

A few months ago was released this movie *Room*,
that is also a book by Emma Donoghue.

If you haven't seen it or read it, well it's kind of a thriller story.

The story of a girl in her seventeens who one day, on her way back from school,
is kidnapped.

Nothing very original so far, but the trigger of the story is that the abductor
does not kill the girl, as you would expect.

Actually, in his twisted mind he thinks he just wants her to be
safe from the world.

He locks her away in his backyard's shack for days,

days that add up to months, months that add up to years.

Years when the abductor takes care of the girl with food and supplies but also of course,
abuses her on a regular basis.

And so what is bound to happen, happens.

The girl gets pregnant

and gives birth in the shack, on her own,
to a son.

And so although it is a terrible story, it also starts to be a beautiful story as
in this closed universe, the little boy becomes for the girl her whole world

as surely as she is the whole world to him.

Indeed, it's very moving to see

how hard she tries to give it all to the boy with the little she has:

feed him, have fun with him, teach him about life.

She tries to give her child all the love and knowledge and wisdom she has, being almost a child herself

Having so many needs.

And yet still, everything she has, everything she is

She gives it to the boy

She pours it inside of him.

But far from being a sacrifice, all along you can feel her happiness as

in the depths of her terror and loneliness

she has with her this wonderful presence,

company

somebody to love and to be loved from, somebody to hug and kiss her

to comfort her.

A Son.

And the more poignant is when we realize that the girl is convinced

it all comes from her.

In her coping mechanism, she just denies the horror of the rape she endured

and she pretends

She gave a child to herself.

A child in whom she put everything she is.

Indeed, because of the exceptional circumstances of his growing up,

the child is more than any other child a "little me", a perfect reflection of his mother.

And yet,

yet as time goes by, the boy becomes somebody else in the relationship.

A Son, who grows big enough and independent enough that at some point he will risk his life to save
his mother's.

(And, *spoiler!*, will save it indeed).

Trinity Sunday

May 22, 2016

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

The Rev Fanny Belanger

Trinity Sunday it is, and so we're trying to make sense of the mystery.

The founding mystery of our faith:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
a unique God, in three persons.

In Christian tradition, we have many images to help us understand what it means.

You may know some of them.

We say: God is like a clover, a single plant, with three leaves.

Or: God is like water.

It can be liquid but also solid like ice, or impalpable like evaporation.

We believe in a single God we can find in three different states, or forms.

There is one God, but three different ways of being God.

Well, the thing is, I am not so sure this way of speaking really does justice to whom God is.

Of course these images are just

images

but if we want to go with images maybe we could just stick with
the best image.

The image John's Gospel actually gives us of God: A Father who has a Son
and between them is a spirit
that is holy.

Because my best guess is that John does not pretend that God is actually a dad

And so

there is no need of another image to explain the first image.

An image that tells us plainly that God is like a Father and a Son and one Holy Spirit.

It's already a metaphor, you see.

Christ is like a Son in whom God

like a Father

(or like the Mother in the movie)

put all his love, all his wisdom, all his energy,

all his hope, all his joy

so that the Son is the perfect reflection of the Father.

But the Son is not a reflection in a mirror

He is not a picture of this love and of this energy.

He loves back, as does an independent being.

As does a Son.

Therefore, although completely one and united

the Father and the Son have a relationship, through this Spirit that proceeds from them both.

Though different,

they are perfectly united.

And so the Trinity, maybe this is the best way to describe God because this is

The best way to describe what love is.

The story of the Trinity, it's the story of love beneath all the love stories.

This longing: How can we be One, perfectly united

and yet

be still different enough so we can have a relationship?

United in a way we don't disappear into one another, we're not eaten up, not consumed but

Revealed as unique

and so the stream, the back and forth of love can continue between
the two of us?

Well, this kind love – we don't need to be star crossed lovers to experience it.
With very close ones, we have this connection.
We think the same thing in the same time, we rejoice with them, we suffer when they're in pain
Morally, but sometimes even physically.
We know we are deeply united, and we can almost feel it in our flesh.
And it's wonderful most of the times, unless it's awful because
in an imperfect world, between imperfect people we can be unable to set – as we say -
healthy boundaries.
But indeed our close ones we expect them to understand us and accept us
because though not us, they're like our own self.
And if they die or break up, or disappear from our life it's like
we lose a part of ourselves
and actually

We do.

We do lose a part of ourselves if we lose them.
Well, what we experience in a messy or tragic or funny way in these kind of relationships,
it's nothing more and nothing less
than the mystery of the Holy Trinity.
How can we be one and yet different, it's the joy and the tears of lovers but more simply put:
It's true of most of our relationships, as soon as there is affection or friendship.
We want to be united, to work together, to understand one another,
to be at peace, of one accord
but still we want to be acknowledged as different, unique, independent
and we want to do our own thing.
Parents, children, teenagers (at lot!)
But also friends, siblings, colleagues.
Being one and being different in the same time, it's not only a psychological issue, it's a love issue,
It's a God issue.
A Holy Trinity mystery.
And so it's not an accident that this is the core of our relationships .
It works this way, because it is what love is all about and we are taken into this stream.
As Paul puts it: “God's love has been poured out into our hearts”
Indeed.

Because what the Trinity means is of course that God
is not an isolated being.
God from the beginning, and actually, even before the beginning,
gives life and love, creates an otherness that is also totally him.
A Son.
But what the Trinity also means for us is that we are drawn into God's intimacy.
God is the perfect story of love and we believe that we were
created inside of this story.
From the beginning in Christ we were included into the room of God's love,
We were bound to be part of God's being.
But we lost our connection somehow, rejecting God
we lost this perfect harmony between unity and independence
and being Christian is to learn what it actually means to be perfectly free in
this wild unbounded love in which we can all be both perfectly one together and perfectly
Revealed as unique.

And so the last thing Christian life is about is
get baptized and boom you're done.

We are far from being done.

I love it that it is Jesus's graduation speech to his disciples:

I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now

When the Spirit of truth comes, the Spirit will guide you into all truth.

The Christian life is a perpetual growing into the life of God,
growing in likeness -

not to become a "little me", a miniature of God,
but to become a great I am, as God is.

Or even better,

to become an amazing we are together.

There is this guy, Tian Jun

who took pictures of him and his son every year
since his son's birth

and then until his own son has a son.

Maybe you saw the pictures they are all over the Internet.

And what draws some much attention I guess is how

surprising it is to see the son growing into likeness with his father

and yet as they start to look more and more alike, in the meantime you can tell
the boy becomes a man

an independent, unique being, a discussion partner,

inside the very life the Father gave him.

We need to grow and we need to learn.

Learning as a Christian has nothing to do with becoming smarter,
getting more knowledge

It's about becoming wiser.

This wisdom

is not about having very reasonable opinions about the state of the world

or not worrying about a single thing

or always doing what is right.

Our first reading tells us wisdom is busy

shouting in the streets

rejoicing all the time because

she becomes aware of God

she is able to see God, in people and in the world

And her very own presence reflects God's presence to others.

Wisdom is about finding who we are in God.

In the midst of all this imperfect human love,

with all this imperfect human love that is still a reflection of the Holy Trinity.

This can happen even in suffering, as Paul reminds us,

and maybe even more when we suffer.

Because when we are poor and lonely, *or with the poor and the lonely*

that's when there is nothing left in the way between God and us.

As the young woman trapped in the shack learned it our movie,

we realize there is nothing else but love we can cling to.

And we can certainly cling to it and rely on it because this is the ultimate reality of our self

as surely as it is the most profound mystery of the universe. Amen.