

As we look forward to March and the “Greening up” of springtime that will soon begin, I am reminded that we will soon be seeing lots of green four-leaf clovers, cardboard cut-outs of leprechauns, and perhaps even donning some green ourselves on March 17th or risk being pinched!

The four-leaf clover is unusual, and therefore lucky. On the other hand, the far more ubiquitous three-leaf clover has often been used to catechize Christians on the nature of God, the Holy Trinity. Each person of the Trinity is represented by one leaf of the clover, yet it takes all three leaves together to make up one clover. There is no such thing as a two-leaf clover, for it would only be a three-leaf clover with something missing.

Our Judeo-Christian piety has benefited from personifying the different persons of the Trinity with different characteristics. We find it helpful to meditate on Jesus as Savior, or on the Father as Creator, or on the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier. Yet, all persons of the Trinity are engaged in all these actions. They are inextricably and inexplicably entwined in one God.

Imagine then the pain of separation that Jesus endured. Imagine God becoming flesh and walking around among us. Imagine God taking a journey to the death.

Jesus often prayed the Psalms. In Psalm 121 the Psalmist declares, “He who keeps watch over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.” These are words of **comfort** as we follow Jesus Christ’s journey to the cross of Calvary. They were words of **comfort** for Jesus as he traveled this way of suffering that would lead to his death. They are words of **comfort** for us as

we travel through the Lenten seasons of our lives. The God of **comfort** and steadfast love is with us in our times of sorrow and suffering – just as God’s Spirit was with Jesus - strengthening him for the journey he must take, and comforting him with the presence and peace of the LORD.

Now that I’m the father of a baby, I am struck by how much watching over God must do of us. Parents and other caregivers watch over babies to ensure their safety and wellbeing. From the perspective of the child, it must seem as though the parent never sleeps! All the baby knows is that if she cries loud enough and long enough, the parent will come. The parent provides food. The parent changes the old diaper. The child feels safe, because she is.

How even more noteworthy then, that the Heavenly Parent would give up the Heavenly Child for the sake of the world. That the “heavenly three-leaf clover” would rip off one of its leaves for our sake. That God the Father would risk God the Son, knowing where this journey would take him.

So while we may dress in green on Saint Patrick’s Day, we will also find ourselves in Holy Week, on a collision course with Good Friday. Only on this path can we arrive at Easter morning, the empty tomb, and the joyful proclamation, “He is Arisen!”

Peace,
Pastor Chris