**Trinity Sunday – 2025**

This is not a trick question…Where in the bible, either the old and new testaments; does it explicitly state in plain, unequivocal language that God is the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit? Don’t over think this…The answer is: **It doesn’t. Nowhere!** So, does that mean it’s not “true.?”

No, we believe it is true, but not because we can bible proof text it or “prove it” scientifically, but because it is a statement of faith. The Christian experience begins with faith, not with scientific proof. As St. Anselm said, “Faith seeks understand.” We’re so influenced by Enlightenment, post-modern thinking that “understanding” has discounted faith in favor of the scientific method. Trouble is, honest biologists, physicists, and other scientists will tell you that there’s a lot of faith built into their theories!

No, we can’t “prove” God scientifically, but we can speak about how the Church has, over time, adopted dogmatic and doctrinal statements as to what we believe and live. Dogmas are the foundational, divinely revealed truths of the Church, while doctrines are the broader body of Christian teaching, including those that may be subject to further development or clarification. All dogmas are doctrines, but not all doctrines are dogma.

So, the Nicene Creed is dogma put into doctrinal form, but it doesn’t definitively settle questions like women’s ordination, gay marriage, and the like, things subject to change and modification as we move on in post-modern culture.

So, in the end, we can’t prove God. We can, however, encounter and experience God through Creation, the broad story of salvation history, and the Gospel witness of the New Testament, and everyday life. This happens through the action of the Holy Spirit, as we open ourselves to it. The revelation is that God is a community, as it were, a relational reality we call Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We are called into that relationship, by His grace and mercy.

Witness before you in the sanctuary this morning the famous Andre Rublev icon of the Three Visitors. It was a gift to this parish by Fr. Jones back in 1995. It’s hung on the wall in the narthex since then and has greeted every person who has come through those doors. I took it down this morning as an illustration. The icon depicts the story in Genesis 18 of the three visitors who come to Abraham. Abraham suspects these are divine visitors, he offers them hospitality, and they give him several messages, including that his wife, Sarah, will become pregnant in her old age, and that Sodom and Gomorrah will be destroyed.

The early Church fathers and mothers prayerfully concluded that the story foreshadowed the Incarnation of Jesus, and what would become known as the Holy Trinity. It was truth revealed by God as dogma that was put into doctrinal form as the core of Christian belief. As someone said, dogma is a way to talk about things we experience but don’t understand. Doctrines, usually drawing on philosophy, do the best they can to put dogma into words and concepts. Again, and ironically, it’s the same for science.

So, Gulph Mills Trinitarians, this has everything to do with us. This is a place that highly values and practices unity in community. We had a lot of visitors here for Teagan’s baptism last Sunday, and many of them remarked to me how warmly welcomed they felt. There is a spirit of hospitality here. It is the hospitality Abraham offered to the three visitors, and as depicted in Rublev’s icon, there’s always a place at the table with God who is One and yet Three. Our culture tends to yell “self-care” at people who really need community care. And I would say that real self-care can only happen in the context of real community care.

I’ll leave you with this story. This past Wednesday and Thursday we had our Trinity School transitional Kindergarten graduations. What a joy! The first class graduated here in the sanctuary and the second in the old sanctuary next door, now part of the school. At the end of each ceremony, I rang the bell for the kids as they marched out and some broke into dance! One of the most powerful moments was when the teachers present the kids with personal awards for this and that. One for being good at math. Another for being good at writing. Another at being a good friend who always shares. And so on. The amazing thing was that the kids helped choose the awards for their peers, based on their relationships with them throughout the year. I remarked on this to one of the teachers who said, yes one of the strengths of this school is that we foster a sense of being one together in community. I got goosebumps and a flood of gratitude came over me.

Being one together in community is what our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit invites us into. It is an invitation into the very life of God. As Jesus said into today’s gospel lesson from John*, (the Spirit) will glorify me because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason, I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.* And so, with joy and expectation we begin the long “green season” of Pentecost (which used to be called the season of Trinity) with anticipation that God will continue to grow in love and hospitality this little congregation called Trinity.

**May it be so.**