

Trinity Sunday June 15, 2025 Greenwich

In my hometown of Boston, at the Museum of Fine Arts, there is a large painting, by Gauguin, of South Sea Islanders in various stages of human life. The painting bears the words, “Where have we come from? What are we? Where are we going?”

Humans have forever gazed into the night sky, into the eyes of the beloved, into the depths of their own hearts, and asked the same questions:

Who are we, and why are we like that? Is there anything, any one, more than us, greater, beyond us? If so, what is that God like?

And if there is a god, or gods, does he, does she, do they, care about us?

And if God cares, then what does God want and demand from us?

Those two basic questions stir in every reflective heart: mortality and morality. If there is a God, does God sustain us after we die? And if so, how does God require us to act here and now, to prepare for that new life?

Some say there is no god; others say that god is impersonal energy or life force. Others assert a myriad of gods and goddesses, each controlling some dimension of the cosmos or of human living.

From those beliefs spring codes of worship and conduct., rituals as innocent as the blessing of foods and as sinister as the sacrifice of children.

In the midst of that human pondering, came a man from Ur of the Chaldeans, Abraham, who claimed that God had come to him, not just to answer the questions, but to abide with the questioner.

Gazing into the starry heavens, Abraham heard God reveal Himself as one who makes covenant with us, binds Himself to a little band of nomads and makes them His own, and promises the impossible-----a homeland and a nation.

And from a burning bush, God called out to Moses and revealed himself as one who is faithful, who keeps His promises, who stands on the side of the enslaved and the oppressed.

And through the prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, God revealed Himself to be one who consoles and challenges His people, one who rescues them from violence and injustice and then demands that they too become makers of peace and doers of justice.

And finally, in Jesus of Nazareth, God reveals Himself as Emmanuel, God with us, God who is one of us.

Jesus, the very word of God, becomes human, like us in all things but sin.

And to complete the full revelation of who God is, Jesus becomes Suffering Servant, obedient to the Father's plan of salvation.

He embraces the Cross; He consecrates the tomb. He breaks the bondage of sin and death. He ascends to the Father's right hand, where he intercedes for us.

He marks His disciples with His own blood, sign of His New Covenant, so that the Angel of Death will pass over them. And He breathes into them His own Spirit, so that they too will live the very life of God.

In sending the Son and the Spirit, the Father reveals that God is really a community of persons who so love one another that they are one God;

a community of persons who so love us and the world that They send the Son, not to condemn, but to save us;

a community of Persons who so love, that They want to share with us that divine triune love and life forever.

In the Trinity, we see the perfect realization of perfect love. And we glimpse what we are to do, and who we are to become: a community of persons so loving that we become one. In God, we glimpse the model, without beginning for every love that has ever begun.

Trinity Sunday celebrates that deep truth, that God has revealed His real name to us, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Triune God.

And so, God has revealed to us our own names., beloved children of God, called to become that same kind of community, fashioned in the likeness and image of God.

But the truth of our real identity is threatened on all sides.

The living and true God means us to be a people of life, human life, eternal life. But our society wallows in a culture of death. I don't need to cite the statistics, about wars, assisted suicide, or gun violence; you know them all too well.

Far too many human beings deem other human beings expendable and worthy only of extinction----whether by abortion, war, capital punishment, or callous indifference.

Far too many negate any intrinsic human dignity that might command our respect and restrain our impulse to kill, no matter how noble the cause or laudable the goals.

What then do we become, we who are fashioned in God's image and likeness as a community of love?

When God spoke to Abraham and commanded him to spare Isaac, He revealed that He is a God who abhors human sacrifice.

The god who thirsts for the death of one of us is Moloch, not Yahweh.

And when we succumb to the delusion that we can decide on death, of the stranger, the criminal, the alien, the enemy, we show ourselves made not in the image of the Trinity, but the image of the Evil One.

Trinity Sunday is not an obscure factoid about God.

It is not as if Jesus took the disciples aside one day and said, “By the way, God is really Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three Persons but only one God. Take notes. This will be on the final exam.”

Rather, the Trinity sums up the whole sweep of salvation history,

from that first word of promise given Abraham,

to that word of consolation and challenge spoken to Moses,

to that word of repentance and justice spoken through the prophets,

to the Word made flesh, Jesus the Christ, become one of us so that our flesh too can incarnate the Word of God,

alive in the Spirit of God,

until we live the eternal Triune life of God.

At this Eucharist, as we recognize the Lord in the breaking of the bread, we seek to recognize ourselves, and each other, as made in the image and likeness of the Triune God,

who calls us to become,

like God,

a community of endless love.

May the Eucharist make us so, as we become what we receive.

And the people of God said, Amen.