

Readings

Ex 34:4b-6, 8-9

Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56

2 Cor 13:11-13

Jn 3:16-18

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Pope Leo XIV has demonstrated that he will fulfill the mission he received as Pope and Bishop of Rome in an Augustinian fashion, a Trinitarian fashion, giving witness to the God of relationships: Father, Son and Holy Spirit: generative, always reaching out, searching and sharing.

As followers of Christ, in the footsteps of Augustine, we are invited and challenged to go out of ourselves to enter into communion with God, with others, with nature. What that means is that we are committed to searching together and sharing the fruit of our search among all of us.

In the face of controversy, polarization, deep divisions and wall building, we are called to be peace makers, builders of bridges, pontiffs of the beloved community, the city of God.

Confronted by hate, derision, belittlement, we are called to invite and welcome others, be friends with others. To love others, even when they don't love us. To speak well of others, think well of others, do well by others and with others. Especially when they deride and speak ill of us.

In the face of exclusion, marginalization, prejudice and discrimination, we are called to be people and communities which respect and rejoice in diversity, as did Jesus, whom Augustine endeavored to follow and make more fully present in his time. So, too, in our time we are called to go out of ourselves to extend our relationships with others, with nature and with God; to be inclusive.

And if this seems difficult, even impossible, then we can be sure we are on the right track because Scripture reminds us today that, in order to be more like God, to love like God loves, we must give of ourselves – as he gave his only Son – sharing ourselves out of love with no other purpose than to be true to our very nature, which is Trinitarian.

It has never been easy to follow Christ, to be Christian. Augustine experienced that challenge and so do we today. In drawing near to the Trinity, we learn that we are not enough, we need one another and – all together – we need God!

And so, in this month when we recall and celebrate the first anniversary of the election of Pope Leo, we turn to our divine Creator and place all our trust not in ourselves but in the Trinity as we pray in the words our Savior put on the lips of his vicar, Leo XIV:

Loving God, you ask us to hear the call for peace
that does not rely on weapons or fear or military deterrence;
the peace of Christ as unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering.

You do not hear the prayers of those who wage war.

You remind us that religious language must never be used to justify violence and
armed struggle.

Peace is built in the heart and from the heart by eliminating pride, arrogance,
resentment and victims.

You remind us that in the face of inequality, both social and economic,
you challenge the wealthy elite who are living in a bubble of comfort while
millions remain marginalized.

You recall and invite us to recognize that health cannot be a luxury of the few.
You address poverty as a matter of justice before it is a matter of charity.
You call us to bridge the gap between the privileged and the disadvantaged.

To believe in Christ and to be his disciples means allowing ourselves to be
changed and to take on his same feelings and to practice the same mercy
which moved Christ.

It means learning to have a heart that is moved, eyes that see and do not look away, hands that help others and soothe their wounds, shoulders that bear the burden of those in need.

Loving God, keep our hearts restless. Keep our hearts open so that we might truly hear your voice and respond as you would respond, with love.