

June 7th, 2020
The metaphysics of love
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Genesis 1:1- 2:4a
Matthew 28:16-20

In the beginning... God...

A relationship, a centrifugal pull of pure love

Manifests in creation.

Trinity Sunday brings us to a mystery. And mystery not because it is something we cannot understand, but something we can endlessly understand.
We cannot settle on one finite metaphor, one absolute image of God.
Rather we seeing this aspect in this moment, and then a new layer is added, and then we are drawn to this and to that.

It is a lifelong endless discovery... mystery.

“God beyond all names, never fully known, mystery of mysteries, calling us your own.”

Our scriptures focus us on the Genesis of life. Of life. Of each life.

A wonderful poetic, theologically rich Hebrew text, probably written when the Hebrew people were in Babylonian exile.
The chaos of a unknowing, the despair of having left what was familiar.

A poem is written, to hold up as a mirror, reminding them who they are.

God is.
God creates.
God creates life.
Life is inherently good.
God creates an abundance of diverse creatures to live in community.
Being together is very good.
Relationship, connection is very good.
Inter-related, unified living is an image of God.

The Mirror we hold up of God, of the ultimate, of the way we think things are, shapes us, reflects what is most valued to us.

I will always remember a man I met while working at a psychiatric hospital in South Africa in the early nineties. Let's call him Vusi. He happened to be of Zulu decent. His skin colour was black. He was in his forties, spent his formative years living with his mother in a poor area of Soweto – a township created in the 1930s when the White government started separating Black people from White.

Vusi's mother worked in the homes of white people and would come back and tell him about her day, about the houses, the cars, the swimming pools, the books, the food, the gardens. And these stories would fill his imagination.

When I met Vusi, he in the midst of a mental health crisis. The stress of his work, his financial debt was unsurmountable. He perceived himself as a failure. And his brain was decompensating. He was experiencing psychosis.

And in this state, Vusi believed he was a white man. He had in this emotional state, broken into the house of a young white family, believing this was his home too. Police had arrived and after assessment, he was admitted into the psychiatric ward where I worked.

I remember standing with Vusi in front of a mirror and asking him what he saw. He described the face of a white male in his forties. The face of a life that he valued, that he wanted to be.

Mirrors, are revealing.

“Let us make humanity in our image”

What if Steve Biko had held the mirror up to Vusi with the words – Black is beautiful.

What if the poetry of Genesis had shaped him - the diversity and unifying love with which God manifests Godself, was societies value, the interconnection of all humanity.

The teachings of Archbishop Tutu on Ubuntu: “My humanity is inextricably bound up in yours”
We belong in a bundle of life. I am because we are.

– Desmond Tutu, No Future Without Forgiveness.

What if the metaphysics of love defined society?

Somehow in the mystery of it all...

As the Cappadocian Fathers of the 4th Century – Turkey theologized:

The principle of the three in one becomes the operative principle of the universe.

- It Undercuts all dualistic thinking
For the three is the deepest nature of the one
1 is lonely, 2 is oppositional, 3 is inherently moving, dynamic and generative.
- It is the flow of divine love
Radical relatedness, perfect communion between 3
A circle dance of love that is never ceasing
- Where God is the dance itself
- Orderly and rhythmic
- The process of subatomic particles spinning round and round at immense speed and dynamism

Richard Rohr and Mike Morrell: The Divine Dance

If this is indeed so, why does Vimal Kumar bear this scar...

Vimal Kumar, born in the scavenger caste in India. People consigned to essentially picking up human waste, usually with some cardboard or plastic and no one ever touches them. Vimal's mother, however, got a job at a private school, and they allowed him to go to school as a result of it. But they couldn't afford a uniform. He had to go to school in rags, and he sat in the back of the class, and he never spoke. But his mother was so proud that, when Vimal was eight years old, she invited the whole class over to have a birthday party, and she spent two days cleaning the house, preparing for it. And then, on the day of the party, no one showed up.

If our very atoms spin with dynamism of the trinity of love, why does my friend Phil remember when he was 10 years old at a Christian Youth camp in Scotland, when he was told by an older boy that he should go home because he didn't belong there because of the darker colour of his skin.

If we are created to reflect the unifying relationality of the trinity, why are we so divided?

When Jesus sends us out to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God, baptising in the name of:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer;
Unmanifest, Manifesting, Manifested;
Hidden ground of Love, Wisdom, Word

We are invited into this dance of God. To experience love. And to manifest love, unifying, interrelated love to our world.

Love is not easy. It is not cheap.

Congressman John Lewis (A civil rights leader in the USA) reflects back:

“The Civil Rights Movement, above all, was a work of love. Yet even 50 years later, it is rare to find anyone who would use the word ‘love’ to describe what we did.”

In our culture, I think sometimes people are afraid to say “I love you.” But we’re afraid to say, especially in public life, many elected officials or worldly elected officials, are afraid to talk about love. Maybe people tend to think something is so emotional about it. Maybe it’s a sign of weakness. And we’re not supposed to cry. We’re supposed to be strong.

But love is strong. Love is powerful.

The movement created what I like to call a nonviolent revolution. It was love at its best. It’s one of the highest forms of love. That you beat me, you arrest me, you take me to jail, you almost kill me, but in spite of that, I’m going to still love you.

I have a lot to learn as I look deeply into the mirror of Divine Love.

Amen.

Reflection on the Eucharist:

The dancing saints of St Gregory's of Nyssa – the community is invited to dance to the Altar, hanging above them are icons of Saints as they dance, and as the community both past and present dances, they join the dance of the trinity. They are unified with the very being of God.

Communion – is for our 'union' with each other, with the various parts of ourselves and with God.

During the Eucharistic prayer – the prayer that is prayed by the Priest at the Altar, we invoke the Holy Spirit and we pray:

"Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts.
That all who eat and drink at this table
May be ONE body and one holy people"

"Gather into one all who share in these sacred mysteries"
"Unite us to your Son... Reconcile all things in Christ"

"Gather your church together from the ends of the earth into your Kingdom, where peace and justice are revealed, that we, with all your people of every language, race and nation, may share the banquet you have promised"

This is a formative meal.

When we gather, take, bless, break and share this bread - we become Christ's body.

We, being many, are one body, for share in the one bread.

We participate in the life of the trinity.

We become a manifestation of LOVE.

Amen.