

Lesson #9

The Mystery of the Holy Trinity

The Grace I am seeking . . .

*To seek thoughts and insights about the Trinity
and to comprehend the concept of mystery*

Before each prayer session:

O Holy Spirit, fill me with Yourself; fill me with love. Help me to feel loved by the Father and by Jesus. Help me to feel loved by my Associates. Set me on fire with love. Teach me how to love the Father and Jesus. Teach me to love my Associates and my neighbors. As you taught the first Apostles at Pentecost to communicate the love of God to all persons, teach me to be the apostle I have been called to be. Let me bring the message of the Father's love and Jesus' love to all, but especially to those who really do not know You, who do not feel loved. Help me, O Holy Spirit of love, to be an apostle of love. Amen.

After each prayer session:

Jesus, spark me with your Holy Spirit and grant that I may never merit the condemnation of the lukewarm, whom You have declared You will vomit from Your mouth. Fire me with a passion for life, and a passion for loving You, my brothers and sisters, and all of creation. Holy Spirit, completely fill me as You filled my brother Jesus. Produce in me the same mind that was in Jesus so that I, like Him, will be consumed with a passion for the will of His Father and my Father. Amen.

Missionary Cenacle Practice and Devotion

Father Judge had a great devotion to the Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Nonetheless, as we'll see below, his own writings directly about the Trinity in itself are somewhat limited and not particularly inspiring. However, his real love for and living of the mystery of the Trinity can best be found in his prayers. Often the prayers he composed or spontaneously prayed over people began "O God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit!" It was probably his most common way of addressing God in prayer. He left us a special prayer of praise of the Trinity which we call the "Missionary Cenacle Doxology" (from the Greek word *doxa* which means "glory" -- giving God glory!). This prayer is common in Missionary Cenacle gatherings and is often used in personal prayer lives of the Cenacle Missionaries.

During this month, commit this prayer to memory and pray it at least twice daily. Use it to end your Missionary Cenacle meetings! The Missionary Cenacle Doxology in praise of the Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is:

Blessed be God the Father who has created us!

Blessed be God the Son who has redeemed us!

Blessed be God the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us!

Blessed be the holy and undivided Trinity now and forever! Amen!

Make this Doxology a part of your daily personal and communal prayer life. It's an easy prayer also to include in your prayers

*with family or community before meals as part of grace

*when you get into a car or some other vehicle to begin a trip

*as you begin some new task, face a challenge, deal with a concern or want to give thanks.

In brief, let this "praise" of the glory of the Most Holy Trinity surround all the various moments of your life. That way your life itself becomes an act of praise and glory to the Triune God. . . . and according to the Missionary Cenacle *Rule of Life*, paragraph #3, that's what our lives are all about: "as Cenacle Lay Missionaries we seek first *to glorify the Triune God.*"

Introduction

The reason for the central place of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity in Father's Judge's though is simple and practical: "all Christian doctrine is grounded on the great fundamental truth, the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity" (*MF 5742*). The Holy Trinity is the "foundation on which the whole superstructure of the Christian religion is built" (*MF 6443*).

And yet when the Church uses the word "Mystery," it is essential to understand what She means and what She doesn't mean. Most importantly, by "mystery" the Church does not mean something that was incomprehensible and therefore why even bother thinking about it! Rather, the best example I ever saw of what the Church means when it calls itself a "mystery" was the time I celebrated a Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary Mass for a beautiful Mexican couple in Los Angeles. They had ten children. Each of the children had married and each of them had another five to ten children apiece! The couple's family asked if they could walk down the aisle with their parents to begin the celebration of the anniversary Mass. And so when the doors opened, following this little couple down the aisle were more than 250 people -- all of whom had sprung from their union! The man used a cane and had a little trouble with his balance and was quite a character, his wife stolid and serious. As they approached the altar, they had to come up three small steps to where I was standing. As the gentleman reached the top step, he suddenly started to lose his balance and fall backwards. I reached out and grabbed him and pulled him back -- at which point, he said, "Oh Father, I was trying to get away!" His wife, looking dismayed at such levity at such a solemn moment, looked at me disgustedly and said, "Father, I'll never understand this man!" That, my friends, is mystery! This dear lady certainly loved this man, knew him very well and yet realized that no matter how long she lived with him there would still be much that she just wouldn't understand.

The Trinity is a "mystery" not in the sense that it cannot be understood or spoken about or its multifaceted reality explored. Rather it is a mystery in the sense that it is a truth so profound, so full that it continually must be "unfolded," revealed, made known . . . and even with all that reflection and prayer and study for all the ages, the fullness of what the mystery of the Trinity contains can never be exhausted! We pray that during this month of prayer on the "mystery" of the Trinity, we will come to a deepening insight and a more profound love for the God who reveals the very heart of Divinity as "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

Process for Daily Prayer

▮ Read each passage once slowly, then reread it. Underline or mark any phrases or ideas that strike you.

▮ Think about what you've read. What attracts, challenges, excites, or upsets you? Perhaps the questions below can help you in your reflection.

▮ Talk to God about it. Whatever is on your heart -- concerns, anger, hopes, dreams, joy, thanksgiving -- open it up to God.

▮ Rest a while and let God speak to you in the quiet.

WEEK I

Weekend Reflection: **“To Glorify the Triune God”**

[From the Spiritual Life Committee, Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity]

Father Judge used the term “Holy Trinity” to refer to the fullness of the Godhead. So central was the mystery of the Trinity in his spiritual thought that the consequences of not having a loving knowledge of the Trinity were obvious:

“If men do not know or love God the Father, they will have little love or thought of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, consequently the mysteries of the Holy Eucharist, the Sacred Heart, and the other truths concerning Our Lord will have no meaning for them.” (MF 5742)

“To glorify the Triune God,” as we saw above, is the first goal of a Cenacle missionary. And yet, practically, what does that mean? In a scribbled letter written on a train en route to Huntington, Indiana, Father Judge gave possible the clearest sense of what he meant by “glorifying the Triune God” through our missionary efforts. The basic idea he explains this way:

“To do all we can to stimulate [the youth] to a greater devotion to the Blessed Trinity, to cause, as it were, the Image of God, the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost to luster the more effulgently within them; to arouse the tepid and careless to a sense of their obligation to the Most Blessed Trinity, to prevent, as it were, this glorious Image from becoming [dimmed], to strive and bring back those in whom sin profanes the Image of the Triune God within them; to labor to have, as it were, such souls cleansed from the soil and besmirching consequences of sin. (MF 4106-4115)

In a unique fashion the human person is made in the divine “image” (MF 8368). Practically, the Cenacle missionaries are trained “to see in the human soul the likeness of the Triune God” (MF 6566). The infinite value of the human person is founded on “the image and likeness of God” which it bears (MF 642). Thus all the missionaries are to “strive for a better knowledge of the value of the human soul” (MF 1345). The Trinity abides in every human heart -- whether the individual recognizes it or not -- and so is to be honored, glorified, and adored there. The divine image and likeness of the Trinity is profoundly imprinted in the heart of every human person.

The profound missionary depths and implications of the devotion to the Trinity were indicated in a brief sentence that Father Judge wrote in a letter in September 1919. He prayed there that “in all things His Image and Likeness and the Holy Name of the Trinity become more and more apparent -- above all, in us who are created to His Image and Likeness” (MF 577). What does this mean?

The image of God, the divine presence and power of the Trinity, is present in all creation but especially in the human person. The work of the missionary is to labor that this divine presence, damaged by sin, be both healed and revealed. This is what will bring glory to God. He understood that the Trinity is glorified by revealing the divine presence in the midst of the most sin damaged areas of human life. This requires even heroic self-sacrifice since sin and the devil will resist this revelation. In a certain sense, it is not so much a superficial matter of bringing to the person or the situation a reality that is foreign to it, but rather revealing its own deepest nature.

An example might help. Joe, a young man of 23, was in a state of serious depression. When he was 2 years old, his father died. To provide for Joe and his three siblings, his mother had to begin working full-time. Joe, the youngest, was left in the care of his aunt. Despite his aunt's best efforts, Joe always felt alone and abandoned by his mother. Then, tragically, a local man sexually abused him when he was nine. He grew up with pain, sorrow, resentment, and anger toward the world, his mother, himself . . . and God. Martha, a Cenacle Lay Missionary, met him at the factory where they both worked. Everyone avoided Joe because of his cynical, negative attitude. He just wasn't a nice person to be around. Martha -- through her faith -- recognized that underneath all the hostility and anger dwelt the glory of the Triune God in whose Image Joe had been made. Over six months, Martha became Joe's friend despite his many rejections of her and his insulting remarks. She persevered in patience and kindness toward him. Little by little, through Martha's love and faith and prayer, Joe began to see himself and the world in a different way, less aggressive and more grateful. God's glory -- which was already in Joe although damaged by terrible sin and evil -- was beginning to be revealed.

No matter what the condition of the person, the missionary must strive -- as Father Judge wrote -- to "try and realize more and more that every human being whom I meet is the living Image of the Blessed Trinity, to respect and honor them as a consequence" (MF 4109).

Do you personally recognize and thank God for the Presence of the Trinity within your own life? Are you able to acknowledge and reverence the Trinity in the lives of others? Who? When? How? Who is a person in whom it is difficult for you to acknowledge the Presence of the Trinity? How can you help to "reveal the glory of God" within that person's life? Ask the Spirit to show you what you can do.

p Write down your reflections briefly here:

WEEK I

Monday: “. . . in the Light of God”

From Father Judge:

[Father Judge felt that a love for and service of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity -- God Who is Family and Community -- had the power to transform the world. This type of love and service was to characterize the Cenacle Missionary. In the Conference given in 1930, from which we will be reading for the next three days, he talks of this “devotion” to the Trinity and the Incarnation and its missionary implications.]

“Our generation specializes in pleasure Our most highly paid professions are our public entertainers, another indication of our spoiled age. Why is there such a tremendous urge today for pleasure, and the means of pleasure? . . .

“Study these things in the light of God, of faith . . . of philosophy. Everything is being done to make man stop thinking of serious things, everything is being done to suppress the thought of man’s real life work, that is, to know, love and serve God. Everything is being done to prevent people from thinking of death and judgment, everything is being done to take people out of the home, to shatter family life more and more I am afraid there is going to be a great falling away of Catholic people.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 321)

From the Word of God:

“**1** Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman, robed with the sun, standing on the moon, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.**2** She was pregnant, and in labour, crying aloud in the pangs of childbirth.**3** Then a second sign appeared in the sky: there was a huge red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and each of the seven heads crowned with a coronet.**4** Its tail swept a third of the stars from the sky and hurled them to the ground, and the dragon stopped in front of the woman as she was at the point of giving birth, so that it could eat the child as soon as it was born.**5** The woman was delivered of a boy, the son who was to rule all the nations with an iron sceptre, and the child was taken straight up to God and to his throne,**6** while the woman escaped into the desert, where God had prepared a place for her to be looked after for twelve hundred and sixty days.” (Revelation 12:1-6)

Father Judge wanted us “study” the realities of our day “in the light of God, of faith.” How much does his analysis of the situation of his day speak to your own experience? What similarities are there? What differences are there? “Study” and reflect on this “in the light of God” -- a God Who is Trinity, Family, Community?

p Write down your reflections briefly here:

Tuesday: “The Church must go on battling”

From Father Judge:

“If that [a falling away of many Catholics from the faith] is true, what next? The Church must go on battling, and the Church will battle alone. It means the Church is going to annoy people, going to bother them. It is going to mean persecution. Some of us seniors may not live to see that but, mark my words, you young people. One reason that I am giving [this talk] is to prepare you for that day. I am thinking of the children depending on you, crying out to you, asking you to pity them. I am making a plea for the boy and girl not yet born who will depend upon us Twenty-five years hence if you have not the right kind of spirit, you won’t survive.”
(*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 321)

From the Word of God:

“**7** And now war broke out in heaven, when Michael with his angels attacked the dragon. The dragon fought back with his angels,**8** but they were defeated and driven out of heaven.**9** The great dragon, the primeval serpent, known as the devil or Satan, who had led all the world astray, was hurled down to the earth and his angels were hurled down with him.**10** Then I heard a voice shout from heaven, ‘Salvation and power and empire for ever have been won by our God, and all authority for his Christ, now that the accuser, who accused our brothers day and night before our God, has been brought down.**11** They have triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word to which they bore witness, because even in the face of death they did not cling to life.**12** So let the heavens rejoice and all who live there; but for you, earth and sea, disaster is coming—because the devil has gone down to you in a rage, knowing that he has little time left.’” (*Revelations 12:7-12*)

Father Judge saw the living Image of the Trinity in every human soul. This divine Image was precious and needed protection, care. Someone needed to “battle” for the human-divine dignity of the person. How much do you experience your faith and missionary vocation as a “battle”? With whom, against whom are you “battling”? How does this make you feel? What helps you to continue in the “battle”? What most discourages or disheartens you? Bring this all to the Triune God.

Write down your reflections briefly here:

Wednesday: “Specialists . . . in the Holy Trinity”

From Father Judge:

[When calling for the need for a “right kind of spirit” to be able to “survive,” Father Judge continues:]

“I am speaking . . . about your Cenacle spirit, about a type being developed by the Spirit of God in the Church In our hearts we should become specialists in these devotions of the Holy Trinity and Incarnation, no matter if there was not another person on God’s earth confessing them. That is why you make the sign of the Cross on everything. Don’t mind what people think of that cross There is no need of putting a dagger into it. Don’t make it too rigid. After all, we should not offend by our piety. Just think of the millions of acts of faith, acts of adoration, acts of love Why not speak about your symbols? There is a nice way in which you can confess these mysteries. You can make a little homily on the use of these symbols.

“In that charter gospel of the Church Jesus said to the apostles, ‘Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost’ (*Matthew 38:19*). You are ministering to that gospel, that is your vocation.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 321)

From the Word of God:

“**13** As soon as the dragon found himself hurled down to the earth, he sprang in pursuit of the woman, the mother of the male child,**14** but she was given a pair of the great eagle’s wings to fly away from the serpent into the desert, to the place where she was to be looked after for a time, two times and half a time. **15** So the serpent vomited water from his mouth, like a river, after the woman, to sweep her away in the current,**16** but the earth came to her rescue; it opened its mouth and swallowed the river spewed from the dragon’s mouth.**17** Then the dragon was enraged with the woman and went away to make war on the rest of her children, who obey God’s commandments and have in themselves the witness of Jesus.” (*Revelation 12:13-17*)

How practically can you manifest your faith in the Mystery of the Holy Trinity? How attentive are you when you make the Sign of the Cross? Do you reflect on the meaning of the words “In the name of the Father”? Take a few moments to prayerfully consider the meaning of the Sign of the Cross and the words we use as we make it.

Write down your reflections briefly here:

Thursday: “The central foundation”

From Father Judge:

“All the other mysteries are built on the Holy Trinity. This is the one great central foundation of our holy faith The mystery of the Holy Trinity is three Persons in one God. These persons are distinct. They are co-eternal, co-equal. God is one Being, one in essence but three in person. The Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God. But there are not three gods. One God and three Persons. How? That is the mystery we cannot understand. The Father is the principal. The Father knows Himself. Thus He begets the Son. The Father knowing Himself must love Himself. Thus, the Holy Spirit proceeds from Father and Son. . . .” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 186)

From the Word of God:

“1 Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me.2 In my Father’s house there are many places to live in; otherwise I would have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you,3 and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you to myself, so that you may be with me where I am.4 You know the way to the place where I am going.5 Thomas said, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?’6 Jesus said: I am the Way; I am Truth and Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.7 If you know me, you will know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.” (*John 14:1-7*)

How important to you is the “mystery of the Holy Trinity”? Is it, for you, really the “central foundation” of your faith? If so, in what way? If not, why? What does this “mystery” mean in your life practically? Do you reflect on it, pray about it, seek deeper insight, profess its Truth? Ask the Holy Spirit to deepen your knowledge and love of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Write down your reflections briefly here:

Friday: “Servants of the Trinity”

From Father Judge:

“You are Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity. Just what does that mean to you? I am going to propose to you a very powerful means of praying, namely, to exercise yourself in the service that you owe to the Blessed and Adorable Trinity. That service begins with the interior confession of the mystery or profession of faith and eliciting acts that come out of that. What should these acts be? This is for you to study and meditate on. When you do you will understand what you can put in the prayer ‘Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.’ I feel certain that if we could only develop these acts, this interior service, a tremendous efficiency would be given to our prayer.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 186)

From the Word of God:

“8 Philip said, ‘Lord, show us the Father and then we shall be satisfied.’ Jesus said to him,⁹ ‘Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? ‘Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father, so how can you say, “Show us the Father”?’¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? What I say to you I do not speak of my own accord: it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his works.¹¹ You must believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe it on the evidence of these works.¹² In all truth I tell you, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, and will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father.” (*John 14:8-12*)

Take a few moments and slowly repeat the prayer “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.” As you do, ask the Holy Spirit to show you the inner depths of the meaning of these words. Resolve to often pray this simple prayer many times each day to give honor and glory to the Triune God. This is one dimension of what Father Judge meant by “the interior confession of the mystery” as a key element of the Missionary Cenacle vocation.

Write down your reflections briefly here:

WEEK II

Weekend Reflection: “Contemplating the Mystery”

[From the Spiritual Life Committee, Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity]

The more we are in union with the Triune God as missionaries, the more we will be able to recognize the Divine Image in the other, especially the poor and most abandoned. That is why the apostolic person must “live more in the Presence of God, the Father and of the God the Son and of God the Holy Ghost.” (MF 4109)

Father Judge clearly outlined his thought about the mystery of the Holy Trinity in a letter sent out in 1924. (MF 139030f.) He began the letter by remind all that it is the duty of every Christian to “esteem . . . love . . . know . . . and teach” this “doctrine” of the Holy Trinity. He stated that there is nothing “more useful or salutary than to refresh our minds by a frequent consideration” of this teaching. He then simply outlined what was the core elements of the teaching regarding the Trinity: one God, three Persons. It is not in itself an emotionally inviting presentation, and yet he claimed that “frequent consideration” of this “doctrine” will “refresh our minds.” He insists that this teaching about the Holy Trinity is, in fact, the truth “dearest to the human heart because all other Christian truths find their root in this mystery.” There was, for Father Judge, no “more beautiful spiritual wish [we could] entertain that to long to be an apostle of this adorable and so necessary truth.”

What is striking about this presentation of his is the contrast between the feeling words he uses to describe the person’s reaction to the mystery of the Trinity -- “esteem,” “love,” “refresh,” “dearest” -- and the somewhat dry, abstract terminology used to express the doctrine of the Trinity. What is the bridge between these two seemingly very different presentations of this Truth?

I believe that the answer can be found in the word consideration. Father Judge urged the faithful to a frequent consideration of these mysteries. The great St. Augustine of Hippo defined contemplation as a “serene and straight look on the object to be looked at.” And so what Father Judge is actually inviting the Cenacle Missionary to is a frequent contemplation, a long and serene and considered look, at the depths and the reality of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity. Such “consideration” will bring light, peace, strength, understanding, and refreshment to the spirit.

It is through contemplation that the individual is led to love and, subsequently, to action for the Beloved. Not barren “knowing about” but a knowing that comes from prayerful “consideration” and leads to love and action is the key and essential element in Father Judge’s thought. This is what he called “devotional knowledge,” i.e., a “knowledge that begets fruit, that worketh in charity.” Sterile “knowing” is simply not enough. Contemplation of the mystery

must “arouse [the] will” so that the individual will “do good.” A contemplation that bears fruit in effective love and service is what Father Judge described as “devotional knowledge.” (*MF* 8629f.)

The Missionary Cenacle vocation always begins in the prayerful contemplation of the heart. There we come to know and love and honor the precious gift of the Divine Truth that has been given to us. When we talk about this Truth to others, we are sharing with others an interior process of faith and love that has already occurred. The more we truly know a person -- if that person is good and kind and loving -- the more we come to love that person. The same is true with God. And so Father Judge invited -- insisted! -- that the Cenacle vocation begins in a person's heart. As we profess, prayerfully consider, and adore these mysteries there love and apostolic zeal grow.

The first letter that young Tom Benson -- later Father Joachim Vincent Benson, S.T., a Cenacle pioneer -- received from Father Judge in the 1920s was describing the Cenacle vocation. Father Joachim later said that, based on the letter, he thought the Cenacle was more like a monastic group than a missionary one! Everything was about prayer, and the mysteries of the faith, and the need to have and promote a “devotional knowledge” of these mysteries. There was no mention of the missionary works the Cenacle engaged in! Later Father Judge cleared up the confusion but why did it happen in the first place?

Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *The Mission of the Redeemer* #91 tells us why:

... the future of mission depends to a great extent on contemplation. Unless the missionary is a contemplative he cannot proclaim Christ in a credible way. He is a witness to the experience of God, and must be able to say with the apostles: ‘that which we have looked upon...concerning the word of life,...we proclaim also to you’ (1 Jn 1:1-3).

You cannot proclaim with conviction to others what you yourself have not personally known and experienced! It will have a hollow ring. The Holy Father insists that “it is not enough to update pastoral techniques, organize and coordinate ecclesial resources, or delve more deeply into the biblical and theological foundations of faith. What is needed is the encouragement of a new ‘ardor for holiness’ among missionaries” (*Mission of the Redeemer* #90). As we seek to enter into a deeper knowledge and love of the Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, Father Judge couldn't be more in agreement. A living knowledge of God Who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is what we most ardently seek. It is this type of *devotional knowledge* that has the power to save!

Do you feel you have a “devotional knowledge” of the Holy Trinity? Try to imagine “explaining” the Mystery of the Trinity to someone: what would you say? What examples would you use? What would say that this mystery personally means to you, how it has intimately touched your life? Ask God the Father, Son, and Spirit for an ever increasing knowledge, understanding, and love of the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:

WEEK II

Monday: “The Mystery of mysteries”

From Father Judge:

“We cannot rightly celebrate the birthday of our Lord without the consideration of another mystery that it suggests, the Mystery of mysteries, the sublimest, the most ineffable of mysteries, the Blessed and Adorable Trinity”

“It is a fact sadly and terribly true that thousands and thousands are ignorant of or at least indifferent to these great truths, so holy and so necessary to humanity. This seems to be incomprehensible but even a superficial inquiry or investigation will show the truth of this statement. To quicken our consciences lest we be guilty of a lack of edification in this matter and to rouse our zeal, it would be useful to follow up this line of inquiry among those whom we meet in our daily life” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 38)

From the Word of God:

“**27** Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it is for this very reason that I have come to this hour.**28** Father, glorify your name! A voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will again glorify it.’**29** The crowd standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, ‘It was an angel speaking to him.’**30** Jesus answered, ‘It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours. . . .’ (*John 12:27b-30*)

Think of the people you run into every day -- on the street, in your neighborhood, school, or workplace. How many of them would have a real knowledge and love of the Trinity? How many would be completely ignorant of or have no interest in this Mystery? As you consider this, what does it mean to you? Is God calling you to do anything? Respond in a different way? Do you feel challenged to action? If so, what? If not, why not? Ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten and strengthen you as you do this.

p Write down your reflections briefly here:

Tuesday: “Make our home”

From Father Judge:

“We may study about these mysteries [of the Incarnation and the Adorable Trinity, we may] meditate on them, write on them. This would indeed be pleasing to our Lord and His Immaculate Mother but far more pleasing if we would agitate ourselves concerning ways and means by which we can spread a knowledge and love of the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity.

“All should strive to have a holy ardor in this attempt to do more for the Word Made Flesh and for that great God who is One in Being but Three in Persons. Communicate this spirit also to the children of our Cenacles, even to the ‘babes and the sucklings.’” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 38)

From the Word of God:

“**22** Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus.**23** Jesus replied to them: Now the hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified.**24** In all truth I tell you, unless a wheat grain falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies it yields a rich harvest.**25** Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.**26** Whoever serves me, must follow me, and my servant will be with me wherever I am. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him.**27** Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it is for this very reason that I have come to this hour.” (*John 12:22-27*)

Do you have a personal sense of God’s having “made God’s home” with you? Do you look on yourself as the “dwelling place of the Holy Trinity”? Yes? No? Sometimes? What could you do to encourage and deepen this sense of God’s abiding Presence in all the aspects of your life? How could you share this knowledge with others?

Write down your reflections briefly here:

Wednesday: “A life purpose”

From Father Judge:

“What a work we will do for God and His Church, how we will please Jesus and His Immaculate Mother if we can get this invincibly set before a child as a life purpose. What a pleasing birthday gift to our Infant Lord and Savior! How gracious will this King of kings and Lord of lords be to the Cenacle! What a generous giving will He make to us of His . . . graces and blessing

“We wish especially to place the Cenacle on record before God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, before our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, the adoring angels and saints, that heart and soul, in season and out of season, we pledge ourselves more and more to the interests of the Triune God. We renew every promise to have made to the Blessed Trinity and we consecrate ourselves to the Blessed Trinity in time, that we may possess the Blessed Trinity for all eternity.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 38)

From the Word of God:

“**32** ‘So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of human beings, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven.**33** But the one who disowns me in the presence of human beings, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.

34 ‘Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth: it is not peace I have come to bring, but a sword.**35** For I have come to set son against father, daughter against mother, daughter-in-law against mother-in-law;**36** a person’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’” (*Matthew 10:32-36*)

How much are you “pledged to the interests of the Triune God”? To what degree is the service of the Most Holy Trinity your “life’s purpose”? What are your other “life purposes”? Do you freely profess your faith to others? In what circumstances? When are you afraid or inhibited in professing your faith? Why? Ask for the grace to be bold in your service and profession.

p Write down your reflections briefly here:

Thursday: “The Great Designer”

From Father Judge:

“God is the Great Designer. Look around read, be informed of the designs that He works out in the sky, in the sea, in the earth. What a tempo! What a scheme there is to His universe! It would be a thrilling exercise of delight for the friends of this Infinite Being of Beauty, goodness and Power to discuss which of His designs appeals most to them or which is the most beautiful. The opinions, no doubt, would vary with the disputants but surely all would united in this, that nowhere is this Almighty Designer more wonderful than in the providence and life plan of each of his creatures whom He has created to His own image and likeness.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 180)

From the Word of God:

“**26** ‘So do not be afraid of them. Everything now covered up will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear.**27** What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops.**28** ‘Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell.**29** Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing.**30** Why, every hair on your head has been counted.**31** So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.’” (*Matthew 10:26-31*)

Why not try the exercise Father Judge recommends in today’s reading? As you consider all the beauty, goodness, and power in the created world, what are you most grateful for? What is the most beautiful, the greatest manifestation of God’s goodness for you? What most manifests God’s design? Give thanks and praise!

p Write down your reflections briefly here:

Friday: “A work of incomparable beauty”

From Father Judge:

“Apply this to yourself, my dear child. The Almighty Designer has a life plan for you and every day his mysterious Providence is weaving this into a work of incomparable beauty for His own honor and glory, your eternal ecstasy, and for the good of your neighbor. You can see this in others. Others see it in you. You see it in the servants of God, and they see you being woven into an exquisitely heavenly design.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 180)

From the Word of God:

“**1** The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh as follows,**2** ‘Get up and make your way down to the potter’s house, and there I shall tell you what I have to say.’**3** So I went down to the potter’s house; and there he was, working at the wheel.**4** But the vessel he was making came out wrong, as may happen with clay when a potter is at work. So he began again and shaped it into another vessel, as he thought fit.**5** Then the word of Yahweh came to me as follows,**6** ‘House of Israel, can I not do to you what this potter does? Yahweh demands. Yes, like clay in the potter’s hand, so you are in mine, House of Israel.’” (*Jeremiah 18:1-6*)

God’s design of love and newness and growth is present in the life of every human being and in God’s holy People. Reflect on your life. Can you distinguish the “design” that God has been weaving? Is it very clear? Still obscure? Completely indecipherable? What are two or three of the major elements of this “design”? No matter where you are personally or communally on the journey, express your love, confidence, and gratitude to the Triune God! End your prayer time today by praying slowly and meditatively the Cenacle Doxology.

▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:

WEEK III

Weekend Reflection:

“*Communio* and the Heart of the Trinity”

Communio is the “central and fundamental idea of the Council’s documents” according to the 1985 Synod of Bishops. But precisely, what is **communio/communion**? John Paul II equates it with the Greek word “koinonia” and notes that it is a “complex word.” It is “the unifying bond between the Lord and His disciples, between Jesus Christ and the baptized. It is a living and life-giving communion through which Christians no longer belong to themselves but are the Lord’s very own. . . . From this communion which Christians experience in Christ there immediately flows the communion which they experience with one another: all are branches of a single vine, namely Jesus” (*Christifideles Laici* #1).

Praying with Rublev’s famous icon of the Trinity can begin to reveal to us some of the Trinitarian depths of this mystery of *communio*. The setting of this famous icon is the visit of the three “strangers” to Abraham at the terebinth of Mamre in the book of Genesis 18/1-15. Tradition had taught that these three “strangers” were, in fact, the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. That is the way they are presented here. What does the icon look like? First, there are three distinct persons all seated around an altar with the terebinth tree in the background and a house to represent Abraham’s tent. The Father is the first figure on the left and is dressed in a sheer gold, almost transparent, outer tunic representing the “invisibility” of the Father. The Son’s blood red tunic signifies His redemptive act; the Spirit’s green tunic portrays life, hope and newness. And so each Person is distinct yet each wears the blue tunic denoting divinity. Each holds in the right hand the staff denoting divine authority. And although the Persons are distinct, their wings are all delicately but definitely touching, forming a clear unity among the Three. And yet the icon is open to all of us. It is not a “self-contained” Trinity of Persons but -- in a certain sense -- we become the “fourth” person of the Trinity as we contemplate the icon. The ancient Fathers of the Church spoke of various dimensions of “*communio*.” Contemplating this icon reveals at least three of those essential dimensions.

A. *The Trinity, Community and Hospitality*. The first and most foundational level of *communio* is the life of unity, love and hospitality at the very heart of God. **God is community, the basis of all communio!** The nature of the community revealed in the heart of God demonstrates the essential qualities of genuine community. The Persons are not isolated, unrelated entities. Nor does God “emerge” from some type of amorphous, undefined “divinity.” Nor do the Persons of the Trinity reveal either an unrelated autonomy or an undefined uniformity. Rather the Trinity manifests to us a delicate balance of interdependence, mutuality, interrelatedness, vulnerability and humility. Further we see that the Trinity is seated around a table, inviting us to community and, as in the case of Abraham and Sarah, bringing forth new communities. **God is hospitality**, and we are invited to become one with the reality of community we find at the very heart of God. God’s community and hospitality create our community. This is the first sense and level of “*communio*.”

B. The Trinity and Eucharist. Rublev's *Trinity* also reveals to us another dimension of *communio* -- the one we usually associate with the word "communion" -- the *Eucharist*. The Eucharist is the way we find open to us to enter into the very heart of this Trinitarian mystery. As we look at the icon we see that the three Persons are seated around an altar. On the altar is the Lamb of Sacrifice. The actual relationship of the three figures to one another forms a large chalice or cup. Our entrance into the heart of this divine Mystery, our sharing in this intimate life of the Trinity is through the sharing in the one Bread, the one Cup. The result of this encounter, this *communio*, is life-transforming: "We . . . become Christ!" (St. Augustine cited in *Christifideles Laici* #17). This experience of "communion" is far from a "Jesus and me" or "the Trinity and me" experience. Our "Amen" to "The Body of Christ" at Communion time is a "yes" not only to the sacramental presence of Jesus in the Eucharist but a "yes" to the fact that we, together with all the brothers and sisters of the community of the Church, are the "Body of Christ"!

C. The Trinity, the Church, and all Creation. But the experience of *communio* is not confined to the sacramental encounter of the Eucharist. Rather from the heart of the Trinity flows forth all creation, and all creation returns to the heart of God -- the great "circle of Life." From the first words of the creation story in Genesis, every molecule, every atom, every minute speck of creation is -- in the words of the great Jesuit poet of the nineteenth century, Gerard Manley Hopkins -- "charged with the grandeur of God." Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin whose thinking so dramatically affected the work of the Second Vatican Council speaks eloquently of this "divinized" nature of all the created universe. The poet Mary Oliver refers to "the light at the heart of every cell!" This "light at the center of every cell" finds its truest origin and final destiny in the very heart of the Most Holy Trinity . . . God who is Family, Communion, Hospitality.

If God is Family, is Hospitality, then what does this mean for us who are "made in the image and likeness" of God? Where we will discover most fully our happiness and fulfillment? What will be our greatest sorrow and pain? Ask the Spirit for Light to enter the depths of this Mystery.

▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:

WEEK III

Monday: “Entrancingly beautiful”

From Father Judge:

[If our creative God has a specific and special design for each of us,] “will anybody or anything interfere or spoil the design? There is danger of interference of a great ruin and this danger comes mostly from ourselves. We become impatient with God’s ways. Our capricious desires and restless nervousness murmur at the restraint that is necessary for the Divine worker or perversely, even insanely at times, we wish another design, a design of our own. What a pity if our perversity prevails. You see, then, the value of being patient. What a beautiful doctrine our divine Lord gave us, what a secret happiness when He taught us: ‘Sufficient for the day is its own trouble’ (*Matthew 6:34*).

“The theme of the wonderful design in your life is already beginning to be seen. It is entrancingly beautiful. It makes one gasp. I wonder if you perceive it yourself. Understand there is a beautiful providence being worked in your life. You can begin to trace the hand of the Divine Artist.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 180)

From the Word of God:

“I Yahweh our Lord, how majestic is your name throughout the world! Whoever keeps singing of your majesty higher than the heavens,² even through the mouths of children, or of babes in arms, you make him a fortress, firm against your foes, to subdue the enemy and the rebel.³ I look up at your heavens, shaped by your fingers, at the moon and the stars you set firm—⁴ what are human beings that you spare a thought for them, or the child of Adam that you care for him?⁵ Yet you have made him little less than a god, you have crowned him with glory and beauty,⁶ made him lord of the works of your hands, put all things under his feet,⁷ sheep and cattle, all of them, and even the wild beasts,⁸ birds in the sky, fish in the sea, when he makes his way across the ocean.” (*Psalms 8:1-9*)

Read over Psalm 8 very slowly. Reflect on the beauty of creation, the magnificence of redemption in Jesus, the sanctifying work of the Spirit in the Church and creation. Praise the Triune God and give thanks by praying the Cenacle Doxology!

Write down your reflections briefly here:

Tuesday: “Praise, thanksgiving, glory!”

From Father Judge:

“Praise, thanksgiving, glory, love, and adoration to the Triune God! May it be the supreme effort of the Cenacle to effect this as much as possible. May the Queen of the Cenacle obtain for us the blessing to appreciate above measure the grace that God has given us in working for this end. We should first and above all things be overwhelmed with thanksgiving for the privilege and favor given to us in a vocation which calls upon us so frequently to think of and make acts of love and abandonment to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; which urges us to spend ourselves generously that the truth and love of this first and greatest of all mysteries may be known, praised and adored by all.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 234)

From the Word of God:

“How rich and deep are the wisdom and the knowledge of God! We cannot reach to the root of his decisions or his ways.³⁴ Who has ever known the mind of the Lord? Who has ever been his adviser?³⁵ Who has given anything to him, so that his presents come only as a debt returned?³⁶ Everything there is comes from him and is caused by him and exists for him. To him be glory for ever! Amen.” (*Romans 11:33-36*)

The clearly excited tone of this conference by Father Judge to early Cenacle members is a gift and a challenge to us. Do I -- do we -- share the same level of enthusiasm, joy, and praise that moved so powerfully in the hearts of Father Judge and the apostle St. Paul? What might we do to make our lives be more filled with this type of apostolic excitement? Ask the Holy Spirit to show the way.

▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:

Wednesday: “The sublimity of the divine Truth”

From Father Judge:

“That this thankful appreciation [of the Mystery of the Trinity] should grow upon us, frequently we must call to mind the meaning and the sublimity of the divine truth of three Persons in one God. Acts of faith and of love, of adoration and thanksgiving should flow from its consideration. What more profitable exercise in meditation and in visits to the Blessed Sacrament, at times during the day, than to direct our thoughts adoringly to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In a word, our whole endeavor should be to increase in the love and knowledge of this most adorable mystery.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 234)

From the Word of God:

“**1** After saying this, Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: Father, the hour has come: glorify your Son so that your Son may glorify you;**2** so that, just as you have given him power over all humanity, he may give eternal life to all those you have entrusted to him.**3** And eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.**4** I have glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do.**5** Now, Father, glorify me with that glory I had with you before ever the world existed.” (*John 17:1-5*)

Spend some time thinking about God as “Father” and “Creator.” What feelings, words, thoughts, images come to your mind and heart? Expression of contrition, sorrow and repentance? Fear? Anxiety? Awe at the love and beauty of creation? What questions or concerns do you bring? What do you want to give thanks and praise for? Do you feel moved to adoration? Whatever it is, bring it all before the Triune God with absolute confidence. You can trust God with your heart.

Write down your reflections briefly here:

Thursday: “Sigh and long”

From Father Judge:

“What a debt of gratitude we owe the good God for calling us to the service of the Blessed Trinity! What a life work is that which finds its expression and happiness in teaching little ones a knowledge of the Holy Trinity -- to trace upon themselves its blessed symbol, the sign of the Cross and putting into their hearts those sacred words, ‘Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.’ We cannot be urged too frequently to elicit these interior acts towards this ineffable mystery. How happy should we be if we could but spend our whole life in no other thought! However, this is heaven’s joy, the joy that should make us sigh and long for that day when we shall be lost in the rapture of contemplating, without earth’s distractions, this Mystery of the Blessed Trinity with God’s angels and saints. This joy is not yet ours since we are still upon earth but next to that joy none can come so close as the opportunity given to us to exalt this mystery in our own lives and to bring others under its influence.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 234)

From the Word of God:

“6 But still, to those who have reached maturity, we do talk of a wisdom, not, it is true, a philosophy of this age or of the rulers of this age, who will not last long now.⁷ It is of the mysterious wisdom of God that we talk, the wisdom that was hidden, which God predestined to be for our glory before the ages began.⁸ None of the rulers of the age recognised it; for if they had recognised it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;⁹ but it is as scripture says: What no eye has seen and no ear has heard, what the mind of man cannot visualise; all that God has prepared for those who love him . . .” (*1 Corinthians 2:6-9*)

Spend some time thinking about God as “Son” and “Redeemer.” What feelings, words, thoughts, images come to your mind and heart? Expression of contrition, sorrow and repentance? Fear? Anxiety? Awe at the love and beauty of redemption and God’s “abundant life” offered to humanity? What questions or concerns do you bring? What do you want to give thanks and praise for? Do you feel moved to adoration? Whatever it is, bring it all before the Triune God with absolute confidence. You can trust God with your heart.

▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:

Friday: “A harvest of good works to offer”

From Father Judge:

“There is nothing comparable to [glorifying the mystery of the Trinity in our own lives and sharing it with others.] Do we appreciate it? Do we thank God for it? Again that we may have a thankful spirit, we must exercise ourselves in these thoughts frequently. We should even entertain a fear lest we offend by a lack of thanksgiving. We should importune our Blessed Mother, of all mortals the most favored by the Blessed Trinity, that she may aid us in thanking the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We should be thankful that in our vocation to the Cenacle we have so blessed a means of manifesting this thanksgiving. Devotion to the Cenacle, to its interests and its works will lead us to serve the cause of the Holy Trinity better, more wholeheartedly and, by God’s grace, will give us a harvest of good works to offer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 234)

From the Word of God:

“**1** I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. **2** Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more. **3** You are clean already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you. **4** Remain in me, as I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, unless it remains part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. **5** I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. **6** Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a branch—and withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire and are burnt. **7** If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for whatever you please and you will get it. **8** It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit and be my disciples.” (*John 15:1-8*)

Spend some time thinking about God as “Spirit” and “Lord and Giver of Life.” What feelings, words, thoughts, images come to your mind and heart? Expression of contrition, sorrow and repentance? Fear? Anxiety? Awe at the love and beauty of creation and the on-going sanctification of the Church and the world? What questions or concerns do you bring? What do you want to give thanks and praise for? Do you feel moved to adoration? Whatever it is, bring it all before the Triune God with absolute confidence. You can trust God with your heart.

▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:

WEEK IV

Weekend Reflection: Developing a “Communio Mind”

The challenge of living with a “communio mind” or way of being and thinking -- becoming fully human, ever more fully a person in relationship and community like the Trinity - is a particular challenge. Why? Because due to sin as well as cultural, economic, philosophical and even religious forces, we battle a double fatal tendency.

First, *isolating individualism*: much of Western society exalts the “rugged individual” who alone conquers all odds. In the United States, for example, celebrities such as John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Rambo and other similar cultural icons embody this admiration for the “you-can-do-it-on-your-own,” “pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps” individualist.

Second, *“winners and losers”*: the corollary of this isolating individualism is the creation of “winners” and “losers,” people who have “made it” and people who “aren’t worth much.” A common measure of who are the “winners” is material success, but “personality,” fame, power, physical beauty are also powerful indicators in society. As people considered “losers” feel more and more isolated, deprived of “communio” and “community,” the normal reaction is one of either self-hatred in the form of depression or anger toward others. Lack of communion can have deadly, violent consequences for humanity. Depression becomes suicide; anger becomes murderous rage.

10 Principles of a “Communio Mind.” As a people born from within the heart of the Communio of the Trinity, I would like to suggest ten principles that would both define and support a transformed way of thinking and being.

1. Humanity is made for “communio,” Family/Community. If God is “family” and “community” -- and we are made in the divine image and likeness -- then this means that ultimately we are made to live in community. Our lives will be fully human to the degree that the bonds of our heart and our lived reality expand to include the ever widening “circle of Life.” Community and Family is who we are!

2. The goal of communio is the “great Banquet” at the end of time. Jesus often speaks of God’s ultimate “goal” for all humanity: that we will sit down at one table as one beloved and united people to celebrate with God a great and eternal banquet feast of Love (Lk 13/29)!

3. The Church’s mission is to welcome all to the Banquet, especially the most marginalized. If the very nature and heart of God is community / communio, is it any wonder that Jesus went out of his way to reach out to, to “touch” and be in “communion” with those whom the society of his day considered outcasts. This same concern that all be included in the communio and experience the caring love of God moves the Church to have a “preferential option for the poor”, i.e. the marginalized, those in danger of being isolated from the community of the human family!

4. All the baptized are called to share in this mission. Mission and sacrament are intimately united. Every Mass closes with a “missioning” ceremony. The priest in God’s Name declares, “Go, you are sent forth as missionaries, as apostles to take this blessed Good News you have heard and the Divine Presence to all you meet this week. My dearest friends, I entrust to you my mission -- to invite others to enter into my communio!”

5. Each person and movement is gifted differently for this mission. A variety of temperaments, experiences, and cultures is essential to communio. Communio is not uniformity. Pettiness and infighting within the Church diminish the noble and holy task to which we are all called. The Church is a “communion of communities.”

6. The world -- not the Church -- is the principal place of this mission. Communio must begin in the Church and then extend out to the world. Most of us spend the vast majority of our time and energy and effort in the world of work, family, neighborhood, and school. That is where God has placed us -- in a very unique and particular way -- to accomplish the Divine Mission right there!

7. Communio demands both unity with the Church’s pastors and personal responsibility. Communio anticipates the baptized person being alive to the Spirit in such a way that the daily circumstances of his or her life dictates mission. Direction and coordination from our pastoral leaders assures a unity of effort, mind, and heart. But these never take the place of the personal initiative and responsibility of God’s People.

8. The Eucharist, the Word of God, and prayer nourish communio. Pope John Paul II reminds us that communio exists or is fostered principally in two ways -- “the word of God and the sacraments.” Also the true disciple “must also enter into his bedroom to pray to his Father in secret . . . , [to] pray without ceasing.” Entrance into the communio of the divine Mystery requires allowing God time on a daily basis to speak to us in the depths of our being.

9. Communio requires forgiveness. What we experience, in reality, day by day in the Church, is a “messy” communio, an “imperfect” communio, a communio with God and one another that can only be realized through mutual forgiveness, compassion, and humility. Only these gifts will make the communio real and possible.

10. Calling often on the Holy Spirit awakens and strengthens communio. God’s Presence lives in the heart of all reality, drawing all things into unity, peace, fullness of life. Increasing attentiveness to this divine Presence, a constant calling on the Holy Spirit opens our minds, our ears, our hearts to see what is really all around -- the breaking in of the glorious Reign of God, the coming of communio! The God who is Trinity, Community, Family, Hospitality empowers us to reach beyond our personal and communal “comfort zones” to embrace the whole world!

How much is your mind a “communio mind” in the image of the Trinity? How much does your thinking and action reflect the “I-can-do-it-on-my-own” or “winner-loser” mentality of much of society? Which of the “principles” for a communio mind most struck you? Why?

▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:

WEEK IV

Monday: “Love of God”

From Father Judge:

“I would also call your attention to a particular Fruit of the Holy Spirit, charity. Charity is the love of God, is the love of our neighbor. The love of God demands of us that we do much for Him. It exacts, first of all, that we know Him . . . that we serve Him.

“The very first conviction of reason, the surest rule of life, is that we order all things according to the end of our being. We know what this is. Therefore it should be our ceaseless striving, our ceaseless searching to discover that way, to live in that way, in which we can better know, love, and serve God.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 172)

From the Word of God:

“**7** For none of us lives for himself and none of us dies for himself;**8** while we are alive, we are living for the Lord, and when we die, we die for the Lord: and so, alive or dead, we belong to the Lord.**9** It was for this purpose that Christ both died and came to life again: so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.**10** Why, then, does one of you make himself judge over his brother, and why does another among you despise his brother? All of us will have to stand in front of the judgement-seat of God:**11** as scripture says: By my own life says the Lord, every knee shall bow before me, every tongue shall give glory to God. **12** It is to God, then, that each of us will have to give an account of himself.**13** Let us each stop passing judgement, therefore, on one another and decide instead that none of us will place obstacles in any brother’s way, or anything that can bring him down.” (*Romans 14:7-13*)

How would you describe -- in a few words -- the “end of your being”? What is the purpose or meaning of your life? Try to be as honest with yourself as possible. Now ask yourself what is God’s “purpose or meaning of your life”? Are they similar, the same, very different? Ask for the grace to make the Love of the Triune God and neighbor the focus of your being.

p Write down your reflections briefly here:

Tuesday: “Motives of thanksgiving”

From Father Judge:

“Motives of thanksgiving come immediately to us. First of all, as children of Holy Mother Church how favored we are among the children of men. Think of those blinded millions, those who are blinded by the pleasures of life, by thirst for worldly treasures, for worldly ambitions, who scarcely ever give one thought to the object of their creation, whose thought is ever in the present and whose ambition is ever devoted to seeking what is worldly and temporal. Let this truth overwhelm you with joy and thanksgiving; let it permeate your very soul; let your faith and religion instruct you in your destiny, in the purpose of your origin.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 172)

From the Word of God:

“**19** ‘There was a rich man who used to dress in purple and fine linen and feast magnificently every day.**20** And at his gate there used to lie a poor man called Lazarus, covered with sores,**21** who longed to fill himself with what fell from the rich man’s table. Even dogs came and licked his sores.**22** Now it happened that the poor man died and was carried away by the angels into Abraham’s embrace. The rich man also died and was buried.**23** ‘In his torment in Hades he looked up and saw Abraham a long way off with Lazarus in his embrace.**24** So he cried out, “Father Abraham, pity me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.”**25** Abraham said, “My son, remember that during your life you had your fill of good things, just as Lazarus his fill of bad. Now he is being comforted here while you are in agony.**26** But that is not all: between us and you a great gulf has been fixed, to prevent those who want to cross from our side to yours or from your side to ours.”**27** ‘So he said, “Father, I beg you then to send Lazarus to my father’s house,**28** since I have five brothers, to give them warning so that they do not come to this place of torment too.”**29** Abraham said, “They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them.”**30** The rich man replied, “Ah no, father Abraham, but if someone comes to them from the dead, they will repent.”**31** Then Abraham said to him, “If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead.” (*Luke 16:19-31*)

The call of the Trinity is to live in the midst of the Divine Heart with all men and women and the entire creation. Sinful self-centeredness damages this plan and breaks the “communion” God so desires. Reflect on your own life: how has God called you to live in a communion of love with others? Do the poor, the broken, the people “on the fringe” find a place in your heart and at your table? Give thanks for your own sharing in this missionary vocation.

p Write down your reflections briefly here:

Wednesday: “For His sake forget all!”

From Father Judge:

“If the ordinary faithful should be so happy in the possession of that knowledge [of their origin in God and their destiny to return to God], we in the Cenacle whose rule of life, whose daily duties, commit us even more to attachment and devotion to this truth -- to know God, to love God, to serve God . . . we should be more overwhelmed with this knowledge.

“Measure your vocation; measure it you cannot, but try to measure it by everlasting happiness, by an eternity of reward. What divine generosity and splendid magnificence is the reward that God gives to those who for His sake forget all! Could I wish a greater blessing? Could greater happiness ever come to you?” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 172)

From the Word of God:

“**9** One of the seven angels that had the seven bowls full of the seven final plagues came to speak to me and said, ‘Come here and I will show you the bride that the Lamb has married.’ **10** In the spirit, he carried me to the top of a very high mountain, and showed me Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God. **11** It had all the glory of God and glittered like some precious jewel of crystal-clear diamond. **12** Its wall was of a great height and had twelve gates; at each of the twelve gates there was an angel, and over the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; **13** on the east there were three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. **14** The city walls stood on twelve foundation stones, each one of which bore the name of one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” (*Revelation 21:9-14*)

It’s good at times to think about the end -- where all this is leading. It keeps things in perspective, and -- for the person of faith and the missionary -- provides motives for immense joy and thanksgiving. Read carefully the section from the book of Revelation. Picture yourself in the scene. Let your heart experience the joy, peace, hope, glory, and thanksgiving of that awesome moment. Give thanks; this is truly your destiny!

▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:

Thursday: “Love of God makes all things easy”

From Father Judge:

“The possession of the virtue of Charity will help you much to understand all this [about our human origin and final destiny]. How ardently, then, do I pray the Holy Spirit to infuse more and more into us this holy virtue, the love of God. The love of God makes all things easy. If you falter by the way your trouble will be not that you did not receive grace, nor calling, nor urging, but that you did not correspond with the loving advances of the Holy Spirit.

“Pray, then, pray much, pray often . . . that you may have an abundance of this Fruit of holy Charity. Truly loving God, you will surely love your neighbor. God’s love will make the burdens of life easy to bear. No prayer will please heaven more than the prayer of the heart for charity.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 172)

From the Word of God:

“**31** After saying this, what can we add? If God is for us, who can be against us?**32** Since he did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for the sake of all of us, then can we not expect that with him he will freely give us all his gifts?**33** Who can bring any accusation against those that God has chosen? When God grants saving justice**34** who can condemn? Are we not sure that it is Christ Jesus, who died—yes and more, who was raised from the dead and is at God’s right hand—and who is adding his plea for us?**35** Can anything cut us off from the love of Christ—can hardships or distress, or persecution, or lack of food and clothing, or threats or violence;**36** as scripture says: For your sake we are being massacred all day long, treated as sheep to be slaughtered? **37** No; we come through all these things triumphantly victorious, by the power of him who loved us.**38** For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nothing already in existence and nothing still to come, nor any power,**39** nor the heights nor the depths, nor any created thing whatever, will be able to come between us and the love of God, known to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (*Romans 8:31-39*)

In your experience, is this true: “the love of God makes all things easy”? What do you think Father Judge means by this? Can you think of a few examples where this statement has proven true in your own life? Ask the Holy Spirit for this ever increasing gift of Charity, love of God and neighbor!

✎ Write down your reflections briefly here:

Friday: “Mary . . . the Shrine”

From Father Judge:

“Mary was the shrine which contained the great God, the Creator of the world. What reverence, what honor, then is due her! And how strictly did she guard every thought and act so that nothing unworthy of her high estate might be found in her. Behold her passing through all the states of womanhood in order to be a universal model -- as a daughter, spouse, mother and widow, keeping unsullied the virtue which alone entitles every woman to respect and makes her an object of veneration, namely, holy purity

“Not only is Mary deservedly called the ‘Vessel of honor,’ but also the ‘Cause of our joy.’ But never in this world shall we realize fully how Mary is the cause of our joy. It is only in heaven that we shall see how her prayers, her maternal solicitude, her powerful help followed us in our sorrows, that we might receive comfort and consolation; how she presented her petitions to her Divine Son, how she saved us from temptations and falls; how she, the Star of the Sea, piloted us through countless storms on the sea of life.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 154)

From the Word of God:

“**1** On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there,**2** and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited.**3** And they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the feast had all been used, and the mother of Jesus said to him, ‘They have no wine.’**4** Jesus said, ‘Woman, what do you want from me? My hour has not come yet.’**5** His mother said to the servants, ‘Do whatever he tells you.’ **6** There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons.**7** Jesus said to the servants, ‘Fill the jars with water,’ and they filled them to the brim.**8** Then he said to them, ‘Draw some out now and take it to the president of the feast.’**9** They did this; the president tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from—though the servants who had drawn the water knew—the president of the feast called the bridegroom**10** and said, ‘Everyone serves good wine first and the worse wine when the guests are well wined; but you have kept the best wine till now.’**11** This was the first of Jesus’ signs: it was at Cana in Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.**12** After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, but they stayed there only a few days.” (*John 2:1-12*)

Mary is truly the “Mother of God.” Spend a few moments with that thought: Mary contained the fullness of the Divinity by which the stars and the universe were made within the embrace of her womb. Place your own life, your hopes, dreams, and concerns, your missionary vocation under the care of Mary. She will know how to care for you just as she cared so exquisitely for her own Son Jesus.

p Write down your reflections briefly here: