

Holy Trinity                      6/4/23  
Matthew 28:16-20                A

SERMON TEXT: WORDS OF OUR GOSPEL LESSON, FROM  
MATTHEW'S GOSPEL, THE 28<sup>TH</sup> CHAPTER.

Sunday morning. 10 AM. You know what that means, right? Divine Service at Concordia.

So say about 10:05, a blind man walked into the sanctuary, what would you do? Especially, considering he had never been in this sanctuary before. What if he bumped into something, made a lot of noise and was disruptive? What if he was about to trip over something and hurt himself or someone else? Would you assume it was someone else's job to warn him, help him? Would you treat him with scorn and contempt because he was interrupting church? Maybe you would just ignore him, pretending he wasn't even there.

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. As you go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

You have likely heard these words before, the "Great Commission", where Jesus declares the Church's mission until He returns. We have this text before us today because today is the Festival of the Holy Trinity.

Jesus teaches that the Trinity is one God in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

I call that to your attention because there is this popular sentiment in our world today, this great lie of Satan is what it really is, that goes like this, "All religions worship the same god." Let me be clear so that there is no misunderstanding or confusion: there is only God, in three persons and three persons in one God. If anyone does not believe in the one true God

– Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – then they do not worship the true God and they are not a Christian.

The Festival of the Holy Trinity gives us great cause for joy: God tells us who He is. Even though we cannot fully understand, God makes Himself known to us. And God reveals Himself to us because He wants us to know Him, to fear, love, and trust in Him above all things.

The Trinity has many different attributes, such as "eternal", "all-powerful", "all-knowing", and "holy". But, today, we learn that the greatest and the most important attribute above all is that God is LOVE. Our Old Testament lesson is the creation account. In six days (**Emphasis**: 6 24-hour-days), God created all things, out of nothing, simply by His Word. Creation teaches us that God is love, He creates, He gives life. His gives us the gift of life and all that we need for our body and soul, so that we can just enjoy the gift of life that He gives us.

But you also know that in the book of Genesis, the account of creation is followed immediately by the fall into sin. The 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Genesis teaches us what why life is foul and why life ends in death. Sin -- it's all because of sin.

But, rejoice and give thanks. God is love. Love moved God not only to create, but to serve. This Trinity Sunday, we are comforted that the Holy Trinity is for you!

God the Father is your Creator. He has made you and all creatures; He has given you your body and soul and still takes care of them. He richly and daily provides you all that you need to support your body and life. He defends you from the evil one. All this He does, not because you deserve it or earn it, but because of His fatherly love and goodness for you.

God the Son is your Redeemer. Jesus redeemed you, a lost and

condemned sinner, purchased and won you from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death so that you may be His very own, live under Him and serve Him.

God the Holy Spirit is your Sanctifier. Because you are dead in sin and cannot come to Christ, the Holy Spirit has called you by the Gospel, enlightened you with His gifts, sanctified, and keeps you in the true faith, so that you might remain a member of Christ's own body, His Church. In this Church, He daily forgives you all of your sin. And, on the last day, He will raise you and all the dead, and give eternal life to you and all the saints of God.

Dear Christian Friends, the eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, holy, and LOVING Trinity is at work in service to you. The Holy Trinity does its work in you, so that the Trinity can do its work through you.

By virtue of your baptism into Christ, Christ lives in you and you live in Christ, so that you can be Christ to your neighbor. St. Paul says it this way, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Ga 2:21).

Maybe the best way we can think of it is to think of a stained-glass window. The interesting thing about stained glass is that it has no light in and of itself. It is only when the sun shines on it, that it can reflect and shine its beauty for all to see.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven", Jesus says (Mt 5:16). As light shines through a stained-glass window, Christ shines through you, so that God may serve your neighbor through

you.

Let me go back to my opening illustration of the blind man. Now, instead of a blind man, suppose Jesus walked into this sanctuary. What would you do? Would you fall at his feet to worship Him, “My Lord and my God”? Would you wash his feet with your tears and wipe them with your hair? Would you embrace Him, clinging to Him, confessing, “Teacher”?

Maybe, you would assume it was someone else’s job to welcome Him. Maybe you would treat Him with scorn, contempt, for interrupting our worship service, maybe for intruding in your life. Maybe you would just ignore Him, pretending that he wasn’t even there.

No, no, you wouldn’t treat Jesus like that! Then, why would you treat the blind man like that? Open your eyes! Jesus is all around you! “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me”, Jesus says to you (Mt 25:40).

When Jesus speaks of the Trinity, He does so in the context of evangelism. As our Lord is about to ascend into heaven, He tells His Church that she will be His instrument, and we, with Christ in us, will make disciples.

And, we make disciples by “baptizing and teaching.” Our Lord Christ Himself commanded us to baptize. In the new birth of Baptism, God puts His saving name on us, so that we belong to Him; we are God’s own child.

And, we teach them “all” things that Christ has taught us, not just what itching ears want to hear in these last days. We do that because “Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Ro 10:17). Through His Word, and Word and the Water, and Word and Bread and Wine, God will work faith in the heart of the hearer.

I’ve told you before about Lifeboat # 14. On April 15, 1912, the ocean

liner Titanic struck an iceberg and, in less than three hours, plunged 12,000 feet to the Atlantic floor. Although 20 lifeboats and rafts were launched, many were only partly filled. To keep themselves from being swamped, the panic-filled people in the partially filled lifeboats rowed **OUT** of reach of the stranded souls who were trying to stay afloat in the icy water. It wasn't long before those voices were stilled as exhaustion and cold took their toll.

But, one lifeboat, lifeboat #14, rowed back to the scene after the ship slipped from sight. Alone, it chased the cries in the darkness, seeking and saving a precious few.

Today, Concordia is lifeboat #14. We are not called to a luxury liner; we are a rescue ship. God has told us to go back and rescue our neighbors, to make disciples of all people.

Do not assume it's someone else's job to share Christ with your neighbor. Don't ignore them, pretending they will just go away.

Row back and pull them into the ark of Christ's Holy Christian Church.