

**Holy Trinity, 2008**  
**St. Mary, Siloam Springs, AR**

My best friend and I have known each other since 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Considering I'm now 38 years old, that's a long time to have a friend. You know, you can always tell if someone is your good friend if they pass the test of time: only good friends put up with each for that long! We went to grade school together, and then we attended the same high school together. Then we even went to the same college together. But when I went into the seminary, that's where he drew the line! I guess even friendship has its limits. But today my friend is a doctor practicing in Springdale, and we still stay close. There's something every interesting I've noticed about friendship: it makes your burdens half as heavy, while it makes your joys twice as intense. In other words, life is so much easier and a lot more enjoyable when you have a friend at your side. All the way back in the book of Genesis, God said: "It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a partner for him." God sends us good friends, they make life worth living.

Today we celebrate the feast of the Most Holy Trinity. We believe that God is one, and yet, He is also 3 Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Now, that is not easy to understand; and it even sounds a little contradictory. One day Archbishop Fulton Sheen was trying to explain the Holy Trinity, and a lady came up afterwards all excited and gushing, and said: "Oh, thank you, Bishop Sheen! I perfectly understand what the Trinity is!" And he replied: "My dear madam, I must have done a very poor job of explaining the Trinity because you're not supposed to understand it: it's a mystery!" Well, today I'd like to take a stab at

explaining the Trinity: it's about friendship. In the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit enjoy the most profound and the most intimate of friendships: they share each other's burdens and they intensify each other's joys. And by the way, this is what will make heaven so great: not just that "I will be saved and not go to hell," but also that we can share heaven together with others. Friends on earth make life worth living, and friends in heaven make eternal life worth living.

One of the best books I've ever read was *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. In my estimation, it's second only to the Bible. It's about a young college student named Raskolnikov. He fills his mind with all kinds of radical ideas and he thinks that he can do anything he wants and not suffer any consequences. I bet you don't know any college students like that. Well, he puts his theories to the test and actually murders his landlady and steals her money. Even though he is the primary suspect, the police cannot prove it. Well, Raskolnikov becomes friends with a young lady, and they fall in love. Through their friendship, she convinces him to confess his crime and accept his punishment. And what happens? He gets sent to Siberia! But she comes to visit him every day. You see, through friendship, Raskolnikov becomes a new man, he becomes a happy man. Friends double our joys and they halve our burdens, and they make life truly worth living.

Folks, let me ask you: do you have a really "best friend"? Now, you don't have to raise your hand, but just think about that question for a moment. I hope that all of you who are married

could immediately answer, "Yes, of course! My best friend is my spouse." If you didn't feel that way, please see me after Mass for some marriage counseling. And in my mind this is the real problem with polygamy. Besides the immorality of having several wives, which one do you consider your "best friend"? You see, by definition there can be only one "best" friend.

On the other hand, when I asked that question if no one popped into your mind, then may I suggest that's what you're missing in life? Maybe you're like Raskolnikov and have some crazy ideas floating in your head; you may need the love of a friend to bring you back to earth. Sometimes we feel that our burdens are going to crush us: well find a friend who can lighten the load. At times we feel lonely and have no one to share our joys and successes with. Friends make the burdens half as heavy, and they make the joys twice as happy.

On this feast of the Most Holy Trinity, we praise God, who is One God in 3 Divine Persons: Father, Son and Spirit. May He who is eternal and intimate Friendship bless us with good friends, who will make not only this life worth living, but also the life to come. And you know, if you still don't understand the Holy Trinity, well...good!

Praised be Jesus Christ!