

**Trinity Sunday – Year C – May 30, 2010**  
**Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31; Psalm 8; Romans 5:1-5; John 16:12-15**  
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Hands up if you recently wrote a letter, sent an email or a text message, talked with someone on the phone, or had a face-to-face conversation with someone this week. Congratulations everyone – you are all communicators! In interpersonal communications, we expect to receive feedback of some form. For real communication to take place there is a process that we can describe as beginning with the *content* of the message, sent from a *source*, in a specific *form*, by a known *medium*, to a *receiver* or target, for a *purpose*. If one or other of the parties involved is not familiar with the language or form of the message, then we have to be more creative in order to get our message across. From a spiritual perspective, there is the mystery of communication in and of God. As the apostle Paul writes (1 Corinthians 13:12), “for now we see in a mirror, dimly”. The writers of the hit sci-fi series *The X-Files* have their own way of embracing the mystery of the unknown. They use the slogans, “The Truth is Out There” and “I Want to Believe”.

This Sunday is traditionally known as Trinity Sunday, the day we celebrate our understanding and experience of One God in three persons, and expressed as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It’s no coincidence that Trinity Sunday is the week following the Day of Pentecost. As we heard and experienced last Sunday, the primary gift of God in the Holy Spirit is the gift of proclamation. Speech is, of course, a major medium of communication, and each language a specific form. In the nature of the gift of proclamation, God reveals that it is God’s purpose for all to be able to share, receive, and understand the Good News of Jesus Christ. If we do a quick review of where we have just been, the Day of Pentecost was the culmination of the season of Easter in which we celebrated Jesus’ glorious resurrection and ascension, and His victory over sin and death. The major feast before Easter was the celebration of Jesus’ birth, or incarnation at Christmas. The Gospel of John describes Jesus’ coming into the world as the coming of the *logos*, the Word made flesh. *Logos* also means speech. For all Christians, Jesus is the essential communication and revelation of the nature and character of God the Father. Jesus is God’s gracious expression of love in human form. Remember that love is only possible in relationship. Jesus is also a living example of God’s loving-kindness, and in His life we see God’s steadfast desire to establish equality and justice on earth, and amongst God’s people. God incarnate is also the mediator of God’s personal plan of salvation from sin and death, once for all, through His gift of self on the cross, and through His glorious resurrection in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is God’s gift of healing and freedom available for all who accept the gift of faith in Christ Jesus. The Word is also a living testament of God’s ultimate purpose to redeem and reconcile the whole of creation. Jesus’ presence is divine communication, and that requires a response.

Today’s lesson from the Gospel of John is one of several passages in the New Testament expressing the knowledge and reality of three divine persons in what we have come to describe as the Holy Trinity. Jesus is speaking to His disciples about the gift of the Holy Spirit who is to come as the Spirit of truth, and who will guide His followers into all the truth. What is truth? Even Pontius Pilate thought that was a good question. Today, we might feel that truth is a definition of facts, especially scientifically determined or proven facts. Yet, according to the Gospel of John, the person of Jesus **is** Truth, and this Truth is in constant relationship with God the Father, and with God the Holy Spirit. In the experience of the first Christian communities, as well as in our own experience, we know that the Holy Spirit is the ongoing, indwelling divine presence whose ministry is to guide us. We also know, and have experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit leading the whole Body of Christ into the deepest truths of Jesus’ teachings. For example, I wouldn’t be here today if the Holy Spirit had not reminded the church that in Christ there can be no discrimination between males and females. The Holy Spirit does not speak independently, but only what She hears. What the Holy Spirit hears is what God the Father

declares, which is also what God the Son, Jesus, proclaims. Our words cannot express a complete understanding of the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but we can imagine that there is an ongoing, intimate dialogue between the three persons of the Trinity. Let's face it, we really dislike not knowing, not being able to prove everything, or figure it all out by rational means. However, being human defines us as God's creatures, and that means we cannot fully know the mystery of God our creator, otherwise we would *be* God. After all, what use would we have for faith if we could be certain of everything?

We cannot prove everything we embrace and experience through faith. Yet there are signs in the world of God, the three in One, in action, and as action. The Scriptures acknowledge the power of God's speech as a creative act. The whole world declares the glory of God in its beauty, its simplicity and its complexity. As the Word made flesh, Jesus confirms that through Him all things were made by the power of the Holy Spirit. God speaks and so it was, so it is, and so it will be. In faith, we believe that the nature of God is a communion of persons in perfect communication; and that means the language of God *is* deeds of power, acts of love and mercy, and the transformation of the world into a new kingdom of peace, justice and equality that reflects the nature of God. In our own lives, we implicitly live the Trinity by putting our faith into action; living our Christian values; doing the right thing as Jesus taught us, and showed us in His own life; and sharing our God-given talents and resources to the glory of God's name. The reality of divine communication is expressed in action: God's gifts and acts, as well as our own response. Desiring to live a life in conformity with Jesus' life and teaching helps us to be responsive to the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit. It helps us to grow in grace and love of God, and our neighbors. Our response to God's gifts is to put our faith to work, and to continually become the people and the community that fulfills God's desire for our lives and our life in community.

It has been said that God's communication is not the passing on of information, like a TV broadcast or an internet search, but it is communication with concrete effects on life, on our relationship with the divine, and on how we share in the life of God in the presence of the Holy Spirit. As individuals and a community, our faith-filled response to God's incredible gifts continue God's revelation to the world, and draw others to Christ. In his personal experience of conversion St. Augustine shares poetically how God's communication was so dynamic it affected all his senses: "You called on me, you cried aloud to me, you broke my barrier of deafness. You shone upon me; your radiance enveloped me, you put my blindness to flight. You shed your fragrance about me; I drew breath and I gasp for your sweet odor. I tasted you and I hunger and thirst for you. You touched me and I am inflamed with love of your peace." God lovingly reveals God's self in ways that we can access and experience.

In this community of faith, and throughout the whole church, we strive to remain receptive to the Holy Spirit in order to be guided in our growth, development and formation in Truth. The message and meaning of Jesus requires ongoing, generational interpretation. The question of our parents and grandparents was the same question we also must prayerfully seek an answer for: what does Jesus mean for our own time, and the circumstances we face today? With confidence, we can rely on the Holy Spirit to lead us to the proper conclusions. The Holy Spirit is our advocate, not our adversary. Jesus is persuasive, not pushy. God offers all the gift of faith, giving all the choice to accept or decline. God the Father sent Christ as both the messenger and the message. God sends you and me to continue to communicate this Truth to the world. The Truth *is* out there, because Jesus lives. I don't just *want* to believe, I **do** believe. How about you?

Amen.