

SERMON TRINITY SUNDAY, MAY 31ST 2026

“Holy Mystery, Creator, Gift, and Keeper” based on Matt. 28:16-20 & Rom. 5:1-5

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Today’s theme of worship is a complicated one. Trinity Sunday. This is a particular Sunday when we talk about the doctrine of Trinity. For me personally, even “complicated” might not be a perfect term to describe this particular doctrine or teaching of the church that is foundation of Christian belief.

Last week, on Pentecost Sunday, we read the story on the coming of the Holy Spirit —poured out on the Apostles. And now, as churches around the world follow the rhythm of the lectionary, we are drawn to reflect on the mystery and beauty of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thankfully we had time to reflect through some reading about Holy Spirit in the past few weeks, because usually this one is the one that is “forgotten” especially in our denomination.

And honestly, the doctrine of the Trinity isn’t something that most preachers like to preach about. When we learn this doctrine in seminary, me and my friends are in agreement that it is a complicated doctrine and one could spend a lot of time trying to explain it. And even then, in my opinion, you would still never explain it perfectly. Because the nature of the Triune God is a mystery to us, and beyond our limited human understanding.

A lot of people have tried to come up with analogies to explain the Trinity. I remember my Sunday school teacher once using water analogy: when it’s in three different forms, solid (ice), liquid, and vapor as symbolization of God The Father, The Son, and The Spirit. The same being like water, but in three different forms. Or some preachers use a 3-leaf clover that is very close with St Patrick tradition, which also as imperfect as the water illustration because it suggest partialism where each leaf are only 1/3 of the clover itself, if you ripped them.

Or for some children sermon, people use “human relationship” illustration, like I’m a son of my mother, a nephew for my aunt, and a *wonderful* brother for my sister. I am one person, Nehemia, but three figures for different people and in three different situations. And this one probably what I would prefer if I must use analogy. However, even this one isn’t perfect for explaining the Trinity

itself. Because I only different figure for three particular people, but I act, talk, and just be myself all the time.

With that being said, sisters and brothers in Christ, each of these analogies, always falls short. And I think it's because of most illustrations try to explain or focus on *how* three *equal* one—as if the Trinity were a math problem or a riddle. But, Trinity is not a puzzle to be solved. It is, as theologian Rowan Williams once said, *“is not a piece of inexplicable arithmetic, but it refer to a way of saying that God’s own life is shared and relational.”*

God’s life is shared and relational. That is something we sometimes forget when we speak about God or when we try to define who God is. Even the disciples, who walked closely with Jesus, listened to His teachings, and heard His explanations about who He was, still struggled to understand when Jesus tried to explain who He is, who the One is who sent Him, and who the One He will send after He physically left the disciples.

In the Gospel of John, which we read a couple of weeks ago, Jesus said, “Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me” (John 14:11). This came after Philip asked Jesus where He was going and asked Him to show the way to the Father.

So what does it mean when Jesus says, *“I am in the Father and the Father is in me”*?

Here is where I think Rowan Williams’ quote can be helpful: God’s life, first and foremost, is shared and relational. Jesus reveals something sacred here: God is not distant, silent, or unknowable. God the Creator, who appeared before Adam and Eve and Abram in the Old Testament, is now active and revealed in Jesus of Nazareth. After many years God is not present physically, God sent His Son in the form of human being in the person of Jesus who was born in Bethlehem.

And He came down to this earth not to condemn or to punish, but to reconcile the broken relationship between the Divine and humanity because of human’s sin. As written in our epistle reading today from the letter to the Romans, Paul wrote: *“since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Romans 5:1). Through Jesus Christ, we are able to be in relationship with The Holy One, and only through His salvation work are we welcomed into the kingdom of Heaven.

And, that's not even the end of the story. In the Gospel of John, before Jesus ascended into heaven, Jesus promised His Spirit, the Comforter: *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you"* (John 14:26).

Through this we know that God is not only united with Jesus, but through Jesus, God also invites us into that same relationship. When God's Spirit dwells within each one of us, it means God is also within us. The relationship between creation and creator here become very intimate, personal, and inseparable.

It is interesting that Jesus does not ask us merely to be His servants. He does not desire there to be a barrier between us and Him, even though He is Holy and we are not. He does not even limit His love only to those who love Him first. Through His Spirit, Jesus fulfills His promise to be with us always, as proclaimed by Kinsey and Piper in today's Gospel reading: *"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"* (Matthew 28:20b).

Friends in Christ, God's saving work was not completed at the cross alone. His love continues as He gives us the Advocate—the Holy Spirit—God's very presence, which now indwelling within us.

While the world cannot see or understand this Spirit, those who love Jesus will know the Spirit intimately. And if you are, today sitting in the pew still questioning what is Holy Spirit? or you think you have never experienced the work of it. I would like to start by saying that the Holy Spirit is the *Wisdom* that is personified and portrayed as present with God from the beginning.

She is the unseen strength that steadies trembling hands and weak knees; the gentle whisper that calms the storm within. In the silence of our despair, the Holy Spirit speaks comfort; in the weariness of our journey, She gives rest. She is the warmth that lingers when the night feels long, the light that finds us when we feel most lost.

And in our loneliest hours, when the ache of absence threatens to undo us, God's Spirit is the one that reminds us—again and again—that we are not alone. We are not forgotten. For the Spirit bears witness deep within us that we belong to The Father who formed us and The Son who redeemed us. With every breath, She draws us back into the embrace of a God who never lets go.

And even now, where the world is aching and troubled with so many noises, chaos, and pain, Christ's promise remains true. In moments when we feel abandoned, confused, or weary, the Spirit of truth remains our companion. She reminds us of all that Jesus said and leads us into the way of life. The world around us may shift, and even our hearts may falter, but the Spirit does not leave.

So now, the questions for us are these: Will we humble ourselves before God and His majesty? And will we stop trying too hard to grasp God fully through our own limited minds and resources?

Because the very nature of God is beyond full human comprehension. And that's not a flaw, but a reason for us to worship and praise and adore Him, each and every day in our life. To humble ourselves before God and recognizing that even our greatest thoughts must kneel before a wisdom higher and also deeper than our own. As one of the famous quotes from Augustine that said, *"If you understand Him, He is not God."* Which means the goal is not to master God with our minds, but to surrender our minds to the mystery of His love.

So friends, on this Trinity Sunday, I would love to invite us to see Trinity not as a concept that is difficult to grasp or explain but as an opportunity to be amazed of our God. May we not approach the Trinity as a confusing doctrine to decode, but as a divine invitation to wonder.

Because this is the miracle of the Trinity—not just that God is three in one, but that this God who exists in this threefold perfect relationship invites us in. The Christian life is not about mastering religious ideas; it is about being drawn into the life of God. It is about knowing God—not from a distance, but as children, as friends, as beloved.

To understand Trinity might be as simple as when you go out and see the wonders of creation, mountains, waterfalls, or even sunrise or sunset, and praise God The Creator, that beautifully made this world in the beginning. Or when you suffer for different things in your life, know that Jesus was also suffered when he walked in this earth, and is crying with you when you are grieving of your loss of someone because he knows how sad it is to feel abandoned or alone. And may whenever you have the quiet whisper in your hearts calling you to pray, to serve, and to circle back whenever you went too far, you know that that is the voice of God reminding you about the reason you are living today is to praise and worship God and be His right hand for the people around you.

And in response of God invitation to accept God's Spirit, I would love to close this reflection time with singing one song from our hymn book that really give me comfort and peace when I feel anxious or forgotten, when I feel lonely and lost.

You are welcome to sing with me if you'd like.

Breathe on me Breath of God

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God, Fill me with life anew,

That I may love what Thou dost love, and do what Thou wouldst do.

2. Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,

Until with Thee I will one will, to do and to endure.

3. Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am wholly Thine,

Until this earthly part of me; Glows with Thy fire divine.

4. Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I never die,

But live with Thee the perfect life of Thine eternity.