

Join the Dance

Trinity Sunday – Year A – May 18, 2008

Genesis 1:1-2:4a ✘ Psalm 8 ✘ 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 ✘ Matthew 28:16-20

Our share within the love and fellowship of the Trinity calls each of us – as individuals and within the life of this community – to join in the dance.

Our reading this morning from the beginning of the Book of Genesis contains language and images that are deep – broad – wide – surely among the most poetic and graceful poetry in all of scripture. The first chapter of Genesis and the conclusion of its story in the first few verses of chapter two do read like poetry. Especially so when they are read aloud.

The literary structure of this first creation story of the Hebrew people helps to frame the sense of poetry that comes to our ears. God speaks a word of creation, and it was so. God acts in the course of successive days, one building upon the other. God reflects at the end of each day. God pronounces blessing that all is good.

The divine dance within the life of God is evident as God breathes and moves over the water of chaos. God creates order out of chaos. The heavens become distinct from the earth. The raging waters are brought to order and dry land appears. The greater light of the sun is called to govern the day, while the lesser light of the moon and the stars govern the night. Life comes into existence – birds that grace the sky, fish and sea monsters that swim the deep. Animals of every kind that graze and cover the earth.

Day by day, the divine life and love that exists within the Deity danced and danced and danced – and creation came into being. And day by day, God observed all that everything was good. On the sixth day of creation, the love and the community that we believe to exist within the divine life of God brought matter and water and breath and life together with memory, reason, and conscience and created humankind – in the image of God.

What was in the hearts and minds of

our Hebrew fathers and mothers in the faith, that this was the story they composed as they reflected on the beginning of things? A people whose primal commandments contained a prohibition against idols. Clear instruction to not create a graven image of God. Yet – something in their experience of God, and something in their long experience as a people in relationship with God, yielded the language that humankind was created, that we live, and move, and have our being, in the image of God.

Living in relationship with God, within the context that we are created in God's image, is a high calling.

We have never lost our desire and our need to understand and explain our relationship with God. As Christians, we have developed, over many centuries, an understanding of God that we describe as the Trinity.

After the experience of the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the early church struggled with language and images and metaphors as they tried to describe, explain, and understand that experience. Their experience of God, of Jesus Christ, and of the continued movement in the lives of the spirit of God led them to language

that expresses the relationship and community that exists with the divine life as a Trinity. Jurgen Moltmann, a German theologian of our generation says that the Trinity is “rich in internal and external relationships.”

It is as a reflection of those rich relationships that we will celebrate today the Rite 13 liturgy with two of the young men in our community – Shawn Spencer and Dante Colombo. We will acknowledge their creation in the image of God. And call them into the beginning of a new life with God and a new life within our community. As they continue to step away from childhood, and begin their journey towards adulthood, we will ask them to become more conscious of their role as partners and co-creators in the divine dance of love and fellowship that exists within the community of the life of God. As a community that has been called together in worship of God, we are called to reflect that same divine dance of love and fellowship.

If we believe that humankind is created in the image of God, then our call to live into that image can only truly exist in community. A community that exists with mutual love and concern for one another, and with mutual love and concern even – and perhaps most especially – for those who are not within

our own specific community. The mutual love that exists within the Trinity found expression as it overflowed outside of itself and into creation. Our call to existence as the image of God must bring with it that same overflowing of mutual love – outside of ourselves.

That is why as a community we are called to practice radical hospitality with not only open doors – that’s not really so difficult. Radical hospitality also calls us to have open minds and hearts. Our experience of community must never exist only within ourselves. That would lead us towards a path that will be nothing like the image of God.

God saw everything that was made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished . . .

Will, not quite. There is still work to be done. There is uncountable human need and suffering to address – on this block, in this city, county, state and country. And around the world. There are unnumbered individuals and families within the reach of this parish who have not experienced a relationship with a faith community that has given them

any confidence whatsoever that God loves them.

Our share within the love and fellowship of the Trinity calls each of us – as individuals and within the life of this community – to join in the dance.