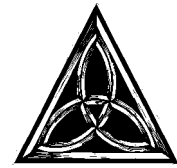




Sanctus

The Holy Trinity



A Worship Newsletter of the ELCA,
Indiana-Kentucky Synod

April 2006

The Episcopal priest once said to the Lutheran pastor, "I get asked to do pulpit supply at Lutheran congregations a lot on The Feast of The Holy Trinity. You Lutheran pastors sure are frightened of this feast day, aren't you?"

Perhaps we get mixed up about what we are to preach. The question is never so much "what is this doctrine of the trinity" as "how is this doctrine good news". The challenge – as always – is to wrestle with the appointed texts and break open the Word of the Gospel for the gathered assembly. The Feast of The Holy Trinity is not the content of the sermon, but the part of the context. The content, of course, is always Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, proclaimed in such a way that sins are forgiven, wounded people are made whole, and tongues are unleashed to give glory to God.

Standing as it does at the beginning of the Sundays after the Day of Pentecost it introduces that part of the Church Calendar often referred to as the "time of the church". Having heard the story of our redemption in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ from Advent-the Day of Pentecost, we turn now toward application in the life of the church. The Holy Trinity reminds us that we are gathered and sent in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

In this issue of the Sanctus you will find resources for planning worship on The Feast of the Holy Trinity. Susan McMahon offers her thoughts on children and that feast day. Part Two on eucharistic prayers is on the back page for your reflection, and there are updates on Renewing Worship and other worship resources for congregations and worship leaders, including summer events.



What's New at Renewingworship.org?

- You can view a summary of Liturgical Review Process and a list of participants.
- You can pre-order ***Evangelical Lutheran Worship*** from Augsburg Fortress. (available in October)
- Much of the textual material from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* has been posted on the web site as allowed by copyright. Additional content and background material will be posted as it becomes available. New background documents have been added on hymnody and liturgical music.
- Graphics included in *With the Whole Church: A Study Guide for Renewing Worship* are available for download.

www.sundaysandseasons.com announces that more hymns have been uploaded from the Renewing Worship Songbook (all searchable by title; about 60 with allowed downloads), from the service music section of With One Voice (#601-625), and the "Canticles" portion of Lutheran Book of Worship (#1-21). These items, all either public domain or Augsburg Fortress-copyrighted works, are searchable and downloadable for your worship plans or through the Hymns & Songs Search.

The Institute of Liturgical Studies at Valparaiso University will hold its Fifty-Eighth Session on April 24-26, 2006: "Saying and Doing the Gospel Today: Mass, Ministry, Mission". This is the third year under this title, and the focus will be on "Mission". For more information and registration info go to www.valpo.edu/ils.

Trinity Lutheran Seminary offers summer music courses for church musicians. They offer both one-week and three-week courses, beginning June 12. For more information contact Trinity Seminary at 614-235-4136, ext 4120, or music@trinitylutheranseminary.edu.

Fellowship Ministries presents its 14th annual *Created to Praise Conference* in St. Louis, Missouri, June 14-16. For general information call 800-783-3079.

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Children in Worship: Speaking of The Holy Trinity

By Susan McMahan



*I prefer to cut children's spiritual garments a little large,
for them to grow into, as they will in time.
And who knows what vivid image or hint of the beauty of God
may remain in their mind and memory?*



Dorothy Coddington, *Orate Fratres*, 1949

I think we do children (and the adults they will later become) a great disservice when we attempt to oversimplify complex truths. Accordingly, I don't think that "Speaking of the Holy Trinity" should take the form of that sort of three-minute object lesson which reduces our Trinitarian God to a controllable home science experiment with water, ice, and steam. (Get a full-sized blizzard or an ocean into the sanctuary, however, and I promise you'll have *everyone's* attention!)

Our younger children rarely "get" the metaphors of an object lesson anyway, and our older ones surely need to be thinking "outside the box" of a lab or kitchen. Nevertheless, the particular truth of the whole cloth of our Trinitarian God is so important to Christian faith that it's critically important to cut some kind of garment our children can grow into.

Here are some options for "less is more" conversations with children about the Trinity -

Remind children "Whose" they are

Make the baptismal connection to this particular name Christians use for God. Take children to the font, trace the cross again on their foreheads, and remind them of their baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Use the opportunity of a day like Trinity Sunday to remind children "whose" they are - and that they belong to God's family.

Help children notice the use of the Trinitarian name in worship

Take several Sundays to draw the children's attention to particular examples of the way we use this name explicitly in the liturgy ... start with the Confession and go on to the prayers, the blessings, and of course, any service of Baptism.

Teach them to make the sign of the cross on their own bodies

Reinforce their listening and participation in worship by encouraging them to make the sign of the cross whenever they hear you speak these words.

Do please remember that children LOVE repetition - you can safely repeat these simple teachings over and over and over again. And if you're lucky enough to have a few "grown-ups" complain about being bored, you can always invite *them* to try on an adult-sized study of the creeds!



The Feast of the Holy Trinity

Color for The Holy Trinity is White

GATHERING

Since this is a feast day, it is appropriate to omit the Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness and to include a bid for forgiveness during the intercessions. The liturgy could begin with a Baptismal remembrance and sprinkling with water. See *Renewing Worship's Holy Baptism and Related Rites*, pp. 101-103. The day also serves well as a baptismal festival day. A congregation, after the Vigil of Easter baptisms, may invite folks to wait until this feast day. Even in congregations that do not delay baptism, however, this is still a good day for a baptism with all the images of the trinity, water, and children of God in the readings.

Gathering Hymns

There are a number of hymns that celebrate the Holy Trinity:

LBW: 165-169, 188, 191, 192, 247, 308, 400 or 522, 535 RW: 260, 285, 293, 298

TFBF: 137, 138, 142, 289

A Procession is especially appropriate on a major feast day.

A possible Greeting:

P Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

C Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

For the Hymn of Praise you might use a setting of the *Te Deum*, such as LBW pp 139-141.

Another option would be WOV 787, based on the *Gloria in Excelsis*.

WORD

The readings begin with the story of Isaiah's call and his vision of the heavenly throne room in Isaiah 6.1-8. It would be an option to have a cantor sing LBW 528 as the First Reading. Hymns that fit well with this reading include: LBW 165, 242, 251, 253, 381, 535, WOV 752, RW 176, 265, TFBF 143, 203, 230. The psalmist proclaims God's glory while watching a thunderstorm move in from the sea and across the land in Psalm 29. Romans 8.12-17 and John 3.1-17 speak of the Spirit's role in leading us into a relation with the Father as children of God and fellow heirs with Jesus Christ, the one sent by God to save the world. Hymns that fit well with John 3 are WOV 693 and RW 135, 161, 202 (for Romans). A Gospel Procession is appropriate for this feast day. You might use LBW 194 or 317 during procession, dividing the stanza evenly between the procession moving into the midst of the people and the return. The Nicene Creed is the appropriate creed for a festival day (unless there is a baptism), and you may wish to sing it using LBW 374.

MEAL

An introduction to the Peace might be:

P The Psalmist proclaims the blessing of peace for the children of God.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

"Create in Me" serves well as the Offertory with its reference to the Holy Spirit.

Eucharistic Prayer III from LBW (*Minister's Desk Edition*) works well with its reference to John 3.16.

LBW 198 makes a good distribution hymn.

SENDING

Possible Sending hymns include LBW 260, WOV 773, RW 191.

A possible dismissal:

A Whom shall the Lord send into the world?

C Here am I! Send me, send me!

A Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia!

C Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!





Why I Use Eucharistic Prayers

By Rudy Mueller



In the first article, I talked about the history of eucharistic prayers, and promised to speak about content and style. But I thought it would be more helpful to first offer why I use eucharistic prayers regularly.

As mentioned in the previous article, the pattern of offering thanks before eating is one that Jesus practiced and offered as a model to the church. It simply makes sense to me that the gathered assembly offer thanks in a corporate and formal way before eating the meal.

Secondly, this has been the historical practice of the church. While the earliest complete text of a eucharistic prayer that we have dates to the 3rd century, we do have references to and examples of such prayers in earlier documents. I quote a portion of Chapter 9 of the *Didache*:

1. With regard to the prayer of thanksgiving, offer it in this fashion.

2. First, for the cup: “We thank you, our Father, for the holy vine of David your servant, which you have revealed to us through Jesus your servant. Glory be yours through all ages!”

[translation from *The Eucharist of the Early Christians* by Willy Rordorf and Others, translated by Matthew J. O’Connell. © 1978 Pueblo Publishing Company, page 2]

Justin Martyr writes in his *First Apology*, chapter 65:

3. Then bread and a cup containing water and wine mixed with water are brought to him who presides over the brethren; he takes them and offers prayers, glorifying the Father of all things through the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit; and he utters a lengthy thanksgiving because the Father has judged us worthy of these gifts. When the prayer of thanksgiving is ended, all the people present give their assent with an “Amen!”

5. When the president has given thanks and the people have all signified their assent, those whom we call “deacons” distribute the bread and the wine and the water ...

[from *The Eucharist of the Early Christians*, page 72]

In *Adversus Haereses* Irenaeus of Lyons writes, “How can they have certainty that the bread over which the thanksgiving is spoken is the body of the Lord and the cup his blood...” [*The Eucharist*, p 89]

All three of these references most likely date from the second century. They, along with others, give witness to the early church’s use of a prayer of thanksgiving over the bread and wine. Even if we grant that the theological content may have gone astray, for centuries the use of these prayers was the standard practice in the western and eastern rites of the church. I consciously connect the use of a eucharistic prayer with the historic practice of the church, and therefore see the use of the prayer as a way to bridge the divisions of the 16th century in a visible, practical, and faithful way.

Further, I see a parallel structure between the liturgy of the Word and the liturgy of the Meal. The liturgy of the Word begins with a shared greeting (The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ... And also with you) and moves toward the proclamation of the Gospel in the readings and sermon. The liturgy of the Meal also begins with a greeting (The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you) and moves toward the proclamation of the Gospel in the Prayer of Thanksgiving. Both movements contain reference to the story of God in creation and in the chosen people, culminating in the particular revelation of God’s love in Jesus Christ. Both then move to the witness of assent from the assembly (the creed and the Amen) and then to a sharing in Christ (through intercessions we share in his care of all creation and through the meal we share in his death and resurrection).

Finally, I see the use of the eucharistic prayer as a way to avoid the sense that somehow we have said the magic words to consecrate bread and wine. The prayer includes a petition for the Holy Spirit (epiclesis) and makes it clear that the actor in all of this is God. It is God who creates, redeems and makes alive. So perhaps next time, words about style and content.