

**9<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the year B cycle 2015**

**A few weeks ago I was sitting in my office and heard this thump, thump, thump.**

**It went on and on and on. Finally I got up, went to the window and looked out into the parking lot.**

**There stood a young man, probably a high school sophomore dribbling a basketball.**

**Thump, thump, thump.**

**He was a neighborhood youth who had been coming over to the church parking lot daily for the past few weeks to practice.**

**Even though there is no basketball rim in the parking lot, he would practice going up and down dribbling between his legs, around is back, going backwards and speeding frontwards.**

**Finally after dribbling for a number of minutes he would picture an imaginary hoop in his mind and take a shot.**

**I am sure that much of his enthusiasm has to do with the professional NBA basketball finals that are now going on. It's a good bet that he was modeling his dribbling and shooting after one of the great players in the game, possibly LeBron James.**

**The point I wish to make is that by practicing over and over the moves which great people make, whether that be basketball or faith, we actually become like them.**

**Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Trinity, a community of three persons, Father, Son and Spirit, who model for us the fullness of life. And I would like to suggest one simple gesture which, if we repeat it over and over with great awareness of what we are doing, we, like the young teen practicing basketball, can become more and more like the God who invites us into his family of love.**

**And what is that simple gesture?**

**What is the one motion which repeated over and over with devotion and deep concentration can radically change our lives?**

**It is the sign of the cross.**

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

**First of all, it is a prayer full of profound meaning.**

**In the name of the father: The One who has created us as good**

**And of the Son: Who has redeemed us of our sinful ways by modeling for us the way to live a full life**

**And of the Holy Spirit: who is the bond of unity between the Father and the Son...and the bond between anyone who wishes us to be bound in the unity of divine love.**

- **In the name of the Father: God created good (basketball players' insecurity)**
- **In the name of the son: God has forgiven our sins, removed the vale of guilt and overcome our death by his resurrection, and invited us to share His Good News to the ends of the earth**
- **In the name of the Holy Spirit: We do have to do it on our own, but not alone; we are part a community walking in the bond of the Spirit of God.**

**(pause)**

**There are some very special basketball moves: dunk, three point, special moves to the basket.**

**There is one very special move we can make with the sign of the cross.**

**It happens at the baptismal font. It is when we make the sign of the cross at the very place we were born into the life of the Trinity.  
(explain NOT going to the small fonts at the entrance of church.)**

**A couple of other special moves with the sign of the cross:**

- **Blessing our children and grandchildren (cards when you entered church).**
- **Sign ourselves in public (at a restaurant).**
- **Have a holy water font in the home to bless ourselves.**

**(Pause)**

**The young man in our parking lot  
did not have a team to play with;  
he did not have a uniform;  
he did not even have a basket.**

**But with his ball and inner consciousness, he gracefully displayed his  
commitment to the game of basketball.**

**We too, my brothers and sisters, can, with grateful hearts and deep reverence, express our faith in the God who has called us beyond the horizons of hate, and bigotry and self-centeredness and sin to form a community of unity love and peace.**

**Let us daily practice with great consciousness the gracious gift of God:  
Let us sign ourselves with dignity and thanksgiving in thanksgiving for the great life we live... in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**