

Trinity Sunday 2025
Rev. Kimberly Glenn
June 15, 2025

Holy and Eternal God, three in one and one in three, on this Trinity Sunday, open our hearts to the grace of Christ, our minds to the wisdom of the Spirit, and our lives to the embrace of the Creator. May our praise reflect the unity and harmony of Your divine nature, and may we leave this place bearing the mark of Your holy love. In the name of the Blessed Trinity, we pray. Amen.

Sometime during the first year of my marriage to Charles Glenn we had an experience that I thought of this week as I contemplated the Holy Trinity. Over the ensuing years I have come to know myself as a devout trinitarian. I have come to know each person in the trinity more intimately over the years, not in the same way as I have come to know my husband, but in an intimacy that a human being is able to know the divine. I love all four of them, the Holy Three and Charles.

I was in the beginning of getting to know Charles when we got married forty-three years ago. When we married we honeymooned in Ireland and then started a new life in a suburb of Los Angeles. Having spent my life living in 'small town' Virginia, with a single summer during college living in Nags Head, North Carolina, I was eager for the adventure that a new life in a megalopolis like LA would bring.

We were living in a suburb just beyond Simi Valley in Ventura County. There was literally nothing but a 7 Eleven in the place where we lived. But we had some friends in the development that drew us out there. We were with them one night having dinner in Simi Valley. After dinner we went to a place where we could hear music and go dancing. It wasn't long after we sat down that a motorcycle gang came into the relatively small diner. The music was great! The four of us got up to dance.... And so did the motorcycle gang. It was while we were all dancing that I noticed they were wearing

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knives and brass knuckles and other dangerous looking things on their belts and jackets. I was a small town girl, for heaven's sake. I was a little nervous. No, I was a LOT nervous.

Then my adorable new husband did something that surprised me, and to be honest scared me. He invited the bikers to 'circle dance' with us. That was one of his favorite things to do on a dance floor. He liked to gather all the people around us into a circle so everyone was dancing all together. I was used to that. But I was not used to inviting people who looked so different and so mean. With a look of surprise and horror on my face I grabbed my friend Lynn and scooted into the ladies' room. I remember Lynn saying to me that I needed to lighten up, let Charles be Charles. I remember saying back to her, "If I let him be any more of himself we might all end up in real trouble!"

After I calmed down, Lynn and I went back out onto the dance floor. I could see that there was nothing scary at all happening. The bikers seemed to enjoy Charles' invitation. Everyone was having a blast, laughing and singing and dancing in a circle. Who could have imagined that?

When I look back on that experience now, I see it quite differently than my twenty-five year old self saw it that night. First of all, Charles showed genuine hospitality when he invited the bikers into the dance. Second, the circular nature of the dance put no one in a position of power, all of us were equally engaged in the fun of the moment. And third, in inviting the others Charles faced the fear of being rejected. As I look back

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on it through the lens of a priest, It was actually all very Christ-like. In fact, it was very reminiscent of the nature of the Trinity.

Many of us were brought up with the very Roman, western notion of imagining the trinity as a triangle, with God the Father taking the position at the top point of that triangle. But that is not the image that comes to us from reading scripture. We come away from scripture, especially scripture in the gospel of John, that God the Father, Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit Advocate are co-equal partners in the divinity of the Trinity. No person of the Trinity is more powerful or dominant than the other. That image

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is no better represented than in the fifteenth century icon by Russian iconographer Andrei Rublev that is pictured on the cover of the bulletin (and shown below.)

This icon shows the Trinity gathered around a table in a circle. There is much written about this icon, but what I hope to point out is that none of the three persons is more dominant than the other. Their personhood is represented in the icon by the color of their scarves. You can't see the color in black and white, but on the left is gold, center is blue and to the right is green. In a book by Franciscan theologian Richard Rohr called The Divine Dance, he tells us that gold symbolizes perfection and fullness, the ultimate



source which is our Creator God.

Blue in the center symbolizes sea and sky mirroring each other as Christ mirrors the Father. The two fingers on the table symbolize his humanity plus his divinity - the two natures of the person of Jesus the Christ, Green is the symbol of endless fertility, "the divine aliveness that makes everything blossom and bloom."¹ That is the power of the Holy Spirit.

¹ Richard Rohr with Mike Morrell, The Divine Dance, The Trinity and Your Transformation, Whitaker House, ©2016, page 29-39

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But there is one more very important detail of the icon that we need to take into account. If you look at the border that surrounds the table where the Divine Three are gathered, you can see that there is an opening. That opening is for you and for me to enter in and join them in their communion, join them in the divine dance.

Scholars say that the original icon once had a mirror affixed there at the opening. The mirror might have made the viewer feel instantly a part of the image. I love that. Remember that in the creation story, Genesis 1:26 says, :“Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness.’” Perhaps this is the “our” that God meant. Think of it. We are made in the image of the nature of God that includes all of Godself represented in the full company of these three persons. What in the world can we do after we know that? We certainly can’t UN-KNOW it, as William Yagel said in his Homecoming sermon.

It seems to me we have three choices. (There’s that number three again!) The three choices are: 1) To join in the dance. 2) To walk away from the dance and never look back Or 3) To stand on the periphery and observe the three dancing with others, maybe to be drawn in or maybe not.

To join in the dance, you step into the circle. The **Father** extends His hand with strength and delight. The **Son**, scarred but exuding a sense of joy, leads you with the kind of love that knows your pain. The **Holy Spirit** surrounds you, is lgraceful, playful, and whispers words of encouragement. In moves that may be imperfect, you realize you’re moving to the rhythm of grace, fully alive, embraced, and part of something eternal.

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If you decide the dance is too intimate and threatening, you quietly slip away. Maybe the vulnerability was too much. Maybe pride, pain, or fear made the steps feel impossible. You sit on the edge, humming your own tune, but deep down, you still feel the rhythm of the divine dance beating in your soul. The Son's eyes still find you. The Spirit drifts near, and the Father never stops keeping your place open in the circle. You may turn away, choosing resistance over relationship. But the invitation is never withdrawn.

Or you might stand nearby, watching. You admire the beautiful glides and turns. You're intrigued, but you think you're incapable of mastering the steps and the tempo. You're afraid of getting it all wrong. You notice the Spirit flowing rhythmically in and out and all around. You admire the Son's pleasure in watching the dancers. The Father waves his arm around dancers as they enter. He gestures patiently for you to join.. But you stay on the edge. You stand close, frozen, hesitating to fully join in the dance.

On this Trinity Sunday, which option will you choose? Our God is offering us a dance card. He offers it freely and always to all people everywhere. God wants you to join with the three of them in the Holy Circle Dance. Will you choose this day to put on your dancing shoes?

Blessing for Trinity Sunday: May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you and remain with you always. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, in the mystery and unity of the Holy Trinity. Amen.