

June 4 2023 Trinity Sunday

Pr. Steve

Texts: 2 Corinthians 13: 11-13, Matthew 28: 16-20

In the name of God, Abba Imma, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I trust all of you were working mightily this last week with the mantra you received last Sunday for Pentecost. You can repeat it after me: *“I am completely loved as who I am.”* That’s it. Only taking it to heart takes a little time, yes?

We can acknowledge it will take a little while for Isla to learn and absorb this, and she’s going to be absorbing it from all of us—you know that, don’t you? But in the interest of full disclosure, I have to say to you that Isla doesn’t know how to speak English—or Japanese, Hindi, Mandarin, or Spanish. She doesn’t know how yet. ... And I’m not sure that she accomplished anything this last week... [sound of Isla] She’s objecting, okay!

And yet, her parents have fallen more intimately in love with life, and her, and each other than they ever could have imagined before she arrived! And we, too, are falling in love, again and again. A gift of life, seemingly from nowhere, is now blessing all of us.

I’ve been reading a novel, Bewilderment [by Richard Powers]. Some folks know this [book]? I think it’s fairly new. And I’m not telling you anything about the story, except the writer/author is an astrophysicist, and the father of a 9-year-old boy, who has learning troubles. I’m just sharing this paragraph where he writes that astronomy and childhood (and I might add spiritual life) have much in common.

*Astronomy and childhood [and spiritual life], these are voyages that go across huge distances. They search for facts, reality beyond their grasp. They theorize wildly, and let possibilities multiply without limits. Astronomy and childhood [and spiritual life] are humbled every week. They operate on ignorance, actually. They are mystified by time, and all [three] are forever starting over, again and again and again. [Bewilderment, p. 61]*

We have a crisis. Did you know the Sun is at the center of our galaxy? Oh yeah, ever since we learned that 500 years ago, it's been a crisis. Everything thrown up into the air. Evolution is part of how we got here. Our story's billions of years old. Everything's in flux.

It was so much nicer when the Earth was the center of the galaxy. Everything was ordered--and it was God-centered. As I can tell you Sun worshipers, it's man-centered now—and I mean 'men'.

Theology divorced from cosmology makes God an idea, an option, or a proposition--one way or another, whatever you like. God is no longer that ultimacy of reality, and an intimacy feeding and fueling the depths of our being. Curiosity.

And, cosmology divorced from theology leaves everything random, chaotic. *'You've got opinions, you've got views, you've got values—help yourself, choose what you like. Let it work. Because eventually we're just riding on this rock, which will disappear someday—burned up, blown up—who knows? Gone.'* That's a huge gap, isn't it, a huge gap between theology and cosmology. Where do we fit in?

Well, on Pentecost, last week, I shared with you that there are two forms of energy: Gravity, which holds the physical universe together, and, Grace, which holds life together. Love energizes—moves us toward relationship and wholeness. We are not mere bystanders on this planet watching the whole world run amok again. [Hysterical voice] *'Did you watch the news? It's worse this week. What are we going to do?'*

No, we are integral to life itself as human beings. We've been given consciousness, creativity, the capacity to care, to adapt with passion. No, we are the leading edge, forward-moving, guiding, pointing, like an arrow, into the future. Our choices make a difference.

Jesus did not come to start a new religion. He came to create a new humanity. That's what the *Bar Enasha* is all about. We don't gather here just to memorize the catechism. Now, full disclosure: the Bishop is here today. Apart from observing and taking notes (and that might have been the most dangerous thing I

just said...) I want you to know that I memorized the entire catechism when I was a child, and I'm glad for it. But, we gather here to engage the Spirit in creating a new life, a new creation. That's why we're here.

The Trinity is a dynamic communion of persons, or *energies* as they say in the Orthodox community, dancing life into being--hidden mystery, the great Cosmic One manifested in Christ, the Spirit overflowing in its endless compassion, creating the Cosmos itself, endlessly generating life and love through Word and Spirit, through sacraments, and more.

Evolution is our story. It's not just random, indifferent chaos. It's 'Creationing' from the get-go. The 'Creationing' never stopped. We are evolving. Perhaps it's like this: you've heard of the Big Bang. How about the opening lines in Scripture when God said, 'Let there be light.' We and the astrophysicists know--Light is the source of everything.

And, the second Big Bang—Easter: Resurrecting Love stronger than Death. You think astrophysicists have a problem trying to explain dark energy and matter? Try [to explain] living and loving into the Love which is stronger than Death!

But we have to choose, and there are multiple forks in the road these days. Shall we choose a medieval religion, Fundamentalism, that is going extinct?

Or, shall we choose Technology? Technology, which promises your two very best friends ever! The Friends you can count on—your phone and your computer. (*THE PROMISE: Come be one with the universe. Enter into the community who sits alone in dark isolation and pretends it's connected with the universe through an artificial screen, artificial lighting, artificial images and an artificial life.*) You don't need people or the environment. Isn't that convenient? Efficient machines will save us from this messy world and the need to care for others or the environment. We get to avoid all of that!

Or, shall we choose Love--which leads to openness, and risk, and wholeness. It leads to consciousness, and community, and communion with all life. It is forever birthing within us: Wisdom, Mystery, Connections, Joy.

I hate to disappoint you, but you won't find joy within technology. You'll find some computing, but not joy. Science has offered us so much, thanks be to God, but we spiritual practitioners have so much creativity and compassion to offer the world.

The mystery of the Trinity our ancestors called a dance. Dance in the Trinity-- that movement of compassion which is uncontainable. As they say in Africa, '*What you have danced cannot be taken from you.*' We come to church to dance back into reality.

For God's sake, for life's sake, for Isla's sake—Dance!

Amen.

The peace which surpasses all human understanding, keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.