

TRINITY, A – June 7, 2020  
SCRIPTURES – Genesis 1:1 – 2:4; Acts 2:14, 22-36; Matt. 28:16-20; Ps. 16:8-11

*You make known to me the path of life; in Your presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Ps. 16:11*

This day, on which God is proclaimed and worshiped as the Holy Trinity, is an awesome day. How great is God, the almighty and all-wise Creator of the heavens and the earth! How great is Jesus, triumphant over sin and death in His mighty resurrection, declaring to His disciples, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”** Our stirring hymns emphasize God’s awesomeness.

You should know and believe that God is awesome, incredible in power and mysterious in His Trinitarian nature. He is all this... and more. But, one Scripture from today’s Introit – Ps. 16:11 – holds before us a truth about God that is especially good to have in mind... on this day, and every day. **“You make known to me the path of life; in Your presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”** (Ps. 16:11) Life and joy: these words, and the thoughts and images they bring to mind, especially proclaim to us the nature of our God, the Holy Trinity.

**“You make known to me the path of life.”** A path is a way to or from, a road on which to travel. With God we are not just traveling through this life, aimlessly wandering from who knows where to who knows where. Our lives comes from Him, and we are journeying to Him. Our reading from Gen. 1 makes this clear.

But, listen to it and consider it carefully, and you will realize this: your path isn’t simply from God and to God. It is with God. It is in God. He not only brings forth life. He is life. The Triune God is Himself the path of life. See this. Know this. Take this to heart.

The path we have been on in 2020 has been pretty rough. A pandemic. Sickness and death. Isolation. Fear. Now we have transitioned to massive protests, a response to brutality. Some pray. Some shout out in anger. Some peacefully gather. Some riot and burn and loot. And we are afraid for friends and loved ones... for those who protect us... for who we are as a nation, and who we will be.

Listen carefully to Genesis 1. God not only creates all things. He is interested in and involved in them. The Spirit of God hovers over His creation. God looks into and over His creation. Seven times we are told, **“And God saw that it was good.”** See Him smelling the flowers and smiling as He hears the songs of the birds! He names things. He blesses His creatures. He makes man – us – in His own image and likeness... the crown and highpoint and focus of His creation! We are not just from Him and on a path back to Him. We are brought into His life, that we might live in continuous communion with Him as we walk the path of life! **“Behold, I am with you always,”** Jesus, our brother and creator, affirms.

God is not a pit stop, a highway rest area on your path of life. Do not make Him so by calling upon Him in trouble, but not in joyful times... by crying out to Him with your voice, yet not listening to His voice! Find your existence... your purpose... your very life in the life-giving and life-sustaining voice of His Word. Invite the life-giving breath of His Spirit to enter your mind and heart through His holy Word. Listen to it... contemplate on it... rejoice in it. ***"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken,"*** says David in Ps. 16. Set the Lord before yourself, and you also will not be shaken. Even though surrounded by sickness... by trouble and distress... by worry and fear, you will not be shaken. You will be held securely by Him who created you, who walks with you, who is your path and your life.

You will also find to be true the rest of what David says in Ps. 16:11: ***"in Your presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."***

Can we really find joy and pleasure in the presence of the almighty Creator of the heavens and the earth, the awesome and mysterious Holy Trinity to whom we will one day give an accounting of our deeds, as the Athanasian Creed reminds us? ***"Those who have done good will enter into eternal life, and those who have done evil into eternal fire. This is the catholic faith; whoever does not believe it faithfully and firmly cannot be saved."*** Who can so believe? Even the disciples of Jesus – who heard His teaching and saw His miracles... who saw Him crucified, then saw Him standing before them, very much alive and full of God's power – *yet doubted*. Who among us, who live so many centuries later and have seen and experienced none of what they did, can overcome doubt? Who among us can have fullness of joy and hope to be saved?

***"And God saw... and God saw... and God saw all that He had made."*** Seven times we are told this in Genesis. God hasn't changed. The years haven't dimmed His sight. He sees you. He knows your mind and your heart. This inspires fear and worry.

***"In Your presence there is fullness of joy."*** I would guess that David wrote this before he slept with another man's wife and got her pregnant... before he tried to hide this by having her husband killed and then marrying her... before he spent months faking his worship and mumbling the prayers that were expected of him as king of Israel and leader of the people. You and I know how it feels... how guilt keeps us from praying... from reading God's words... from being glad in His house.

***"And God saw... and God saw... and God saw."*** And Jesus saw. He surely saw the doubts that His disciples feared to speak. But He did not mention them or speak one word of rebuke. ***"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me,"*** He said instead. Authority to do what? To forgive sins. To free consciences. To gladden hearts. ***"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."*** The Lord who has all authority; who knows all things, including your sins – knows them even better than you, for He bore them in His very flesh and soul and on the cross felt His Father's hatred of them – He has chosen to join you to God and fill you with Him in your baptism. To

forgive you and wash you clean. And in that baptism He has given you another image of the God who sees: He is your Father, the Son who was crucified and rose for you, and the Spirit who makes you holy.

On the front of your bulletin is the painting, *“The Holy Trinity,”* by Sandro Botticelli. It was commissioned for the church of Saint Elisabeth in Florence, Italy. The church was in a monastery for nuns who had formerly been prostitutes but had turned from their licentious lives to follow Christ. Botticelli shows the Crucified Jesus to be the central focus. God the Father is holding His cross and offering Him to us. The Holy Spirit, the dove of peace, is hovering over Him, ready to fly forth. In front of Jesus are John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence, inviting everyone to Christ, and Mary Magdalene, who was assumed to have been a prostitute. Her uncut hair, a sign of her repentance, covers her, and she is in an intense praying posture. This is the God who sees! This is who those former prostitutes were invited to see, and who we are invited to see: a Father who offers to you His Son, who bore your sin and death for you, and a Holy Spirit who flies forth with His Gospel, ***“making known to you the path of life”*** and assuring you that this Jesus, crucified and risen for you, is with you always.

Behold, this God, this Holy Trinity and Undivided Unity, is your life now... to the end of the age... and into eternity! ***“You make known to me the path of life; in Your presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”*** In the blessed name of the Father and of the on and of the Holy Spirit! Amen.