

Holy Trinity – May 22, 2016
Proverbs 8:22-31; Psalm 8:4-9; Romans 5:1-5; John 16:12-15

Explanation of the Trinity:

When I was a kid at Sacred Heart Orphanage, I heard about the mystery of the Trinity through two stories I remembered from religion class.

The first one, according to one legend, was about St. Patrick who was traveling in Ireland converting the pagans when he happened upon a number of Irish chieftains along a meadow. The tribal leaders were curious about the Trinity and asked St. Patrick for an explanation. So he bent down, picked a shamrock, and showed it to them, and explained how the three leaves are part of the one plant, and how similarly the three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, are part of one Supreme Being. (I'm glad St Patrick wasn't unlucky enough to be in a field of 4-leaf clover).

The second is a story told about St Augustine who was walking along the seashore trying to figure out the mystery of the Holy Trinity when he came up to a little child trying to pour the ocean into a hole in the sand with a seashell. Augustine told the child that it was impossible. Then the child told Augustine that it was also impossible for the mind of anyone to try to understand the mystery of the Holy Trinity. With that, the child turned into an angel and disappeared.

We are a Trinitarian church...we start Mass "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The Presider's prayer to God at the beginning of Mass ends with the routine phrase "Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen." So we speak of God as the Trinity all of the time. We know that this is who God is from what we can learn in the Scriptures.

The communion of Creator, Son and Spirit is the fullness of life. It's something beyond anything that we can imagine. The history of salvation has been to show us the inner life of God and to share that life with us. That is what Christianity is all about.

The reading from Proverbs sets the stage, as the "wisdom of God," the Holy Spirit, speaks of the joy of being present at the beginning of the world. "When the Almighty established the heavens, I was there...I was beside God as a craftsman...and I found delight in the human race."

God finds delight in us – even though we are often less-than-delightful. Even though we are often disappointing...even though we are prone to hatred and selfishness, God loves us anyway. Here is our God who loves us so much, and whose love cannot be contained.

In the *Psalm* we sang: “How glorious your name, O God, in all the earth.” When the word “name” was used in the Old Testament, it referred to the power of the one being referred to. We celebrate God the creator in this psalm, but the psalm goes further. It celebrates the pinnacle of God’s creation – humankind. We have been given rule over the works of God’s hands. God wants to have a relationship with us...to share the God-life with us.

In the Second Reading we hear about Redemption, another thing that only God can do. Saint Paul says to the Romans that “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then he goes on to say that **“the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”** Here is one of hundreds of times that the Holy Spirit is mentioned and in a personal way.

Finally, in the Gospel, we have some of the words of Jesus. He was there sitting in front of the disciples. As the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus says: “I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when the Spirit comes, the Spirit of truth, you will be guided to all truth. The Spirit will not speak on his own, but will speak what he hears.” The Spirit will guide our hearts so that we understand what Jesus is saying, what the Church is saying and why it is true. This is what the Spirit of God will do. The Holy Spirit is alive and with us today in the Church—even here among us—as our constant teacher and comforter, and as the One who is effective and acting in the life of the Church.

So, we started reflecting on who God is and we ended up discovering that our lives are intimately tied up with God and God’s Church!

By the power of the Holy Spirit we find Jesus, sent from the Creator, in the Sacraments we celebrate and then carried out into the world of our everyday lives. Each of us becomes the evidence and example of God to the world.

We celebrate that God is with us always and continues to teach us and guide us and show us the way. We celebrate the God who, rather than being hidden from us, is revealed to us.

God’s creativeness so far exceeds our own, and God’s love overwhelms us. Here is a God who loves us so much...a God who created us out of that love...a God who became one of us, as God the Son.

A God who loves us so much...He remains with us, as God the Holy Spirit — living within each of us.

In the gospel, Jesus declares: “Everything that the Father has is mine,” explaining that the Holy Spirit will also share that with his disciples.

Here is a God so generous...He gave us Himself, in flesh, to suffer with us and die for us. Here is a God so generous...He continues to give us Himself, through the appearance of bread and wine, here at this altar.

Here is a God who shares with us gifts: wisdom and understanding...courage and piety...knowledge and counsel and fear of the Lord. Here is a God who loves us beyond our wildest imaginings – three distinct persons, but with limitless possibilities.

And our God wants us to discover that, and celebrate that. God is constantly calling out to us...but not necessarily with words.

The fact is: God *wants* to be found. And God gives us so many opportunities – so many times when we travel through even the darkest tunnels of our lives and then come out the other side to encounter something surprising and beautiful and holy.

It might be in a mountain. Or it might be a co-worker in the next cubicle at work. It might be in watching a toddler learning to walk, or seeing an eagle soar, or in hearing a kind word from a friend at the passing of a loved one.

It might be in the broken bread of the Eucharist. God is present. If we only look, **we will find God.**

Each of us, in our own way, is called to create our own work of art, from the many colors of our own lives. And it begins by discovering the great Artist, The One whose creative genius guides everything.

Today, Trinity Sunday, we are reminded of the limitless possibilities of God – one God who cannot be contained, but must co-exist as three persons. God is ready to help us because God wants to be found. Let us seek God out in all creativity, in all creation – as Creator, Counselor, Redeemer, Spirit and Friend.

The world, its riches, pleasures, and honors will pass away. The saints did not all begin well; but they all ended well. If we have begun badly; let us end well.

Deacon Greg Cecere

May 22, 2016

(with excerpts from Fr. Bevil Bramwell OMI and Deacon Greg Kandra)