

June 7, 2020

**Morning Prayer for the First Sunday after Pentecost:
Trinity Sunday**

Opening Sentence

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come. *Revelation 4:8*

The Invitatory and Psalter

V: Lord, open our lips.

R: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Alleluia

Venite Psalm 95:1-7

The earth is the Lord's for he made it: Come let us adore him.

Come, let us sing to the Lord; *
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

The earth is the Lord's for he made it: Come let us adore him.

For the Lord is a great God, *
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *
and the heights of the hills are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it, *
and his hands have molded the dry land.

The earth is the Lord's for he made it: Come let us adore him.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. *
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

The earth is the Lord's for he made it: Come let us adore him.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The earth is the Lord's for he made it: Come let us adore him.

The Psalm or Psalms Appointed

Psalm 146 *Lauda, anima mea*

1 Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, O my soul! *
I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
2 Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, *
for there is no help in them.
3 When they breathe their last, they return to earth, *
and in that day their thoughts perish.
4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! *
whose hope is in the LORD their God;
5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; *
who keeps his promise for ever;
6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, *
and food to those who hunger.
7 The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; *
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
8 The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger; *
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
9 The LORD shall reign for ever, *
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

Psalm 147 *Laudate Dominum*

1 Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God! *
how pleasant it is to honor him with praise!
2 The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem; *
he gathers the exiles of Israel.
3 He heals the brokenhearted *
and binds up their wounds.
4 He counts the number of the stars *
and calls them all by their names.
5 Great is our LORD and mighty in power; *
there is no limit to his wisdom.
6 The LORD lifts up the lowly, *
but casts the wicked to the ground.
7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; *
make music to our God upon the harp.
8 He covers the heavens with clouds *
and prepares rain for the earth;
9 He makes grass to grow upon the mountains *

and green plants to serve mankind.

¹⁰ He provides food for flocks and herds *
and for the young ravens when they cry.

¹¹ He is not impressed by the might of a horse; *
he has no pleasure in the strength of a man;

¹² But the LORD has pleasure in those who fear him, *
in those who await his gracious favor.

¹³ Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; *
praise your God, O Zion;

¹⁴ For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; *
he has blessed your children within you.

¹⁵ He has established peace on your borders; *
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁶ He sends out his command to the earth, *
and his word runs very swiftly.

¹⁷ He gives snow like wool; *
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

¹⁸ He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; *
who can stand against his cold?

¹⁹ He sends forth his word and melts them; *
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.

²⁰ He declares his word to Jacob, *
his statutes and his judgments to Israel.

²¹ He has not done so to any other nation; *
to them he has not revealed his judgments. Hallelujah!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Lessons

A reading from Job 38:1-11, 42:1-5

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind: "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements-- surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy? "Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?-- when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors, and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped'? Then Job answered the LORD: "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 'Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you declare to me.' I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you.

Here ends the Reading.

The Song of Zechariah *Benedictus Dominus Deus*
Luke 1: 68-79

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *
he has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *
born of the house of his servant David.
Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our enemies, *
from the hands of all who hate us.
He promised to show mercy to our fathers *
and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the
shadow of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

A reading from Matthew 28:16-20

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Here ends the Reading.

You are God *Te Deum laudamus*

You are God: we praise you;
You are the Lord; we acclaim you;
You are the eternal Father:
All creation worships you.
To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise:
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
The glorious company of apostles praise you.
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.
Throughout the world the holy Church acclaims you;
Father, of majesty unbounded,
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

You, Christ, are the king of glory,
the eternal Son of the Father.
When you became man to set us free
you did not shun the Virgin's womb.
You overcame the sting of death
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
You are seated at God's right hand in glory.
We believe that you will come and be our judge.
Come then, Lord, and help your people,
bought with the price of your own blood,
and bring us with your saints
to glory everlasting.

The Sermon **(audio will be available on Sunday evening)**

In the Name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. Amen.

These are deeply troubling days. Every day and night, we see American cities and towns in chaos as citizens protest the horrific murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis on Memorial Day. It is a sad and sinful truth that that single act of brutality against a black man was not an isolated incident, but it has laid bare, again, centuries of the sin of injustice and inequality; centuries of the virus of systemic racism that continues to be fueled by fear. The pain spilling out onto our streets is too deep for words.

And all of this, at a time when COVID-19, another viral pandemic, continues to ravage the entire planet, itself exposing the deep rifts of inequity in what we have imagined was our “common” life.

I can only speak for myself, but my emotions these days careen all over the place. I go from being tired, to heartsick, to enraged, to anxious, to overwhelmed. There are moments of most days when I just feel stuck. Stuck in my own heart and mind; stuck about what to say to you. Especially on such a day as this when we are called to celebrate the Feast of the Holy and Undivided Trinity.

Then, someone reminded me that that it is much less my job to tell you what to believe or what to do, than it is to remind you (and me in the process) of the life to which God calls us all. To guide our thoughts today, I want to consider two words – relational and humility.

What does the life to which God calls us look like? Recall with me the final question of the Baptismal Covenant (BCP 305): “Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?” And the response is, “I will, with God’s help.”

Here, in a nutshell, is the life God dreams for us. When we baptize a new Christian into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we affirm that God is, at heart, inherently, undeniably, and inextricably relational. When we affirm our own baptism, this promise reminds us that, because we are created in God’s image, we, too, are inherently, undeniably, and inextricably relational.

Early Christians had to grapple with the fact that the reality of God as revealed in Jesus and in the Spirit at Pentecost, no longer fit into their preconceived ways of talking about God. The language needed to be expanded.

Just so with us. In these days especially, it is vital to remember the words “all people” and “every human being.” Not “some people” and “the human beings I already know.”

If the Feast of the Holy Trinity reminds us that we are relational in our being, it also reminds us that we are, all of us, creatures of God, and not actually God. Who God is and how God works is, as we say, a mystery. And apprehending this mystery involves some sense of humility on our part.

Let’s look for a moment at today’s reading from Job. The passage is an excerpt from one of the Bible’s less well-known Creation narratives. And Job has been spouting off to God about how much he knows about Creation. God pushes back: *Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind: “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding.”*

Tell me. In this divided and polarized moment, when our failures before God are laid bare, and when religion is so often used as a weapon of war, it’s easy to imagine

that we, like Job, hold a monopoly on the divine, that we *really* understand who God is and what God desires. And then God says, “tell me, if you have understanding.” Ouch.

By its very complexity, the mystery that is the Trinity challenges our presumption. George Rawson, the 19th century Congregationalist hymn writer said:

We limit not the truth of God
to our poor reach of mind,
to notions of our day and sect,
crude, partial and confined:
no, let a new and better hope
within our hearts be stirred:
the Lord has yet more light and truth
to break forth from his word.¹

In a modern-day echo, Debie Thomas writes: “The truth of God will always confront, convict, and remake us, even as it soothes and affirms us. This is a good thing. It is good and right and necessary to remember that *we* are created in *God’s* image. We are not at liberty to reshape God into ours.”²

So, where does that leave us today? We are called by God to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being. We must engage in the struggle to call out and dismantle racism in the world around us...and within ourselves.

But, how do we strive? Where do we find God’s help? I mean, mystery is all very well and good, but it’s still mysterious. We prefer lists of things to do, and results that are reportable and manageable. Nevertheless, in the first instance, countering racism isn’t about check lists or data points. Calling out, and working to eradicate, racism is about building actual relationships with actual people. People who are, like us, created in the image of the Triune God. Dismantling racism involves taking an ax to the root of the thick and overgrown shrubs in our society whose fruit is poison, and have led us to despise, to fear, to hate, to dehumanize our sisters and brothers in God. You and I worship a Triune God who calls us to see and know and respect the dignity of every human being. Period.

¹ George Rawson (1807-1889).

² Debie Thomas, *The Undivided Trinity*. <https://www.journeywithjesus.net/lectionary-essays/current-essay?id=2655>

How do we make this journey? American Trappist monk and writer Thomas Merton wrote: "You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going. What you need is to recognize the possibilities and challenges offered by the present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith and hope."³

Hope. Many people in 12-Step Programs will make sayings, or slogans, out of a single word. This week, I was reminded that HOPE can stand for

Hearing
Other
People's
Experience

Hope is precisely what links the ideas of being relational and being humble. Hope obliges us to see, really see those whose lives differ from ours. Hope requires us to give up the notion that our experience of the world is the norm, or the best. Hope demands that we reject any manifestation of, "why can't they learn to be like us?" Hope obligates us to listen rather than speak. The adage "God gave you two ears and one mouth for a reason" comes to mind. Hope invites us to learn and learn and then learn some more.

If the dream that God has for us is to live into the fullness of his image within us, then we must commit ourselves to hearing, studying and experiencing that image of God within others, in all of its fullness and complexity.

In the end, though, nothing will change unless and until we humbly allow ourselves to be drawn into actual, genuine, listening relationships with people from communities beyond our experience and outside our comfort zones.

The work to which we are called today isn't easy. The path forward is unclear, and we will often fall short. It is, however, Gospel work and thus, the work of the church. But we do not labor in vain, or alone. Remember our response, "I will, with the help of God." 2,000 years ago, Rabbi Tarfon taught "*You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it.*"⁴

In the portion of Matthew's gospel that we hear today, Jesus says, *And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age* (Mt. 28:20). This passage is usually called the "great commission," but today I want you to hear it as the "great promise." With strength and encouragement, Jesus promises to be with us ... "in our heartbrokenness and grief, in our protests ..., in our fear and uncertainty, in our confession and

³ Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*.

⁴ Pirke Aboth, "The Ethics of the Fathers" 2:21.

repentance. Jesus is with us. And as long as Jesus is with us, we will neither lose hope nor give up.⁵

We close with a prayer for our country in this difficult time. Let us pray:

*Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitude brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth, In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*⁶

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

V: The Lord be with you.

R: *And also with you.*

Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

⁵ <http://www.davidlose.net/2020/06/trinity-a-trinitarian-matters/>

⁶ 18. *For our Country*, BCP 820.

Suffrages B

V. Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;

R. Govern them and uphold them, now and always.

V. Day by day we bless you;

R. We praise your name for ever.

V. Lord, keep us from all sin today;

R. Have mercy upon us, Lord, have mercy.

V. Lord, show us your love and mercy;

R. For we put our trust in you.

V. In you, Lord, is our hope;

R. And we shall never hope in vain.

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of your divine Majesty to worship the Unity: Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

A Collect for Sundays

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Mission

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. *Amen. 2 Corinthians 13:14*