

Paul and the Trinity (Year A)

2 Corinthians 13:11-14—Conclusion and Final Blessing

¹¹ Finally, brethren, farewell. Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹² *Greet one another with a holy kiss.* ¹³ *All the saints greet you.* ¹⁴ *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.* (2 Corinthians 13:11-14)

1. Farewell: conclusion to what is arguably Paul’s most heartfelt and personal letter.
2. Holy Kiss: the “holy kiss” (cf. Rom 16:16; 1 Pet 5:14)
3. Saints: all the “holy ones” (Greek *hagioi*) greet you (13:13; cf. 1 Cor 1:1-2)
4. Three Divine Persons:
 - a. Lord Jesus Christ: “grace” (Greek *charis*)
 - b. God (the Father): “love” (Greek *agapē*)
 - c. Holy Spirit: “fellowship” or “communion” (Greek *koinōnia*)

The Living Tradition

John Chrysostom: Paul closes his letter with prayer, taking great care to unite them all with God. Those who claim that the Holy Spirit is not God because he is not inserted with the Father and the Son at the beginning of Paul’s letters are sufficiently refuted by this verse. All that belongs to the Trinity is undivided. Where the fellowship is of the Spirit, it is also of the Son, and where the grace is of the Son, it is also of the Father and the Spirit. I say these things without confusing the distinctiveness of the Persons but recognizing both their individual and the unity of their common substance. (Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Corinthians* 30.3; adapted by G. Bray from *NPNF1* 12.418-19)

Roman Missal:

The Priest, extending his hands, greets the people, saying:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (Holy Trinity, Year A)

1. When Paul mentions the “saints,” to whom is he referring?

2. Why do the Introductory Rites of the Mass begin with this quotation from 2 Corinthians 13? How is the Mass an entry into the life of the Trinity?

For Further Reading

1. Thomas D. Stegman, S.J. *Second Corinthians*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009.
2. Gerald Bray, editor. *1-2 Corinthians*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament VII. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1999.