

Grace and peace are your dear friends from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Today's gospel text is the most well known text in Holy Scripture, second being Matthew 6:9-13, The Lord's Prayer, and third being the 23rd Psalm (according to Patheos.com)¹ We hear about God's love for us, we remember and memorize the words and location in Scripture, and we share and pass-down the passage with others. For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son...

Today is Holy Trinity Sunday and a somewhat difficult and challenging Sunday for pastors to preach on. Some pastors, as I have learned from my seminary, internship, and mentorship experiences, will pass this one Sunday off to others more than other Sundays, even when the color is white, indicating a Festival or High Sunday. Part of the reason for this is the difficulty in explaining the Godhead in the three persons of the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We believe there is only one God, but confess the three persons of the Trinity...and this is where pastors start the downhill slide. They turn the message into an academic presentation instead of revealing again, what God has done for us.

In preparing the message today, I found myself reading The Irish Times and focused on a story of people who were lonely. One lady, a 44 year old professional married women describes how happy she was until she (and her husband) decided to move back home to Ireland after living in Wales for the last twenty years. While they moved closer to family, they left a large group of friends behind. The lady's words are echoed in the headline and read; "I never thought I would feel the kind of loneliness that makes my heart ache. But I do."²

What this lady is saying is that in her new location, she was not known. The loneliness of not being known to others was a matter of heart, mind and body. You see, when we are not known, our story is not told, our concerns are not voiced, our needs are never discussed in the context of community. When we are not known, we live a solitary life when God has called us to share and experience 'life-together'.

What does any of this have to do with Holy Trinity Sunday? My friends and fellow servants in Christ; on the Sunday of Pentecost, which we celebrated last week, God made His final person of the Godhead known to the world. As I have shared and will continue to teach, the Missio Dei, the Mission of God is to be known to His Creation. God desires for His people to know whom He is and He has made His presence known (visibility) in all persons of the Holy Trinity.

As God first appeared to Moses and lead Israel through the desert in a pillar of fire and cloud; God made Himself known to Israel through His presence in their midst, in the presence of the Ark of the Covenant, and in the presence of the Holy of Holies in the center of the Temple. God reveals His presence among us to bring back the hope of life-together with us.

God's Word became human flesh as the Son of God was made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus lived among us, performed miracles, and revealed His divinity to us so that we might believe that

¹ <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2015/05/28/7-of-the-most-famous-bible-scriptures/>

² [https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/lonely-people-your-stories-the-kind-of-loneliness-that-makes-my-heart-](https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/lonely-people-your-stories-the-kind-of-loneliness-that-makes-my-heart-ache-1.2343121)

[ache-1.2343121](https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/lonely-people-your-stories-the-kind-of-loneliness-that-makes-my-heart-ache-1.2343121)

He is truly the Son of God. When we put this divine life to death, God raised Jesus to new life to reveal again the reality of God's presence and promise to us that He too will share life-together with us.

On the day of Pentecost, God reveals the gift and reality of the Holy Spirit among us; living proof that life-together with God is restored to the most holy extent possible.

So now that we have life-together with our Creator, now that we have knowledge and understanding of who God is and what God has done for us; now that we have come to learn of God's eternal love and compassion for us... what comes next? God has made Himself known to Creation; He has made Himself known to us. What will we do next.

Before we answer what we will do with a fuller knowledge and understanding of the God of all Creation; there is a much easier question that will answer this question. What will we do when a stranger becomes our friend? My friends, this is the simple matter of taking the time to allow a stranger to become known to us. Once we hear their story, once we listen to their words, once we take to time to understand them... they have established a connection with us that in turn becomes a choice to us.

The choice to *us* is do we decide to participate in life-together with them; or do we walk away? God has made it known that He gave His Holy Spirit to all life, he made it know that he loves all life in the world, and he made it known that He died for all life in the world. So when the Holy Spirit presents to us in the form of a stranger, someone different, or someone unique; will we engage with them or will we try to erase our experience of them?

My dear friends, no one WANTS to be lonely. Loneliness is a condition that many people are trapped in, but people do not seek out and desire loneliness. Likewise, our Lord does not want us to be alone, so God made it known that He would be (and is) with us! And still, we must come to this knowledge.

God is present my friends. Because of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, the Holy Spirit is present in the clay jars that fill this world with life in the form of our family, our dear friends, our neighbors, our rivals, our companions, our leaders, our strangers, our guests, our caregivers, our providers, our law enforcement, our merchants, and yes our car dealers and DVM workers, our sales people, our doctors, our lawyers, our landscapers, our contractors, the people that make us smile, the people that make us angry...ALL THESE PEOPLE contain the very Spirit of God. All these people are holy before God.

God allows us a choice to participate in life-together with Him or not. It is our hope, our prayer, and our calling by God to work together in life-together and for life-together to make God known to all people; to share the story and to tell one another what Jesus Christ has done for us all. God asks us to do what is easy and will manage the rest... however; we must first be willing to extend the offer to make God known to others.

In as much as we are asked to listen to the stranger and participate in life-together with them, God is always using 'ALL people' so our life-together will be healthier, stronger, more meaningful, and by all means... more abundant! When life-together allows us to know one another and know what God has done for us through Jesus Christ, then ALL will truly possess the peace that passes all understanding, to keep our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!