

Holy Trinity – Love, Care and Respect

Subdue. Rule over. Dominion. These are not nice, easy, gentle or inviting words. They are words that I associate with Ukraine, Sudan, Iran, Lebanon and Gaza, amongst others. They are words that I associate with colonization, exploitation and appropriation. Subdue. Rule over. Dominion. Let me ask, do you remember hearing them in our readings this morning?

Subdue. Rule over. Dominion. They are all in the first reading, the first creation story in Genesis chapter 1. In Genesis chapter 2 there is a second creation story, a very different version. And you will not find subdue, rule over or dominion in the second creation story. But that is a discussion for another day.

The word dominion is also in the Psalm 8; a psalm believed to have been written by David. David proclaims praise to God, for God's power shown in the majesty of the stars and the moon, as well as God's love and favour to human beings.

The first creation story is not all bad news; in actual fact it presents a God who is the Almighty and compassionate creator of everything. God created everything considering how each created being was related and connected to every other created being. God created everything simply by saying so.

God created human beings in God's own image and charged them to be fill the earth and rule over the animals. Human beings were created with special attention and intricacy – fearfully and wonderfully made. Yet, does this make us better and holding more power than the rest of God's creation?

It certainly sounds like the rest of creation is subject to us, putting humankind above all else, and having power over all.

Subdue. Rule over. Dominion. Why these words? How about: Love. Care. Respect.

Would our behaviour towards the rest of creation and towards other human beings be any different? Can we love, care for and respect all that God has created? If we recalled our interconnectedness, our interrelatedness, our interdependency would we respond to creation differently.

The core of Jesus' life and teaching is love, to love our neighbour as ourselves. Jesus came into our world to remind us of this. We can be so preoccupied with subduing, ruling over and having dominion over others not just the animals and plants, but we also try to subdue, rule and have dominion over our fellow human beings.

Love. Care. Respect. Interconnectedness. Interrelatedness. Interdependency. These are the core characteristics of God. God is a community in Godself – Father, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit. They all have distinct personhood and characteristics and yet are one.

If you look at almost every artistic interpretation of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Trinity is depicted as three distinct persons, wearing distinct clothes, occupying space and having space between them. The space between them implies that each holds a distinct identity, an identity which has been made known to us through history. One of the most common images is of an older man seated, a younger man often seated and a dove hovering in the

space over the two men. Admittedly, most searches will bring up what is deemed most popular and not necessarily a fair representation of what is available.

We learn of God the Father in the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible. God the Son in the person of Jesus Christ is brought to us in the New Testament. And God the Holy Spirit was given to the early church at Pentecost and is with us today. Three distinct personhoods yet they are one, sharing the characteristic of love, care and respect.

Three distinct persons and yet they are interconnected, interrelated and interdependent.

The internet has given us fast and easy connection to the rest of the world. We can message, speak to and see friends and relatives almost anywhere in the world, instantaneously. So much so that cutting off the internet is a tool that some governments use to control their populations. We know it is happening in Iran and Russia. It is also used by invading armies to disrupt those they are fighting against, as a tool of warfare, cutting off the opponents' communication channels, cutting off access to help and aid.

Despite all our tools and channels for connectivity, our way of life has become more disconnected from and apathetic towards our neighbours, and the rest of creation. In this age of connectivity, we are, ironically, more disconnected from the realities that divide human beings.

In this age of connectivity we are more disconnected from nature.

In this age of connectivity, we only see ourselves and how we can better our own lives.

In this age of connectivity, we only think about our survival at the expense of others.

In this age of connectivity, our idea of progress and development is killing animals, cutting trees and exploiting the nature.

As we celebrate the Trinity, Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit this Sunday, let us celebrate the diversity and the unity of the Godself. The Godself models love, care and respect. The Godself models interconnectedness, interrelatedness, interdependency.

Let us look at ourselves and seek the connections that we have with others – with other human beings, and with the rest of creation.

Let us not take ourselves out of the web of life, for we are an integral part of it.

Let us recognize the space that we occupy and the space that we share with the rest of the creation.

In recognizing this space, let us become mindful of our fellow creation and not become greedy, taking more than what we can consume, leaving others with less and the rest with nothing.

In recognizing this space and becoming mindful of others in everything that we do, we are the incarnate the love of God, we make the love of God real and tangible to the other.

Let us recognize this space and work towards healing.

May love, care and respect, the core characteristics of the community of God, be the values that you carry with you. Thanks be to God for the gift of the Godself – Father, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit - interconnected, interrelated and interdependent.

Readings: John 7:37-39

Genesis 1:1-2:4

Acts 2:1-21