

Trinity Sunday ~ June 11, 2017
Sermon preached by the Rev. Daniel Vélez Rivera
Lessons: Genesis 1:1- 2:4^a, Psalm 8, 2 Corinthians 13:11-13,
Matthew 28:16-20



The Book of Common Prayer defines the Holy Trinity as follows, “The Trinity is one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” These concise words define the Holy mystery and principal doctrine of Christianity regarding God our creator, liberator and sustainer. But what these words don’t do is explain the concept of the Holy Trinity. That is because the Trinity is a holy and divine *mystery* which doesn’t necessarily have an explanation. It “is” in the way that God is. As Christian believers, we understand the idea of a triune God each in our unique manner, which is what I imagine God expects of us having given us wisdom and free will. However, we are also given descriptions in the Holy Bible provided by the messengers of God, prophets, sages and disciples, of the triune God: Alpha and Omega, with no beginning or end – a Holy mystery.

Even though there is no precise explanation for the Holy Trinity one God, human creation has different ways to communicate with God, one of those ways is prayer. Prayer is another mystery which moves God as much as it moves us. The power of prayer allows humanity to have a relationship with God. It is with our souls, minds, and hearts that we faithfully pray affirming that which we don’t see, but feel. It is also with faith that we can use our holy imagination to conceptualize God. You may recall my saying in the past that the Trinity is one of the most complex doctrines to understand, nevertheless, we affirm by faith that God is divine and that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Last Sunday was the feast of Pentecost and the readings for the day explained how Jesus breathed onto his disciples the Holy Spirit, which according to different authors in scripture is our advocate, counselor, guide, revealer of truth, teacher, and companion until Christ’s next coming. Today’s reading from Genesis is the Creation story. In the second line of this first book of the first book of the Bible, God refers to the presence of the Holy Spirit in this manner, “a wind from God swept over the face of the waters”. Now, depending on which version of the Bible you read, the wind from God is also translated as “the Spirit of God hovering over the waters” or in the Hebrew, the ruach of God hovered over the waters, which also means essence or spirit. You may recall from last week’s gospel reading from John (20: 19-23) how Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon his disciples before ascending to the Father at the first feast of the Pentecost. It is that same wind, that Holy breath, that is given to us as a gift of God’s eternal presence before time and forevermore. Why would this

description of God appear in the very first sentences of the Bible? Because it is important. The second reference to the Spirit of God was when God created the first human, saying, ““Let us make humankind in *our [plural]* image, according to *our [plural]* likeness.” So, God the father, mother and spirit created humanity in God’s infinite image at the time of universal creation.

We have so many ways to communicate with our Creator God. The fifteenth Russian artist, Andrei Rublev, talked to God without using words. Mr. Rublev was an artist and author of the famous icon of the Holy Trinity. Through his art he not only communicated with God but he also communicated with people about his personal image of the divine mystery of God. In that icon, you see three figures sitting at a table with a chalice or cup in the middle of the table. Their heads appear to be half resting or supporting one another surrounding this cup on the table. The cup is a symbol of the sacrifice made by God of his human and divine Son, Jesus, the third person of the Holy Trinity.

At every Eucharist, we witness and communicate with the triune God with and without words, as we use our bodies and are enveloped by the Holy in the Eucharistic feast, that place where we, the body of Christ called Saint Gabriel’s, communicate with God as we see, touch, and taste the mystery of Christ’s body and blood. In the Eucharistic feast and anywhere we find ourselves we also converse with God through our prayers which are probably the most intimate and personal expressions that unite us to God.

I invite you to reflect on what person of the Trinity is the most familiar to you when you pray. We lean on those intimate prayers to support ourselves, just like the three images in Rublev’s icon rest on one another to live and survive in this earthly kingdom. Some people may think that it is impossible to see God, but we constantly witness the infinite manifestations of our Creator. In his icon, Rublev chose to highlight the image of the human and divine Christ in a fourth image, in the form of a chalice. We will have the opportunity to do the same as we receive the consecrated body and blood of our Lord during the Eucharist.

The Holy Trinity invites you to continue supporting one another, God calls us to be true brothers and sisters in the Spirit. When the Apostle Paul told the new Christians that they should greet one another with the kiss of peace he was inviting them and us to recognize the Holy presence of God in each other and to see in one another the face of Christ. Remember this, God doesn’t ever expect humanity to fully understand the nature of God and all that God is. Not understanding the mystery of God is what keeps us humble. Yet at the same time, the Lord invites you to open yourself to the transformation that comes with faith in the Holy Trinity, three in one.

Let us then pray for one another, pray for unity among us and in the world, pray to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: God from God, light from light, true God from true God to keep us and sustain us as we sojourn on. Amen.