

<i>Date Preached</i>	12-Jun-2022	<i>Date Initiated</i>	31-May-2022
<i>Where Preached</i>	SAK	<i>Appointed Readings</i>	Trinity, Yr C

" The grace ... to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity;
and ... [to] worship the Unity "



Once upon a time, in a faraway land, lived a little girl. She was born and raised in a big city, and so, she'd seen and heard many things that even some grown-ups never knew existed. This isn't to say that she was spoiled or snobbish—only that, for her age, she had a fairly good idea of how the world worked.

One summer, when she was nine or ten years old, her mother took the little girl to stay with her aunt and uncle. They lived far out in the country: a land of hills and dells ... flowing with rivers and streams ... and dotted by deep, dense forests: a perfect land for walking without any particular place to go.

One day, the little girl hiked her way up a high hill. About half-way up, she heard a sound she'd never heard before and decided to investigate. The more she climbed, the louder the sound grew—constant, bright, almost *too*-loud—until, at last, she looked uphill and saw a giant cataract: *torrents* of water spilling and splashing over the edge of a cliff into a deep, deep pool, below. But there was something strange about this cataract. Birds flew through its water with ease; fish swam gracefully up its fall, to the top, and then back down again; and laced all through its water were delicate lilies and slender reeds, all growing heartily—indeed, *happily*—inside a flood strong enough to knock down a stone barn.

"How strange," said the little girl. "I wonder what this is."

"I am the Creator," said the cataract to the little girl. "From Me all things come. In Me all things dwell. And to Me all things return."

"Even me?" asked the little girl.

"*Especially* you," replied that cataract.

A week or two later, the little girl was following a well-traveled path across a meadow that brought her to a circle of tall, leafy trees, enclosing a small clearing. In the clearing, she was startled to see a small crowd of people, each one injured or ailing in some way. Some leaned on crutches or staffs when they walked. Some wore bandages or slings. And some had a dullness-of-look or drabness-of-spirit that bespoke the sadness or despair they carried with them, like packs on their back. And then, in the midst of this knot of needy people, the little girl noticed a kind-looking man, dressed in simple clothes. One-by-one, the people approached him and whispered in his ear. After each whisper, the man smiled kindly; bowed his head for a few moments; and then gently placed a hand on their head. Every time he did this, the person was healed: Crutches were cast aside; bandages unwound; countenances brightened.

"How marvelous," said the little girl. "I wonder who he is."

"I am the Healer," said the man to the little girl. "People come to Me in their greatest need and deepest despair, and I make them whole, just as the Creator intended them."

"Even me?" asked the little girl.

"*Especially* you," replied the man.

As the summer wore on, the little girl found herself drawn back to the cataract and the man in the clearing again and again: It felt wonderful to be with them. But she still *wandered*, too, and one day, after a particularly long walk on a particularly warm afternoon, she lay down in the cool shadow of a great boulder, to take a rest; and soon, she was fast asleep. It was a pleasant, dreamy sleep—the kind you wish would never end, even as you're sleeping it. But right in the middle of her nap, the little girl became aware of a feather-light pressure on her shoulder ... and a pleasing warmth in the middle of her chest. Very slowly—almost reluctantly—she peeked open one eye, tilted her head just slightly and there it was: a beautiful gold-and-white finch perched but an inch from her ear, nestled in the tumbling curls of her hair. The little girl wasn't startled or excited; for somehow she knew that on her shoulder, the finch had not found a moment's perch, but an abiding home.

"How lovely," said the little girl. "I wonder who you are."

"I am the Comforter," said the finch to the little girl. "I companion people their whole lives: guiding, but never directing; suggesting, but never telling. I receive them from the Creator; help them find the Healer; and, when it's time, guide them back to the Creator, again."

"Even me?" asked the little girl.

"*Especially* you," replied the finch.

That summer passed far too quickly. Soon, the morning air grew crisp, and the little girl's mother brought out their trunks and cases for their trip home. The morning of their departure, the little girl set off on one last adventure. She made her way around the smokehouse, past the barn, across the pasture, over the fence, down the bank and came, at last, to a delightful brook, full and fast. She kicked off her shoes, peeled off her socks and sat down on a flat rock, dipping her feet into the welcoming water. Out of the blue, the brook now *brimmed* with tiny copper-colored fish, bumping against her feet and nibbling at her toes. The sight of them brought an inexplicable joy to the little girl's heart, and she just sat and gazed at them for a long, long time, delighting in their frolic.

After a while, the little girl noticed something *else* in the water: the Healing Man had appeared, out of nowhere, and was down there, too: under the water, enjoying himself every bit as much as the fish. And the next thing she knew, the Comforting Finch splashed down into the brook, too—*deep* down, whooshing around through the water like a cormorant. Happily submerged, the Healing Man and the Comforting Finch playfully chased one another, back and forth and back and forth—both of them laughing and singing ... and never once coming to the surface, as if they breathed *water* and not air.

Soon the water in the brook itself grew playful, too: splashing and spilling and crashing and filling u the air with spray. "Is it my imagination," the little girl wondered, "or has the brook *joined* the game of tag the Man and the Finch are playing?"

"No, it's not your imagination," answered the Brook and the Man and the Finch, all at the same time. "You see, we are but One, and also Three. We are all the same substance, but each wear a different guise: a *Unity* ... of Three. Creatures know us differently, but what they know ↓ is all the same love: a *Trio* ... of One. In our play is our joy; in our joy is our life; and into our life do we bring everything that lives."

"Even me?" asked the little girl.

"Especially you," replied the Brook and the Man and the Finch, in three-part unison.
"Especially you."



*The Rev Douglas S Worthington
St Andrew's Parish
Kent, CT*