

May 27, 2018

Trinity Sunday – Relationships

Sermon

Many of you may remember that I am one of five children. The middle one actually. What you may not know is that there are several years between each of us. As a child, I enjoyed the age differences between my siblings and I. Because it meant we all had our own separate friend groups, our own lives. Yet, we could still get along with each other. Later on, as a teenager I especially liked that I had much younger siblings, so I could use it as an excuse to watch Disney channel or do immature kid things. Most of all though, I liked that we shared in each other's experiences.

I can recall vividly when my older brother started driving. Much more than I can remember the first time I sat behind the wheel. Or the time we taught my little brother how to swim and my sister how to tie her shoes. Each time one of us experienced something new, we all went through it together. And this year has been no exception. From new additions, to disappointment, to big moves, and graduations. Just a few days ago the youngest finished her high school career and were coming to the realization that the Walker children were all grown up.

I also was pleasantly reminded of how lucky I am to be part of such a big family. And as I prepare to move away this time nearly 2,000 miles to New Haven, Connecticut and Yale University. I can't help to be but a little nervous. Not of a new town, rigorous academics, or extreme cold weather but nervous of being alone. Saying it out loud is weird. I am living in the most socially and technologically advanced, connected time where my family and hundreds of my friends are just a text, tweet, or call away. And yet I am afraid of being alone.

That's because even with all the technology and social networking sites I know I can't completely fill the void of being with my family and continuing to experience life together. And today, on this particular Sunday, when we are to ponder the Trinity and the relationship between God the Father, his Son, and the Holy Spirit. I keep thinking about the relationship between God and all his children. And our relationship with each other.

In our epistle reading today, we are reminded that we all have become part of God's family the same way. We did not choose him rather he choose us. Adopted us, each and every one to join his family. The Holy Spirit through his wonderful love led us all to become heirs of his kingdom.

Wow, what a great, awesome, and extremely large family to be a part of. Now I'm even more embarrassed that I admitted that I am worrying about feeling lonely when I move. Why should I ever feel lonely when I'm part of the largest, most loving family. I think it's probably safe to say we all have experience in loneliness at some point in our lives.

I mean, we're human. We yearn to feel desired, known, and loved. But for some reason, it's not enough to know God wanted us to be in his family. That He knows us by name, and He loves us. We need more. We crave to see we are valued, we are important, we are needed. We're looking for a relationship.

When I hear the word relationship, I immediately feel a weight on my shoulder and the word that comes to my mind is work. Yes, in my experience relationships on any level require some work. However, when I was preparing earlier today I was intrigued to find the definition for relationship is simply the state of being connected.

We want to be connected to God. We need to be connected to God. Many of you may be thinking to yourself, yes, I already know that. I recognized that long ago I wanted a relationship with God. I am here in church on a holiday weekend. So good for you. You managed to maintain or grow the connection. I think a lot of Christians excel at this. We are very good at having our own relationship with God. Keeping our business with him.

We forget though that we were brought into a family with all the other children of God. Think of all those connections with our brothers and sisters that we are led to make, to keep, to share. Now as a bassimus (?) of that since then, I've started to feel the pressure of work again.

Why do I need to do all that when I already have my Father's love? For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. Perhaps one of the most well-known verses in the Bible. We are reminded that through Jesus, God shows us how to love. And since we are joint heirs with Christ as Paul writes, we also have a responsibility to share the kingdom with each other.

We are called to build connections and relationships with the world. And like Facebook or Instagram, our several connections turn into a community. A community where we can share in all of our experiences the exciting ones, the sad ones, the confusing, the happy, the angry.

Yes, I'm describing the church. We share these moments often. We break bread together and share in the kingdom of God each week. And like my experiences with my own family, I feel complete when I am sharing in these holy mysteries with all of you. For what I'm talking about isn't just a community built here at St. Jude's. I'm talking about our responsibility as Christians and children of God to build a

community of God's church beyond these walls. To seek and serve all persons to know and love and value one another.

It may seem like a daunting task to do all that but let me remind you, you do it here already every day. It's how you made me feel at home within just my first few days here. You are incredibly caring, nurturing, hospitable, and above all else loving. You are well capable of sharing that love with the world. I think you are aware of it. But I think you are overwhelmed and don't know where to begin to build such a community outside in this hectic world.

I often tell people I rarely go in public without talking to at least one stranger whether it's in the checkout lane bonding over the lack of cashiers open or warning the Starbucks lady of the proper way to spell and pronounce my name. While some may see this as weird, naïve, or maybe even rude that I do this, I live for the opportunities. I live for them because it reminds me I'm never alone. I am part of an incredibly large family with a loving Father. And I'm excited to share in all the experiences that come with my family. So, I'm not suggesting you do the same. But let me remind you a community is just a bunch of connections. A bunch of relationships. So maybe let us start there with just one single connection.