

Trinity Sunday (B)

May 27, 2018

Deuteronomy 4:32-40

Psalm 33

Romans 8:14-17

Matthew 28:16-20



I often find myself wanting to share my belief in God with the veterans that I work with. And often times the veterans share their belief in God with me. This happens mostly because these veterans know that I am a priest and they trust that I would understand. This sharing, this exchange is a step toward understanding God, a stretching and growing, both for me and for the veterans.

Where I might say God is love, compassion, mercy, and forgiveness, a veteran might say, "God was there for me. God saved my life any number of times." Another veteran might feel free enough to say, "God was not there and did not respond when I asked for help. God failed to save my friend who died in my arms." Other veterans tell me they believe in God but they do not know how to relate to God. A 26 year old, after serving four years in Iraq, is struggling with drugs and alcohol addiction. He is home now and his parents want him to go to church with them but he says, "I am on call for prayer each Sunday at church and that is uncomfortable." He wants to find a different church.

No one of us can give another person faith or belief in God. What we can do is share our belief, our experience of God. What we can do is listen to the other person who wishes to share their doubts, fears, and struggles to believe. Perhaps again, in the exchange, each individual can grow into an understanding, maybe even a deeper relationship with God.

The sacred word given to us on this Trinity Sunday gives us an opportunity to reflect upon God and maybe even wrestle with our own understanding of God. Any number of events and experiences can stand in the way of knowing and relating to God. Our veterans are an example of how difficult moments can leave us in a place of confusion and unbelief. God is all about community, God is all about relationships, God is found in gracious hospitality. So often it seems that we perceive God as a figure looking

down and expecting us to perform in a certain way, and to an extent this is true. Yet, I think God is also saying, "I want to come and enter into your life. I want to do things for you. I want to work for you, and I want you to sit back and enjoy life. I want you to receive my gifts generously and thankfully."

These lessons today help us see the movement of God in our human lives, "ever ancient, ever new," as St. Augustine described it. In the Deuteronomy lesson, Moses is reminding all of us that God took a suffering people, divergent and from many separate tribes, and God lead them into freedom, giving them a new name, Israel. With deeds of power and might, God revealed himself as One who wanted to be in a covenant relationship. In time, God sent his son into the world with a message that was even more radical and new. The message that Jesus preached and lived was meant to change how the human family relates to God and to one other. The Christian message came upon distinct words to help describe this new relationship as grace, love, mercy, and forgiveness.

This Trinity Sunday is all about relationships, how the divinity of God is shared among the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This divinity of God is then shared among the disciples who believe and carry on the mission of the Son. The Spirit urges the disciples to share this divine relationship with each another, the human family so wide and diverse. The heartbeat that keeps us connected is God, where it all began and where it will come into fulness.

How often have we said: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. I will close with an alternate doxology or prayer that considers Trinity as God, revealing loving relationships.

*We praise you Christ, beloved Son
through whom the
Holy One is known,
whose Holy Spirit fills the world!
and makes in each of us her home.*