



Trinity Sunday (C)
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
June 16, 2019
The Rev. Dr. Christian Brocato, Rector

†In the Name of God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Amen.

The first reading today begins with powerful words: “Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?” It goes on to say, “When God established the heavens, I (meaning wisdom) was there, when God drew a circle... made firm the skies...the fountains of the deep... the foundations of the earth... delighted in the human race”. If we understand and interpret this as best as possible, wisdom has been from all eternity and will be forever.

Last week when we celebrated Pentecost, I said that wisdom is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Here in Proverbs, we learn that God is wisdom itself. Wisdom is essential to the make-up and activity of God.

In our daily lives, wisdom is essential in making decisions. Sometimes, we think that maturity, that is accumulation of years of life, might enable one to be more wise. I'm not so sure about that.

The wisdom of God in the creation of the world seems like a no brainer on many levels. Proverbs confirms that God as wisdom created all things and the human race.

So why is it that we often fail to call upon the wisdom of God to lead and guide us in life? Why is that decisions made in life too often fail to rely on the wisdom of God for assessment, understanding and action?

I often think that I may not always employ wisdom in life. What I do know is that the ‘wisdom of the community’ is not just a concept. The wisdom of the community involves processes, conversations and intentional listening to what is best for the overall good of the community.

Here, I'd like to say that as Christians, we are called to live in community. It is the community of faith which gathers in the Name of God, Father, Son and Spirit and in and through the many characteristics which we attribute to God. It is here where we experience the holiness of God in this sacred space and in one another. We experience the holiness of God in the Word of God, the Eucharist, in singing and in asking God to be with us in our life together.

We come together as a community to be together in relationship, to be stronger than we are as individuals. The relationship of community is a bond which can nurture and sustain us. We really don't learn how to be all we are called to be in isolation from one another.

Is it possible to love another as best we can from the solitude of our own room? Is it possible to learn patience and acceptance of one another without being in relationship to others?

Yesterday, St. Mark's and three other Episcopal Churches in Grand Rapids hosted a booth as part of Pride Festival. For the time I was there, I was amazed at the sea of young people with a kind of freedom of expression not always demonstrated in daily life.

Is it possible for us to accept others for who they are if we are not somehow in relationship with them? Are we not called to know others, to hear the perspectives of others and to allow others to be who they are without wanting to reshape them in to who we think they 'should' be? I believe it is possible to embrace others as God's creatures as well as embrace the three primary attributes of God in relationship with one another.

The theological construct of the Trinity isn't an easy thing with which to deal. The early Church grappled with a theology of the Trinity. That struggle continued beyond the formulation of the Creeds.

The reformers of the sixteenth century grappled with the theology of the Trinity. There are those today who grapple with the mystical and mysterious three primary expressions of God made manifest in one God. The complexity of the Trinity seems to live comfortably in mystery.

No matter what, God is God, and God is truth. God can be thought of as Father or Mother, Creator, Redeemer, Spirit, Sustainer or Comforter. There are many attributes of God, and we are grateful to experience them in our lives of faiths.

The Church calls us to experience the Trinity of God as expressed in the Scriptures. In order to do that, we are called to listen, to be open, to discern, to trust and to respond.

Is God calling us to consider if we can we live our lives of faith more faithfully? Is God calling us to consider re-ordering our thinking about faith, so that we are more in tune with God who desires a deep intimate relationship with us?

The Trinity of God is wrapped up in a relationship of love. 1 John 4:7 tells us that "God is love". In the Gospel of John, Jesus is clear that he relied on the love he shared with the Father. As the very expression of God's love on earth, Jesus retreated to be one with the Father, and how was that possible?

Jesus was able to be one with the Father through the power of the Spirit. It is that Spirit of God to which Jesus refers when he says, "When the Spirit of truth comes, the Spirit will guide you into all the truth..." That same Spirit empowers us to seek truth in life.

Speaking truth in life is not always easy. Telling half-truths or lies is perhaps easier. Fabrications of the mind can unfortunately allow us to misrepresent the truth in ways which can be harmful even destructive.

These days, it seems fabrications and even lies in civil discourse have become standard practice in our world. Wisdom calls us to a higher reality and to question. Wisdom calls us to discern. Wisdom calls us into a relationship with truth, as we search for and embrace God as creative, redeeming and comforting in life.

Perhaps this week, we might ask ourselves three questions. Can I call upon the wisdom of God to lead and guide me into ways of truth and love? Can I test my thinking and that of others through the lens of wisdom and truth? Can I know what God is trying to tell me through the gifts of wisdom, discernment and truth? If the answer to these questions is "yes", then what? Amen.