

May 30 & 31, 2026 – Trinity

2 Corinthians 13:11-14

Finally, brothers, rejoice. Set things in order. Be encouraged. Agree with one another. Be at peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Dear friends in Christ Jesus:

Last Monday we celebrated Memorial Day. In a month we will celebrate the 4th of July. Why do we have such holidays? What is the point? As Americans, it is good for us to have holidays that remind us that the freedoms we enjoy as Americans are freedoms that were earned. On these patriotic days we remember all those people in the past and present who fought and fight against those who were and are trying to steal away our freedoms. As an American, you enjoy a certain amount of freedom and a certain quality of life that many people in the world just don't have. That freedom, that quality of life, didn't just happen out of the blue. It's something that was earned for you by other people. That's why we have patriotic days.

Today we are celebrating a special day. That is the Festival of the Holy Trinity. On this day, we remember that God reveals himself to us in a unique way, as three separate persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But he is not three Gods, just one God. The doctrine of the Trinity does not attempt to completely explain God. It only explains to us in a very simple way what God has revealed to us about himself so far. To describe the tip of the iceberg above the water is not to describe the entire iceberg. So this teaching of the Trinity is not a complete explanation of God. It's simply a way of describing the tip of the iceberg of what we know about him. So today let's: **Remember the Trinity – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: 3 Persons but One God!**

The United States didn't just happen by itself. All the things you see that are American—our technology, our freedoms, our American lifestyle—were set up by other people. Wars had to be fought. Blood had to be shed. And, just in case you forget that, there are war memorials that remind you of the price that had to be paid so that you can enjoy everything you see. Memorials are to keep us from forgetting that our country is here because of what other people have done.

The world didn't just happen on its own either. The sky, the trees, the animals, the complicated human body – those things didn't just happen. Wouldn't it be foolish to say that our country developed accidentally? And yet, that's what people say when they describe the world. They say that the world happened accidentally with a big bang explosion, leading to a puddle of slime. And, lo and behold, millions of years later there were people.

“Not so,” God says in the Bible. God the Father, the creator of our world, tells us in our first reading for today that the world did not happen accidentally. There was no big bang from which came simple organisms which eventually after millions of years became people. God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, created our world in only six days. “But how could that be? The world is so complex no one person could have put it all together,” some might say. And the answer really is very simple. God is all powerful. God is wise. God can do whatever he wants. If God wants to create the world, complete with adult animals, and trees that look hundreds of years old, and rock formations that look millions of years old in only six days, then he will, because he is all powerful, and he is wise.

Wouldn't it be nice if God the Father left behind a few memorials so that we wouldn't forget just how powerful and wise he is? God has left behind a memorial for you called nature. Look at the beauty of nature. Look at all the beautiful varieties of birds that gather around a bird feeder. Go snorkeling and look at the brilliantly colored fish. Listen to a doctor describe how complicated and how ingeniously the human body is designed. These are God's memorials and they remind you of just how wise and powerful your creator is.

But after God made the world Adam and Eve fell into sin and sin changed the world. The Devil took over. The people who lived here didn't realize it, but they were slaves to the Devil and slaves to sin. No one was free to go to heaven. No one was free from being afraid of God. No one was free from the punishments of hell. Everyone was born in sin and enemies of God, destined for hell. You and me included. But God didn't want that, so he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity into this world, born a baby in Bethlehem. And Jesus, by his perfect life and innocent death, brought us freedom.

Last Monday, Memorial Day, we remembered the sacrifices that have been made on our behalf as a country. Because of those sacrifices we have freedom. We don't have to worry about having our vote taken away. We

don't have to worry about someone telling us that we can't worship God anymore. We don't have to worry about being thrown in jail for no reason. We are free from those sorts of things. But it came at a cost. People had to go to war and shed their blood for us. Jesus shed his blood so that we could enjoy our Christian freedom. Jesus went into battle against Satan and death, and the battlefield was the cross. There he shed his blood, dying to make the ultimate sacrifice to pay for our sins, to take their punishment away. He did this so that you could have freedom, forgiveness and eternal life.

You see, that sacrifice served as a ransom. And once that ransom price was paid, you were freed from all kinds of things. No longer do you have to be afraid of God because you know that Jesus has taken away your sins. No longer do you have to be afraid to die because you know that you'll be going to heaven when you die. No longer do you have to be tortured by guilt because of those sins of the past because those sins are gone. No longer do you have to live in confusion about how to get to heaven for you know that Jesus has already saved you. You are free from all those things, free to live at peace with God and at peace with yourself. But that freedom came at a price. The Son of God had to sacrifice himself for you. He shed his blood for you. And so, on this festival of the Holy Trinity, we remember what the second person of the Trinity did. Jesus died for you and me to save us.

When the Allied forces defeated the Germans in WWII, thousands of prisoners were released. Thousands of people were given their freedom. Not one prisoner said, "No, I don't believe the war is over. I will stay here in this prison until you prove to me that the war is over." When Jesus died on the cross, and then rose from the dead, billions of prisoners were freed. According to the Bible, every person in the world, for all time was freed from their guilt, from their fear, from the condemnation of hell. But not everyone believes it. A lot of people say, "That's too good to be true. I will stay here in my prison of guilt until you prove to me that God really did win the war." But for you, you do believe. You are like those prisoners of war who see the allied troops opening the gates and rejoice. Jesus has opened the gates of heaven to you. The war is over. Satan has lost. You are free from your sins, free to be a Christian who is loved and taken care of by God.

How did you become an American citizen? For most of us, if not all of us, we were born into it. For some, though, who were not born in this country, it takes a lot of work. There are some facts to study, some tests to take, some fees to pay.

How did you become a citizen of God's country, of heaven? How did you become a Christian? No one is born that way. So how did it happen? That's where the Holy Spirit comes into the picture, the third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit brings people to faith in Jesus. He turns people into Christians. And he uses the Gospel to do this. This may take place when the Gospel is preached or when the waters of Baptism and the Word are applied. That's what the third person of the Trinity does. He brings you to faith. He changes you into a citizen of God's kingdom. And through Word and Sacrament he keeps you in the saving faith.

Throughout the year, we have different days that remind us of our citizenship, days that help us to be patriotic. We have Memorial Day, the 4th of July and Flag Day. Patriotism is a good thing. It's good to be proud of your country, to appreciate your citizenship and the sacrifices that were made to win your freedom. Is there such a day as a Christian Memorial Day? A day when you remember God the Father who made you, God the Son who died for you, and God the Holy Spirit who converted you. Well, today is that Memorial Day for the Triune God, isn't it? What an awesome God we have. And it is well we devote one day in the year to remember our God.

But there is more. We are human beings and we are forgetful. How quickly we forget about our Creator, our Savior, our Sanctifier. That is why it is so important that we meet here at Calvary regularly. Here we remember what God has done for us. Here we find joy and strength as we hear the Word of God. Here we receive Christ's body and blood in Holy Communion for the reassurance of our forgiveness. And as you remember your Triune God, know **that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit [is] with you all.** Amen.