

Trinity Sunday, May 22, 2016
Sermon preached by the Rev. Daniel Vélez Rivera
Readings: Proverbs 8:1–4, 22–31, Psalm 8, Romans 5:1–5, John 16:12–15

Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Trinity, the three persons of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; a celebration established to counter the heretical belief that Jesus was a son of God like we are children of God, yet not co-equal. The priests of the early Church created canticles, collects, prefaces, and hymns to affirm the Christian belief of God in three. At the baptism of every Christian the priest names the presence of the Holy Trinity by saying, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of Holy Spirit.” Just last Sunday I baptized Rosalie Mayo at the Chapel in the Woods, our first outdoor baptism!! It was a wonderful celebration! Today at our 3 o’clock service in St. James’ I will baptize another child into the family of Christ, Isabella Carranza Añazgo. These baptisms are a manifestation of the three persons of God in us, given so that we might *share* them, holy practices entrusted by Christ to us so that we might perpetuate the love of God in the Trinity through the values and traditions that were shared with us. Christ commanded us to love all and to baptize all in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; and that is what we are doing as we welcome others into the one body of Christ.

We heard a few moments ago in the first reading from Proverbs that when God the Father created all that is, God was not alone. The moment of Creation was shared with the presence of divine wisdom, which we call the Holy Spirit. The theme that I will speak about today has to do with sharing. The Holy Trinity was at work when Creator God shared that epic moment of Creation with Wisdom; and then God Creator and Spirit became incarnate in the Son, so that humanity would receive the mandate to share with others the faith, wisdom, emotions, compassion, grace and all the wonderful gifts and talents that we inherited through our ancestors.

The Holy Trinity is not a doctrine to be understood by pure rational, analytic study of its principles because it is above the realms of finite human reasoning. The teachings about the Trinity in the Holy Bible are far more concerned about our relationship with God than our understanding of God’s nature. It is at times challenging for me to teach the understanding of one God in three persons because God is infinite, God is perceived, concrete and abstract at the same time, and ever present. What makes it helpful for me to teach about the Holy Trinity however is that while we cannot see God in three persons, we can see the infinite images of God in each other. So the Trinity is embodied in us and God is manifested in us. Yes, to understand the infinity of God in three persons is challenging, it goes beyond human understanding, but

nevertheless we have life, we are given a soul, and at the core of our beings is that relationship between created and Creator; God, three in one.

Did you notice that today's scripture readings were relatively brief? Particularly the reading from the book of Proverbs and the Gospel of John. I am fascinated by how much can be said about the infinity of God with so few words. I wish that the Holy Trinity would impart in me that gift of more in less, my homilies would be much more brief and clear, but no, short and sweet is not one of the gifts of God to me so I'm sorry, you'll have to endure me! ☺ It was in the Gospel lesson that I gleaned the theme of sharing. John restated how it was that Jesus shared the glory of God and the Holy Spirit with his disciples. In verse fourteen John said that Jesus told his disciples that the Spirit would glorify him, and that the Holy Spirit would take what was Christ's and give it to the disciples. The Holy Spirit would receive all of that earthly wisdom of Christ's (the good and the bad, the joys and the sorrows, even life and death) and share it with the people of God so that we in turn could share the glory and wisdom of God with our neighbors. Once again, the manifestation of God in humanity comes from that giving and taking of life experiences, Christ's life experiences as the model to live by, a gift given in love and shared with us through the Holy Spirit.

The three persons of God are acting and are manifested through us. So what do we do with all that? Well, let's start with the fact that by faith and belief in the Holy Trinity we are gathered here, glorifying God around us and in us. We embody the love of Christ given for us as we remember him and share the body and blood of our Lord at the primary feast of our church, the Holy Eucharist. What more do we do with the incarnation of the God in us? Well, in a few hours we will welcome a new child, Isabella Carranza Añazgo, into the one body of Christ, the holy catholic church. We are brought together to learn, to grow, to be fed and to feed others through the sacred traditions we inherited from our Christ, God made man. No, the mystery of God in the Holy Trinity may not be easy to explain or understand, but at the same time we are here sharing what we know, what we have, that holy DNA of the sacred mystery of God. Jesus instructed his disciples before his death and ascension to share love with others and to baptize others in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit – and we are doing just that today, to God be the glory. Amen.