



I've grown accustomed to caving into the words, "I don't know." And on this day when the wider church even more lifts up identifying God as this combination of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I must admit I still do not know exactly how God is three persons yet one God; how the three are so tightly connected that you cannot separate one from the other. Perhaps, it's only fitting that this Holy Trinity Sunday is right up

against tomorrow: another day that I will never grasp the immense gravity of it; for those for whom there is a reason to have a Memorial Day at all.

Of course, the closest I ever got was that Army recruiter sitting in our high school cafeteria. Not too many of us teenagers came up to his table those few days he was there. But knowing my grandfather served on the Pacific end in the Second World War, I figured I owed it to him to, at least, hear the man out. So, I did. And I figured I owed it to the officer to, at least, hear him out beyond a boisterous school lunchroom. Soon enough, he came out to the house, and I suppose I was waiting for him to somehow miraculously transform my, "I don't know?" to a resounding, "Yes!" But I knew all along I didn't have it in me: courage, fortitude, guts, strength, patriotism or a combination of all the above. I didn't know what *it* was; I just knew I didn't have *it*.

But during that even slightest consideration, I thought about the people who did have it in them to serve. I thought about my grandfather, who traveled to Japan before meeting my grandmother, before my mother was born. What would have happened to multiple generations of a family if something happened to him? Some would say that the most precious Holy Trinity worked together to make sure it happened that way. All well and good. But what do we do with the other families, whose stories are forever altered, because someone they loved was convinced they had the courage, fortitude, guts, strength, patriotism or a combination of all the above, and seemingly lost all of it in an instant; those for whom there is a tomorrow on the calendar for the rest of us. The Memorial Day that I am sure I will never grasp the immense gravity of it all, no matter the parades or television documentaries or historical novels. It is a day when I feel like all I can say is, "I don't know."

And maybe it is rather fitting for it to be right up against this Holy Trinity Sunday: this Holy Trinity who has done everything possible in trying to show humanity how to live in peace and harmony, how to share the resources of this earth, how to love our neighbors as ourselves, and yet the hatred and the violence and even the just giving-up-on-the-world continue to run rampant. I don't know how God does it. I don't know how God the Father can stand to watch God the Son go through immense pain and suffering and still love this world. I don't know how God the Son can watch his closest friends betray and conspire behind his back and still care for them to their core. I don't know how God the Holy Spirit can live in our humanity with all the love and grace and hope and mercy and joy to maximize all goodness possible, and see us do our fair share of none of the above, and still insist on rising every day within us. I don't know how God does it, especially when we feel like we don't have whatever it is to do our part, but for some reason, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit insist on locking arms and surrounding all of us with a love beyond our comprehension.

So, I suppose it's only fitting that a baptism should top it off today, because the grace of it all defies our human logic. As if Oaklee should have to wait to earn whatever it is that God provides. Oaklee should have to go through Sunday school and Confirmation; do some service projects with the high school youth group. Come back and serve on various committees and the church council. Then, maybe this almighty Holy Trinity will bless her with a life-altering combination of love and grace and hope and mercy and joy. But, for some reason beyond human comprehension, God adores Oaklee far too much to wait around to bless her with the assurance of the Gospel, because today isn't about Oaklee, or any of us, needing to understand exactly how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are going to work together to pull this off. It will never be about Oaklee having to do this or that, or finding the perfect path to take in school or what to do for a career to earn God's favor for her. God has cherished her from very beginning. The Trinity has insisted on wrapping around her so tightly in love to the point that absolutely nothing she can do in her life will ever break that bond away.

I don't know how God does it exactly. I just know this Holy Trinity has it in them to do it for Oaklee, for all of us. Sure, we can learn from each other along the way. We can be thoroughly moved by those who reveal to us a precious glimpse of a love for something so immense that you're willing to die for it. We can certainly grow in our knowledge and life experiences to be sure, but even on the days when all we can say is, "I don't know," we can rest assured that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit know how to surround us with the most loving embrace to lead us in new life for all eternity. For that Greatest News for Oaklee, for all of us, we most certainly give thanks to God, indeed! Amen!