

## *Sunday Sermon May 31, 2026*

This is Trinity Sunday. It's the only occasion on our liturgical calendar when we celebrate a doctrine: the notion of God in three: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, or Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Each of these three expressions is found in the Scriptures, of course, but the concept of God as a Trinity of interrelated persons in relationship within Godself is a doctrine long-debated and hammered out in the early councils of the church. We regularly express this belief when we recite the creed during our services.

As I did some reading early in the week, I came across this thought on the Trinity from Karen Armstrong. She says: "Jesus did not spend a great deal of time discoursing about the Trinity, or original sin or the incarnation which have preoccupied later Christians. He went about doing good and being compassionate."

After reading that, I considered simply telling you to imitate Jesus by doing good and being compassionate and then just moving on to the creed, but I decided I needed to share a bit more about the Trinity, about God in Three.

Our first reading was the beautiful story of creation. How God brought something out of nothing, which only God can do. How Creator God gifted the planet with light, land and waters, plants and creatures of all kinds. And how God made it all good...

Creation is God's gift and a blessing that reveals God to us in many and varied ways, from the majesty of a whale or a sunset, to the simple beauty of a flower or a songbird. Someone once noted: "Creation is the teacher who sets forth and preaches God." I like that thought.

Writer Anne Lamott gives a marvelous perspective on God and creation when she writes: "I don't need to understand the hypostatic unity of the Trinity, I just need to turn my life over to whoever came up with Redwood trees."

God's works of art all around us in the wonder and beauty of creation, from redwoods to dolphins and orchids to ospreys.

But the story notes that God saved the best for last, right? After the light and the land and waters and plants and living creatures of every kind, God decided to create God's greatest works of art: humankind. Humankind in God's own image and likeness. Humankind cherished and blessed and given the responsibility of stewarding, caring for, God's gift of creation. Caring for one another.

God made us good, very good, and God made us free. Given the gift of free will, we can choose to honor God and follow God's ways or to live selfishly and abuse one another and the rest of God's creation. Sadly, we have chosen to turn our backs on our goodness, on the image of God in ourselves and others, and we have chosen to live at odds with the original grace that God imbued us with.

But Creator God took flesh in the second person of the Trinity, Jesus, and sought to restore us to the original goodness with which we were created. He taught us how to live and how to love, how to be the people that we were created to be: loving people. But Jesus was seen as a threat to the established order, to the ways of this world, the ways of man, and so He was executed.

But they could not destroy the life-force that was his very essence. They could not defeat love because God sent that love, in the form of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit – the love of God poured out on us and on the whole world, so that we might know the transforming power of a love that is stronger even than death. The Holy Spirit – the perfect love of the Father and the Son, so abounding that it spills over to fill every heart that is open.

So that, my friends, is my feeble attempt at preaching on the doctrine of the trinity on this Trinity Sunday. It might have shed some light, or it might have you anxious to get to the creed, but there it is.

I'll leave you with one final thought tonight/today. It is inspired by a quote I read from the great pianist Artur Schnabel. He said: "Great music is music that is better than it can ever be played." (X2)

It's impossible to do God justice by talking about God – as a preacher, I can hardly believe I just said that – but God is always more, always bigger, than our ideas about God. But that doesn't mean we stop trying. Just as Schnable would tell pianists to never stop playing, we never stop seeking, learning, looking, listening, praying when it comes to God.

Because God is all around us, and within us, in the beauty of the created world and especially in the creatures that God has made “in God's own image and likeness.”

God is always bigger, always more, always waiting to surprise, challenge and inspire us with another glimpse, another thought, another moment, another word, another encounter that helps us to know God, who is love, more fully and deeply. May we live with open eyes, minds and hearts.

Amen