

**SERMON**  
**+ Holy Trinity C**  
**June 15, 2025**

On Luzon, the main island of the Philippines,  
lives an indigenous people  
who have been there for tens of thousands of years  
known as the Agta Negrito.  
They are hunters and gatherers.

During the 1960s and 70s,  
a missionary family lived and worked with them  
focusing on language and culture studies,  
documenting the Agta's struggles with modernization and development,  
and completing an Agta translation of the New Testament.

One time, during their time there,  
the family set up a croquet game in their front yard.

Before long several of the Agta people  
gathered to watch them.  
Soon they wanted to play, too.

The missionaries explained the game  
and gave each of them a mallet and a ball.  
At some point in the game,  
the ball of one of the Agta's  
landed next to another's.

The missionary became very excited  
and explained one of the more aggressive rules of the game:  
You can put your foot on your ball  
and smack it hard with the mallet,  
causing your opponent's ball to go flying far away.

The Agta understood what he was saying,  
but couldn't comprehend  
why anyone would want to do it.  
"Why would I want to knock his ball  
out of the court?" he asked.

The missionary replied, "So you will be the one to win!"

He shook his head in bewilderment.  
Because in hunting and gathering societies,  
people survive, not by competing, but by working together.  
By being connected and dependent  
in communication and relationship.

When the first player successfully got through all the wickets,  
he did not see himself as the winner.  
For him the game wasn't over.

He went back and gave aid and advice and encouragement to the others.  
Finally, when the last wicket was played by the last player,  
they all shouted happily, "We won! We won!"

*Herbert G. Hand, "Imitating Jesus Series: I Want to be Like You!"*

*Church of the Annunciation Web Site, September 29, 2002.*

*From Today's Stuff, from Pastor Barry, Thursday, June 3, 2004.*

We celebrate a fundamental doctrine of the church today,  
the Holy Trinity.  
It says that our God is one god in three persons.

The Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creeds are organized that way:  
both are creeds about the one God we believe in  
divided into three articles,  
one article for each of the three persons of God:  
God the Father, God the Son, Jesus, and God the Holy Spirit.

It is a fundamental doctrine,  
expressed in our creeds,  
and described extensively in theology.  
But the most important thing  
the Trinity says about God,  
is that God is a relationship in communication.

God is a living, dynamic community,  
a conversation, a relationship  
between an almighty creator,  
a sacrificed, incarnate Word,  
and a poured-out and lively Spirit.

Three persons in one God.  
So intimately related they are one.  
So unique in persons that they are three.

And this God of relationship and communication  
wants to be known by us –  
loved, in relationship, in communication with us –  
so badly,  
that God goes to great lengths to reveal himself to us –  
even coming to us in three persons.

And the thing is, that the way of God  
is also the way of the people of God: you and me.

Following Jesus as his disciples  
puts us squarely in the midst  
of an intimately connected God in three persons –  
part of a holy community  
connected to each person of the trinity  
and to one another.

Jesus says, “[The Spirit of truth] will glorify me,  
because he will take what is mine and declare it to you.  
All that the Father has is mine.” (Jn 16:14-15)

We are baptized in the name of that Holy Trinity  
and called children of that triune God.  
We are united with that One God in three persons.

And just like the perfect unity  
expressed in the three diverse persons of God,  
so we are a diverse body of many members  
who are nevertheless one body.

We are united in relationship  
not only among ourselves in this congregation,  
but with the whole body of Christ  
wherever and whenever it exists.

Our one God – Father, Son, and Spirit –  
makes us one with him,  
and so makes us one with each other.

And yet, that is not our world experience, is it?  
As one colleague put it,  
“One of the things in vogue right now  
is the dehumanization and demoralization  
of anyone who disagrees with me –  
whoever the me is.

“We are polarized.  
We have picked our sides.  
You are either for us or against us.”  
(Matthew Borasso, “Forum Letter” Vol 54 No 3, March 2025)

The competition of a front-yard game of croquet  
looks completely benign in comparison.

But we are created by God to live in community,  
in relationship with each other –  
like the Agta Negrito –  
connected and dependent,  
in communication and in relationship.

This is what it’s all about  
to be people created, saved, and made holy  
by the God who is a Holy Trinity.

Our God is a triune God,  
a God who is a community of communication himself,  
three persons united as one God,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And because we are people  
of that triune God of community and communication,  
we, too, are people of a community –  
connected and dependent,  
in communication and relationship.

We are people who matter to others,  
people for whom others matter,  
and most amazingly, people who matter to God.  
We won! We won!  
Thanks be to God.