

Today, in the Christian calendar, is Trinity Sunday. In one of my favorite silly videos, St. Patrick, after facing difficult questions about the Trinity from two “simple” Irishmen, in frustration, defines the Trinity this way, “The Trinity is a mystery which cannot be comprehended by human reason, and is best understood only through faith as it is confessed in the words of the Athanasian Creed which states ‘We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in union, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance. That we are compelled by the Christian Truth that confesses each distinct person is God and Lord and that the deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one equal in glory, coequal in majesty.’” Then, the two simple Irishmen say, “well why didn’t you just say that at the beginning Patrick?! Yeah, Patrick! Quit beating around the bush!” I love that video because it’s so silly and absurd, as if the answer St. Patrick gives is somehow satisfying or makes any kind of sense to the untrained person. I mention this scene to say that most people struggle to understand the Trinity when you start thinking about it. The Church has spent millennia saying what the Trinity is not, and not much time defining what the Trinity is in lay person terms...which is the whole point of that video. Trinity Sunday, in my humble opinion, is meant to be a day when we celebrate the unique relationship that is God, because at the heart of God’s existence is relationship. It’s ok for some things to be a holy mystery.

In fact, in today’s passage from Matthew, even some of the Apostles who saw the resurrected Jesus and were interacting with him in this very passage, are said to have doubted. If they had doubts, one might ask, what chance do we have in knowing what happened? On the other side, I like to think that maybe this passage affirmed that, just like the Trinity, some parts of our faith are simply mysterious, that we will never understand them, that we will have our questions and doubts...and that’s ok. Jesus doesn’t chastise those Apostles who doubted. He didn’t say, shape up before you ship out! No, to the disciples who had faith and to the disciples who doubted he commanded them both with the full authority of God to go and proclaim the good news to everyone. We all have this commission. We all have a responsibility to go out into the world and to make the world a better place. Yes, we can take our doubts and our fears and our questions, but the important thing in this passage is that we go out into the very ends of the Earth to proclaim God’s love for all people.

Like many of you, I have been physically and emotionally exhausted these last several months. And then the murder of unarmed black people in their home and on the street sent angry shockwaves throughout our country. People are in the streets protesting every day over the racism that continues to exist in our country and in our very towns and homes. People are tired of it all. We are fed up. And so people are working to fulfill Jesus’ commission to go to the very ends of the Earth to make disciples, to shape the world in the image of God. People are working hard to fulfill Jesus’ commandments to love God and to love our neighbor. We have much work to do. The differences within our communities and within our country and world are highlighted in bold right now. And there are many people who don’t know what to do. They are afraid and scared and some are paralyzed by the enormity of everything. I understand being in that place. I get it. The disciples all those years ago had been through a traumatic event together and, even after their Lord rose from the dead, they still had their doubts and questions and fears. But Jesus didn’t hold back for them. He didn’t say, “hang out for awhile up here.” No he said, “Go”. 2nd person imperative. Get up and go to the very ends of the Earth. You have a lot of work to do. We have a lot of work to do. We have a long way to go until all of creation is living in the divine mysterious relationship like the trinity.

I am here for you during this time. There is so much unknown. There is so much work to do. Going to the very ends of the Earth is a lot of work, God! Building the peaceable kingdom of God is a lot of work. Ending racism and oppression is a lot of work. The enormity of it all is overwhelming. But, how do you build a building? One brick at a time. How do you run a marathon? One step at a time. If you want to start having conversations about what all of this means and you find yourself asking, “what can I do?” Give me a call. Let’s talk about it. Let’s read a book together. Jesus commissioned the sure in faith and the doubters together. Doubt and fear are no excuses for not doing the work we are called to do. So, let’s give our resources and time and energy to learning and working towards creating the world Jesus Christ calls us to create. We have much work left to do. Our work is not over, beloved. But today’s passage reminds us that each one of us has the imperative to get to work, to live together in holy and mysterious unity. We are not alone. God is with us and we are all in this together. Amen and amen.