

Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation

From the Center for Action and Contemplation

Week Two: Trinity 1/13/2022

The Trinity as Love

Professor Heidi Russell describes a way of speaking about the Trinity as Love that might allow modern Christians to connect more intimately to God.

In the twenty-first century a new understanding of Trinity must be found that allows Christians to reconcile their image of God with a contemporary, scientific worldview. Theology needs to move away from concrete images of God in which God is pictured as an old man in the sky. The use of concepts such as being and person in our trinitarian theology have too often led to an understanding of God as *a* being or *a* person, or worse as three beings or three persons. Shifting from language of being and person to a concept of God as Love can help counteract this tendency to make God in our own image.

The primary analogy for God as Trinity offered [here] is Source of Love, Word of Love, and Spirit of Love. God the Father is the Unoriginate Source of Love, simply meaning the ultimate source, the source that has no origin itself because it is the origin of all love that exists. That Source of all love has been revealed in the Word of Love. The world was created in and through that Word of Love, and that Word of Love has been spoken into the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The Source of Love is also continually enacted in the Spirit of Love, which is present in the world and active in the heart of all believers forming the Christian community into the body of Christ. As the body of Christ, this community is then called to be the ongoing presence of God as Love in the world. . . .

To affirm God as Trinitarian Love means that our relationships with each other have the potential to mirror such divine, three-fold love. Russell quotes Pope Francis:

The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures. In this way, they make their own that trinitarian dynamism which God imprinted in them when they were created. Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity. [1]

She continues:

We can choose to exercise the unfolding of love in our lives. I can meditate on a God who is Love, who has enfolded Godself as Love at the core of who I am and empowered me to participate in the unfolding of that Love in the world. Through that meditative prayer, we will come to better enact Love in the world. Our hearts can literally change our brains. Our altered brains will change our actions.

That unfolding of love means I am empowered to live out my life in relationships that are loving, that engender mutuality and equality in the world.

[1] Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, 240.

Heidi Russell, *The Source of All Love: Catholicity and the Trinity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017), xvii, 171, 174.

Image credit: Brian McLaren, *Untitled 4-6* (detail), 2021, photograph, United States. Jenna Keiper and Leslye Colvin, 2021, triptych art, United States.

The creative team at CAC sent a single-use camera to Brian McLaren as part of an exploration into contemplative photography. His photos are featured here in a form inspired by early Christian/Catholic triptych art: a threefold form that tells a unified story.

Image inspiration: *Trinity is the mystery of deep, abiding relationship. Each of the organisms in these photos reflect different forms but share the same source, providing benefits to the others. They are intricately related in their shared ecosystem.*

2022 Daily Meditation Theme: Nothing Stands Alone

What could happen if we embraced the idea of God as relationship—with ourselves, each other, and the world? [Watch Father Richard](#) introduce this year's Daily Meditations theme to discover what *Nothing Stands Alone* means.

Prayer For Our Community

God, Lord of all creation, lover of life and of everything, please help us to love in our very small way what You love infinitely and everywhere. We thank You that we can offer just this one prayer and that will be more than enough, because in reality every thing and every one is connected, and nothing stands alone. To pray for one part is really to pray for the whole, and so we do. Help us each day to stand for love, for healing, for the good, for the diverse unity of the Body of Christ and all creation, because we know this is what You desire: as Jesus prayed, that all may be one. We offer our prayer together with all the holy names of God, we offer our prayer together with Christ, our Lord. Amen.