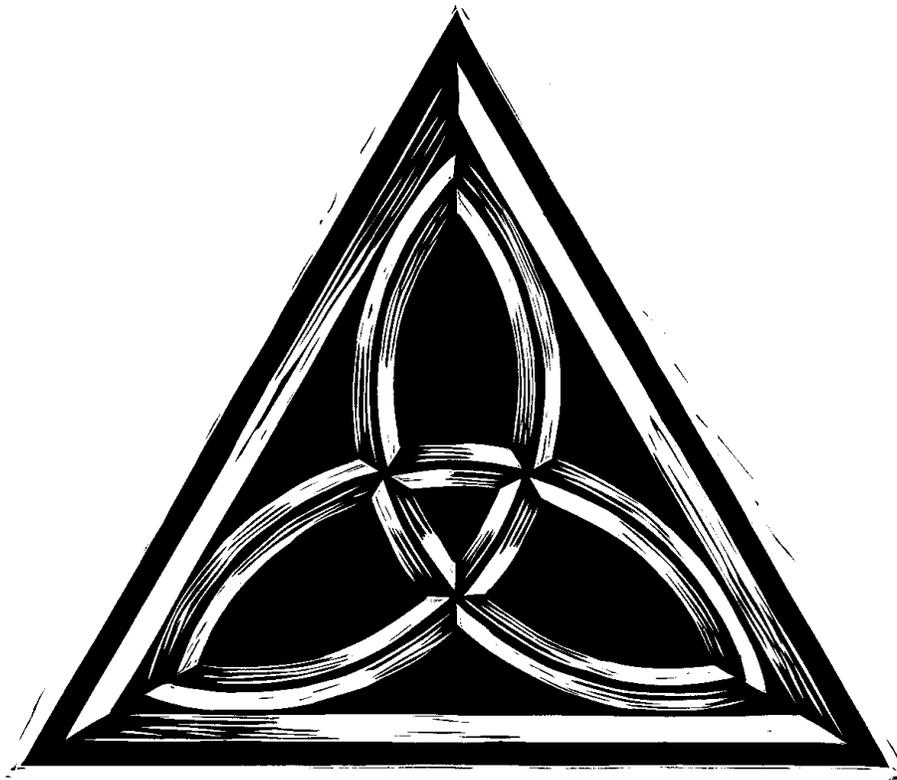




The First Sunday After Pentecost
May 30th, 2021



Join us in person, by Phone, or Zoom Sunday Mornings at 9:30 AM
Zoom #116 359 399
Dial in to join us by phone: (646) 558-8656

The Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of your divine Majesty to worship the Unity: Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Old Testament

Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

The Response

Psalm 29 *Afferte Domino*

- 1 Ascribe to the LORD, you gods, *
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his Name; *
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters;
the God of glory thunders; *
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice; *
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.
- 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees; *
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, *
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the LORD splits the flames of fire;
the voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; *
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

- 8 The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe *
and strips the forests bare.
- 9 And in the temple of the LORD *
all are crying, "Glory!"
- 10 The LORD sits enthroned above the flood; *
the LORD sits enthroned as King for evermore.
- 11 The LORD shall give strength to his people; *
the LORD shall give his people the blessing of peace.

The Epistle

Romans 8:12-17

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ-- if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

The Gospel

John 3:1-17

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

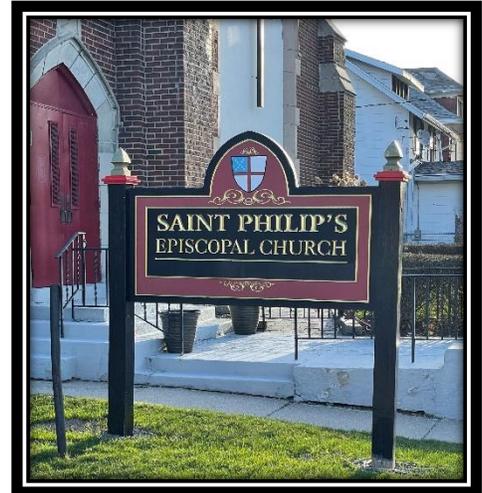
"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Prayers

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
On earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever.
Amen.



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Intoxicate us with visions and dreams that will align us with you. Jolt us from our inertia into action. Come into our lives with power.

Come, Holy Spirit, and stay with us.

Transform our melancholy into joy, our worry into peace, our despair into hope. We pray for healing for those who suffer from any distress or illness. Come into our lives with healing.

Come, Holy Spirit, and stay with us.

Work your ways in this world, and direct the leaders of the nations to embrace peace and justice.

Come, Holy Spirit, and stay with us.

Shape our weary and wounded souls into souls on fire for God's mission.

Come, Holy Spirit, and stay with us.

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We are trying a new format
for the mailed readings.
Please let us know if you have any
thoughts about the new format.



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Trinity Sunday (B)

You Will See Yourself

RCL: Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17



One of the challenges to proclamation on Trinity Sunday is that there are no Biblical passages that discuss the peculiar Christian understanding of God as three persons. The word in the creed is *personas*, like the mask Greek actors wear to play different characters. It is always the same person behind the three personas! Other monotheists are utterly baffled by bold assertions in creeds and in doctrinal theses of just how the One God of the Abrahamic religions can appear to be three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and still be only one God. Such assertions about the Trinity emerge from our reflection upon scripture but are not found explicitly in scripture *per se*.

Our readings for this day, for instance, from Psalm 29 and Isaiah illustrate the compelling power of God's voice, able both to create and destroy creation all at once, and able to convince the most unsuspecting of us to assent, indeed, proclaim with vigor, "Here I am, send me!" The voice can call us to return to the myriad problems of *terra firma* and risk being a prophet, pointing out all the ways in which we, as God's people, just have lost our way and need to, at least, reform our behavior, if not full-out repent and begin again. People, understandably, do not like to hear the prophetic voice, which explains why Jonah tried to get as far away from Nineveh as possible.

In Romans, Paul leads us into more mystical territory with his assertion that, like Jesus, we can now call God by the more familiar name, *Abba*, Father, suggesting that, although we suffer with Christ, we also will share in his glory. In John, Nicodemus tries mightily to ask straightforward questions of Jesus, only to get an enigmatic response about wind and being born from above, which he mistakes for being born again. Nick leaves shaking his head and muttering, "How can these things be?"

It may be helpful to turn to those Christians throughout the ages we call saints and mystics on the topic of the Trinity. Take, for instance, Julian of Norwich, a woman in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries who lived in a hut, or cell, attached to the outer wall of St. Julian's Church in Norwich. During her lifetime, the city suffered the effects of the Black Plague, the Peasant's Revolt, and the suppression of the Lollards. Julian, while sure she was dying, received a series of visions or "showings" and wrote them down in the first book ever written in English by a woman: *Revelations of Divine Love*.

A popular summary of her showings has been reduced to the popular saying: "*All shall be well, all shall be well, all manner of thing shall be well.*" Yet, a look into the Thirty-First Chapter of the Long Text of her "showings" may provide us with a bit more insight into the nature of the Holy Trinity and Divine Love; she would spend the rest of her life sharing these insights with those who came to the window of her cell seeking spiritual guidance. The text begins:

"And our good Lord answered to all the questions and doubts which I could raise, saying most comfortingly: I may make all things well, and I can make all things well, and I shall make all things well, and I will make all things well; and you will see yourself that every kind of thing will be well. When he says, 'I may', I understand this to apply to the Father; and when he says 'I can', I understand it for the Son; and when he says, 'I will', I understand it for the Holy spirit; and when he says, 'I shall', I understand it for the unity of the blessed Trinity, three persons and one truth; and

when he says, ‘You will see yourself’, I understand it for the union of all men who will be saved in the blessed Trinity. And in these five words God wishes us to be enclosed in rest and peace.”¹

She refers to “these five words” which are: I may, I can, I will, I shall, you will. With these five words, we learn that God’s wish for us is to be “enclosed” in rest and peace! God wants to surround us with Divine Love, and each *persona* of the Holy Trinity is forever and constantly involved in this enclosing or surrounding us with Love, which in most of the Bible is described by the Hebrew word, *hesed*. *Hesed* is perhaps best understood as an “act of good faith” rather than a feeling. It is a quality that humans are to share with God: that generous ability to put the interests of another weaker party before one’s own, most especially the needs of the poor, widows, orphans, and strangers from other countries who are sojourning in the land. That is, God’s Divine Love, as revealed to Julian, is acting with love on behalf of others just as God acts with love on our behalf.

Since scripture says we are made in God’s image, then we are to be those people who exemplify *hesed*, acts of faith and love toward others in the same way that God desires to enclose us – surround us – with God’s own Divine Love, rest, and peace. This suggests that the five words are, in the end, meant for us. We might think of it as the doctrine of the Little Engine That Could. That is, to be made in God’s image is to wake up each morning and say the five words: I may, I can, I will, I shall, you will see yourself. Then we are to go about our days, generously putting the interests of others ahead of our own. We will then be enclosed and surrounded by God’s Divine Love in rest and peace as we share that Divine Love with others.

In this receiving and giving of God’s Divine Love, we discover that all shall be well, all shall be well, all manner of thing shall be well; we find ourselves enclosed in rest and peace.

When we say, “I may, I can, I will, I shall, you will see yourself” once a day, how Divine it will be to know, to really know, that the Divine Love of God in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit means to enclose us and surround us every day until that time when we will return to the household of God’s Divine Love from whence we come. That day, we will all become one with the One in whose image we are created. Perhaps this is what “You will see yourself” really means: we will see who we really are and who we are created to be. We will see that we are those people meant to accept and share generously with others the Divine Love that those like Julian, Ignatius, Isaiah, Paul, and Jesus have tried so hard to describe and to live through acts of faith themselves. Surely such knowledge of ourselves deserves at least one day every year to remember who we are and to see ourselves as God sees us – those people made in the image of God’s own Divine Love who may, who can, who will, and who shall share that Love with others. All others. Especially those in need. For it is when we do this that we see ourselves as we really are: God’s Beloved. Amen.

The Rev. Kirk Alan Kubicek is currently Priest in Charge at Christ Church, Rock Spring Parish, Forest Hill, Md. Christ Church is a Small but Mighty parish, and together we are rediscovering what our Lord has in store for our future. He has spent over 35 years in Parish Ministry in all shapes and size parishes, and for 15 years worked with The Episcopal Church Office of Stewardship and TENS. He often uses storytelling, music, and guitar in proclaiming the Good News. Married with three adult children and one grandson, Kirk also plays drums in On The Bus, a DC Metro Area Grateful Dead tribute band. All shall be well, all shall be well, all manner of thing shall be well!

¹ Julian of Norwich: Showings (Translated by Edmund College, James Walsh, Paulist Press, New York: 1978) p. 229.