

Theme: The Gospel Brings Us into a Relationship with the Triune Nature of God.

Sub-Theme: The Trinity, like Creation, is intended to be enjoyed more than explained.

Today is Trinity Sunday—the one day in the Church year set aside not to recall an event in Christ’s life, but to contemplate the very mystery at the heart of our faith. And whenever we speak of the Trinity, we are reminded how quickly our understanding reaches its limits. It is bold, even audacious, to imagine we can fully grasp the God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—three divine persons, distinct and relational, yet one in essence and being. To approach this mystery is to step immediately into the deep waters of theology, where our words can only gesture toward a truth far greater than our comprehension.

None of this is easy. Matthew’s Gospel today hints at this when it tells us, “*Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted.*”¹ The doubt the disciples experienced was an honest admission of the human failure to comprehend and process all that had happened. The word for doubt in the original is a compound word that joins the word “*double*” with “*stance*.”² It implies that the disciples were hesitating between two opinions. Oftentimes, it is hard to reconcile the spiritual with the natural. Evidently, the disciples were still processing the resurrection, the empty tomb, and their own failures in the light of what was taking place right in front of them. There was definitely a disconnect between what they were

¹ Matthew 28:16-17

² Strong’s Concordance, # 1365 distazo, **Phonetic Spelling:** (dis-tad'-zo), **365** distázō (from 1364 /dis, "two, double" and 4714 /stásis, "stance, standing") – properly, going two ways, shifting between positions.

seeing with their eyes and what was going on in their hearts. And the fact that it is included here, in the last resurrection appearance of Christ before his ascension, seems to normalize it. Most often, worship and doubt stand side by side together, and they are not mutually exclusive. I know, for myself, I constantly struggle with feelings of self-doubt, but that doesn't mean that I don't have faith. I am continually astounded that God would call someone like myself, with such obvious flaws, to serve him. With such questions and struggles, my heart and my mind are often not aligned. The same is true when it comes to understanding spiritual mysteries. Our minds may linger with questions that are beyond our comprehension, while our hearts may be content with a word of faith spoken by the prophets.

One very human example of how our hearts and our minds struggle to catch up with each other happened when I began dating my wife, Ellen. For the first year we were acquainted, I couldn't reconcile the fact that things weren't happening the way I had envisioned. We came from such different backgrounds and had different ways of defending ourselves around each other, which made falling in love more difficult than I had expected. Our relationship took work and patience, and most of all, humility. It was so painful that at one point I actually believed, "God couldn't be in this relationship." But he was, and ultimately, I couldn't resist and repented. And why, because love was at the center of it.

God is love, yet his ways are beyond our ways, and his thoughts are higher than our thoughts. But it is within this tension between our minds and our hearts that we are called to live.

Our catechism teaches that "*We recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit when we are brought into love and harmony with*

God, ourselves, neighbors, and all creation.”³ It is for this reason that the creation story is included in our Old Testament reading today. Its language is richly poetic, speaking directly to the heart without becoming entangled in technical definitions and scientific detail. Its beauty and rhythm draw us into a kind of sacred drama, punctuated again and again by the refrain, **“It is good.”** Another repeated phrase, **“And God said ...”** used eight times, is a reminder that creation unfolds through the sheer power of God’s life-giving Word.

And this is where the presence of the Holy Spirit becomes unmistakable. The same Spirit who hovered over the waters and calls the worlds into being now stirs in the depths of our own broken and chaotic hearts, drawing us into the harmony God intended from the beginning. Creation is not merely something that happened long ago; it is something God continues to speak into existence. Whenever we find ourselves moved toward reconciliation, toward compassion, toward a deeper reverence for the world around us, we are experiencing the ongoing rhythm of that first creation song. The Spirit tunes our hearts to hear it and to join in.

And this brings us directly to the mystery proclaimed in John’s Gospel: **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”**⁴ The same Word that spoke light into the darkness of creation now stands at the center of our faith as the One who brings light into the darkness of our souls. John tells us, **“In him was life, and that life was the light of all people.”**⁵ What Genesis describes poetically, John declares explicitly: the creative Word of God is not merely a sound or a

³ Book of Common Prayer, Catechism on the topic of the Holy Spirit, p. 852

⁴ John 1:1

⁵ John 1:4

force — the Word is a Person. The Word has a face. The Word has a name. The Word has come among us to live and die as one of us.

And as we begin to see creation and the new creation forming within us, being held together by the Word — the Word who was with God and the Word who is God — something else comes into focus. The story of creation is discovered to be more than power, order, or beauty; it is about a relationship. From the very first verse of Scripture, God is not solitary or withdrawn but active, relational, and overflowing with life. The light that shines in the darkness is not the product of an isolated deity but the radiance of a God who exists in eternal communion. Creation itself is the outpouring of that communion — the overflow of divine love expressed in Word and Breath and Life.

And this is why the Church dares to say that God is, in His very essence, a community of love. The relationship we glimpse in creation — the Father speaking, the Word creating, the Spirit moving — is not a temporary arrangement but the eternal life of God Himself. As St. Augustine observed, unless God were triune—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—where love is eternally expressed between each divine person— love could not be the ultimate reality of the universe. Love requires a relationship; love requires communion; love requires an eternal Beloved and an eternal Lover. Because God is love in His very being, He speaks to creation not out of need or distance but out of overflowing desire for relationship. Being created out of love and for love is one of the reasons the Psalmist can say, with such poetic wonder, ***“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.”***⁶ Through the things God has fashioned, His invisible power and divine nature shine forth.

⁶ Psalm 19:1

And if creation so clearly bears the imprint of His glory, then the question before us is whether we are open to the message that glory proclaims. When Jesus gave us the Great Commission, he commanded us “...to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” The preposition Jesus uses is significant: we are baptized **“into”**⁷ the name, implying a penetration into and a participation in the very life and communion of the Triune God. For this reason, baptism is not merely a ritual we undergo; it is an entrance into a relationship with God—an immersion into God’s very life. In those waters we are united with Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, and we begin to taste the fullness of the God who created us, redeemed us, and now dwells within us by His Spirit.

So as we stand before the mystery of a world spoken into being by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and sustained by the Spirit, we are invited into something much more grand than we ever imagined. The God who formed creation in love is now forming and transforming us into that same love. The Word who shines light into the darkness now brings light into our souls. The Spirit who hovered over the waters now dwells within us, drawing us ever deeper into the life of the Triune God. And as we go forth — listening for His voice, honoring Him with our lives, giving thanks for His goodness — we do so held within the very communion that created and redeemed us.

Therefore, **“May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.”**⁸

⁷ Strong’s Concordance, #1519 eis (ice), “to or into” – (indicating “motion into which” implying penetration)

⁸ 2 Corinthians 13:14