

## Trinity Sunday Year A 2011

Friday evening as I sat out on my patio appreciating all of the work that I had done a phrase came to my mind and it kept repeating itself through to the next day. A question came first asking this; "And what have you been doing." The answer came second responding in this way; "I've been working on my farmers tan." You know the one that cuts off at the tee shirt line just above your elbows and around the base of your neck. Yep the question and answer were very clear. What have you been doing? I've been working on my farmers tan.

On Thursday and Friday I planted flowers, and vegetables, and even some grass seed. I cleaned windows and patio furniture and sprayed for bugs and rust. I trimmed bushes to add to the last remaining burn piles of the season and then I cleaned up with the blower and the water hose. Finally with creaky bones, stiff muscles and a couple of liquid gel Advil in my stomach I sat down and the question came. "What are you doing?" And the answer came. "Working on my farmers tan."

Do you ever have that experience when something just comes drifting into your mind and it won't go away? It usually happens when your guards are down. Maybe you're tired or resting. Maybe your mind is adrift and unworried and unhurried. Maybe it's even God who poses the question. And if you're guards are down and your mind adrift, maybe it's even God who helps to

answer the question. For me these experiences are wonderfully mysterious experiences of the living God, the one we put into words today, the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. The New Zealand Prayer Book names the Trinity Earth Maker, Pain Bearer, and Life Giver. I like the New Zealand names because they really speak to what this triune God is about. A God who makes the earth, a God who bears our pain, and a God who gives life.

This morning we listened to the beautiful story of creation. Darkness separated from light, the wind of God sweeping over creation, day and night, the sky made distinct from the sea and dry land, earthly vegetation, plants and fruit trees, stars and the moon and the sun, and swarms of living creatures, birds, and sea monsters, cattle and creeping things and wild animals, and then as God's next to final gesture human kind... created to have dominion over it all. Human kind created both male and female in God's image. Go forth multiply, be fruitful, fill the earth and subdue it. Make it your dominion. And then God's final final gesture was to take a break.....and when God did he saw that everything he had made and created was indeed very good. Not just good but very good. This is a God who takes notice, a God who is reflective, a God whose imagination knows no bounds, a God who can sit down and appreciate the work that he has done. I can picture God on that seventh day reclining in his Sabbath lawn chair looking at all that his

holy and divine will had created and saying to himself, What are you doing?, What have you done?, and then responding with great delight and joy and pleasure and happiness. This is very good, very good indeed. God enjoyed his work of creation.

A word that has been coming to me recently is the word portal. A portal is a doorway, a gateway, an entrance, a threshold. A portal is an opening in which to walk through, an opening in which to see and hear through and glimpse what is beyond. We here gathered are at such a portal. Before us stretches several months of summer in which we have no big holidays, no liturgical feasts, no liturgical journeys. There are no Christmas Days to prepare for, no Thanksgiving feasts, no Easter festivals, no Advents, no Lents, no Epiphany, no New Years to celebrate,..... it's simply summer. No big deals, ....unless you want big deals, just a stretch of summer, a stretch we call in the church the season after Pentecost or better known as just plain Ordinary time.

This is a great opportunity to ask yourself what you want to do, or be, or become. How are you going to spend your time this summer? What portals do you want to walk through? What can you do to live as St. Paul suggests to the Corinthians? To "live in peace; and [have] the God of love and peace ...be with you."

Will you find yourself at the end of this Ordinary time and be able to sit back with God and say.... this is good,

this is very good indeed. Perhaps a summer can be a time of exploring your goodness and the goodness of others, and the goodness of creation. Perhaps a time of becoming more grateful. We tend to think about and bemoan the things we don't have or the things we can't do and we forget that so many other things are possible. We always have choices. When focused on what we could call badness we forget about our goodness. Archbishop Desmond Tutu writes that, "We are made for goodness by a God, who is goodness itself. We are made for and like God, who is the very essence of goodness."

You may often hear me say that people are good but sometimes their behavior is bad. People make bad choices in the face of difficult or challenging circumstances. Thank God there is forgiveness. Forgiveness is a portal back into goodness because the goodness never goes away.

This is Ordinary time, a portal into whatever you want it to be. This Ordinary time can be any day of God's creation, maybe even a Sabbath Day, a day of rest to acknowledge the blessings of our lives, to be at peace and to know that we are loved and blessed and held by God..... this Holy Trinity. The Earth Maker, the Pain Bearer, and the Life Giving Spirit be with us this day and remain with us always. Amen.