In a 1957 letter, Sr. Mildred relates the same spiritual counsel in Our dear Lady's words:

Fear not, small one, for it is through the most unlikely of instruments that God works His wonders. He chooses where the world would not. He makes that possible which the world deems impossible ...God has no need of anyone, yet He chooses the smallest of the small for His glory. Sweet child, let your humble heart be filled with a great confidence, for my Son is in love with your lowliness and simplicity of heart. Make known to souls the preference my Son has for humility.

Would that we all might hear such comforting words, "My Son is in love with your lowliness and simplicity of heart." Oh how we would make known to others the Lord's preference for humility!

Sister Mildred was born in 1916, shortly after Elizabeth left this world in 1906. Sister Mildred wrote Father Leibold in 1954 that she had been studying the writings of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity. Sister Mildred was struck by the fact that even while knowing little of Elizabeth's mystical doctrine of "praise of glory," that she herself had been thinking of the name "Laudem Gloriam," and had understood that every soul should be a "praise of Glory" towards God. Sister Mildred writes:

But after one has become in one's soul "the praise of glory" of the Trinity, it seems to me, that for some souls, or rather for many souls, there must be something else. Must not the soul proclaim this glory to the world? The other morning as I was following the prayers of the Mass, I came to the Lavabo and was suddenly struck by these words of the Psalmist: "Ut audiam vocem laudis; et enarrem universa mirabilia tua." Was not the Divine Word made Man the first Voice of His praise, in heaven and on earth? Is He not in our souls the Voice ever praising His Father? But since He has decreed to hush His own human voice so that the soul alone hears it, it is upon this same soul He depends to give utterance to the praise of the Trinity. After we have become, in union with the Divine Word the "Laudem Gloriam" of the Triune God, we must,

in union with the Word, again, become the “Vocem Laudis” of this same God-Head within us. Oh God, make of each of us “the voice of thy praise,” that we may proclaim Thy glory to countless generations of souls who will thereby glorify Thee forever and ever.

In 1958 St. Joseph appeared to Sr. Mildred to expound upon this awesome mystery of the Indwelling Trinity. He said:

Kneel my beloved daughter, for God is about to reveal to you a secret of the interior life. Few there are who learn it, and fewer they who live it in its fullness. This SECRET, dear child, is living with Him Who is within you and has made of your soul His Kingdom. There are many who know this Doctrine, but few to whom God reveals its secret operation. Few souls there are who empty themselves of all things that they may possess this Secret of Secrets, this ultimate glory of all living, this union with the Divine, ending in Eternal Vision.

This Secret cannot be written, lovely child; its deepest meaning will be made known to you in the interior depths of your child-like soul, in your humble heart, where LOVE has found Its resting place, Its palace beautiful.

They who would possess for themselves this mysterious workings of the Divine Secret must strive to cultivate in silence and humility this love for the Eternal Being within them. We [Mary and Joseph] lived this life, beloved child, so to attain it, souls must imitate as far as possible the fullness of our union with the Indwelling God.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls the doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity, 3 distinct persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in but one God, the central mystery of our Faith, that upon which all else depends. Everything begins and ends with the Trinity, the God Who is the **Eternal I Am. In THE TRINITY AS HISTORY, Bruno Forte describes the inner life of the Trinity in itself, that heavenly Trinity, naming the Father as Lover; he refers to the Son as the Beloved; and the Holy Spirit as Love Itself as it spirates between Father and Son in their unity as one. Our human mind can never fathom this mystery; even with supernatural Faith, we cannot fathom it, but can only grasp at its utter transcendence and awesomeness.**

The communication of that heavenly mystery into our created world is the economy of salvation and our Blessed Lady is the link between these two trinities as she was fashioned by the Eternal Father to be Mother of the Beloved Son and Spouse of the Holy Spirit and to bring the Word into our flesh where He would be part of the earthly trinity with Joseph, Mary’s human spouse and the human (legal) father of the Son of God. Mystery is heaped upon mystery. Add to it that this infinite, All Holy and Eternal God

would stoop so low, not only to take upon Himself our flesh, but to willingly become a prisoner to our poor selves through that extension of His mystery, His Divine Indwelling Presence in our very souls and in the Real Presence of the Eucharist that is our spiritual food and in our tabernacles where He stays with us as a constant companion on our journey.

With Sr. Mildred, let us sing and chant our worship of God all the way to heaven and beg His own Holy Spirit to groan from the depths of our being such praise of His glory that we do not even know how to utter. At least, with Sr. Mildred, let us try by echoing her prayer.

To live in the Holy Trinity, oh that is life, life as God willed it to be and desires it to be; yet, in how many souls is His work frustrated, His great designs made void. I will not be as those ungrateful ones who forget the true Holy Treasure within them. I will remember that the great God Who created me out of nothing is within me who, without Him, would return again into the nothingness out of which I was formed.

O Life, O Beatitude, O Heaven, You only delight of the soul, You who reach down from Your high celestial throne to gather unto Yourself the little ones of this earth and in recompense for the slight sufferings they bear out of love for You, give them Yourself. Look down, I beseech You, upon this, the smallest of Your small ones and have compassion on my extreme weakness and frailty, known even more to You than to myself, and make me entirely Yours.

Sister Mildred knew well what Elizabeth of the Trinity said so simply in these words: **“Let yourself be loved. All God wants of us is that we let Him love us and let His love rouse us to love Him in return.”**

Are we willing to let God love us?

And to let His love rouse us to love Him in return?

Will we declare with Sister Mildred, “I will not be as those ungrateful ones who forget the true Holy Treasure within them.”

Then let us beg God to love us as we pray this little prayer of St. Mechthild of Magdeburg.

**O Lord,
Love me intensely,
Love me often and long!
For the more often you love me, the purer I become.
The more intensely you love me, the more beautiful I become.
The longer you love me, the holier I become.**

And with Sister Mildred let us pray “The Prayer to the Indwelling Most Holy Trinity” for a greater humility and surrender so we might be ever more truly a sacrifice of praise to the glory of our Triune Love.

O my Love, my only Good, Most Holy Trinity, I adore You, hidden in the depths of my soul. To You, to Your honor and glory, I dedicate my life. May every thought, word and deed of mine be an act of adoration and praise directed towards Your Divine Majesty enthroned in my heart.

O Father, Infinite Goodness, behold your child, clothed in the likeness of Your Son. Extend to me Your arms that I may belong to You forever.

O Son, Divine Lord, made man, crucify me with Yourself that I may become, in union with You, a sacrifice of praise for the glory of Your Father.

O Holy Spirit, Fire of Everlasting Love, consume me on the altar of Divine Charity, that at the end of life, nothing may remain but that which bears the likeness of Christ.

O blessed Trinity, worthy of all adoration, I wish to remain in spirit on my knees, to acknowledge forever Your reign in me and over me, to Your everlasting glory.

Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the pure heart of St. Joseph, I consecrate my life to Your adoration and glory.

**At the moment of death, receive me, O my Triune Love, that I may continue my adoration of love through all eternity. Amen. (200 days)
(Prayer re-copyrighted 1993)**

Copyright © Contemplative Sisters of the Indwelling Trinity, 2009