

Here are just a few things children have wondered about – and so they decided to write letters to God in order to get some answers. . .

Dear God, Nancy writes: I bet it's very hard for you to love everyone in the whole world. There are only four people in my family and I have difficulty just loving that many.

Dear God, writes Dennis: My grandpa says you were around even when he was a little boy. Just how old are you?

Dear God, Anita writes: Is it really true my father won't get into heaven if he uses his golf words in the house – that's what my mom tells him!

Dear God, writes Amanda: Please put another holiday between Christmas and Easter. There is nothing good there now.

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin who is 5, and Ryan who is 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson so she said: "If Jesus were sitting here, he would say, 'let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'" Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Go ahead, Ryan, you be Jesus today, I'll let you. . ."

A kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work. "Nice clouds," she would say. Or "that horse looks really good."

When she got to one little girl who was working diligently she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "Oh they will when I get finished."

What does God look like? What is the nature or the essence of God? How does God act? Does God really hear our prayers? All appropriate questions on this feast of the Holy Trinity.

They are questions which each of the writers of our Scripture readings today try to answer – by painting a picture of God --- not with an actual drawing as the girl in the story – but with words. . .

Exodus tells us, through the experience of Moses, that God is "gracious and merciful – slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity."

We come to know those qualities of God throughout the Scriptures – if God were NOT gracious and merciful --- God would have given up on humanity long ago and the Old Testament would be much shorter than it is and we would not even have to worry about a New Testament. . .

If God were not slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity – God would have given up on me – and possibly you – a long ago.

God does have a plan for each one of us. God also knows we sometimes, maybe most times – try to fight that plan, or think we have an even better plan for ourselves -----

but God is patient with us. God doesn't force us to do anything – but quietly and consistently invites us to see things His way and not our own way. . . God never gives up on us!

St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, tells us that God is a relationship. . . Some of our Protestant brothers and sisters want to ask us on occasion *where do we get this notion of the Trinity* . . . it isn't in Scripture. . .

Then how to explain these words of Paul: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ – the love of God – and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you."

Or how about Jesus own words to his apostles several weeks ago on the feast of the Ascension when we read from the ending of St. Matthew's Gospel:

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

God is a relationship – and we are given some wonderful gifts from the Triune God: grace, love, and fellowship. And we, as Christians, are at our best when we are in relationship – practicing and perfecting the gifts --- of grace, love, and fellowship.

And in the Gospel, the word picture we are given of God is again one of a loving and merciful God – one who did not come into the world as Jesus to condemn the world – but that we might be saved.

God so loved the world: love is incarnated – becomes real, becomes enfleshed --- in Jesus Christ.

Love bestows on us eternal life.

Love begets salvation.

Love strengthens belief.

Love is the very power of the Holy Spirit.

In the end, we know that all our words which attempt to explain what God looks like – or which tries to answer what the nature or essence of God is – or attempts to explain how God acts ---- will all fall short ----- *because God is a mystery*. And it is more important for us to be able to live within the embrace of the mystery – then to expend our time and energy trying to unravel it.

It is only when we see God face to face in the kingdom to come that we will truly understand the nature, and essence, and activity – of God.

And in the end, no matter how we try to make sense of God and God's activity and presence in our lives – we will still be left with a few questions – like:

Dear God, thank you for the baby brother you sent us – but what I really asked for, was a puppy. Check your records of my prayers.

Or Dear God, maybe Cain and Able would not have killed each other if they had their own rooms. That seems to work for me and my brother.

Or Dear God – did you really mean for giraffes to look like they do – or was that just a mistake?