Dear friends:

I’m being reminded of the ephemeral nature of April’s weather as I sit and watch the cedars and pine tree bending in the blustery snow flurry outside my window. This is the month which can have us peeling off layers and going out in shorts and sandals one day, digging in the closet for our winter coats the next, and going looking for that misplaced umbrella the third.

Not only the weather can be surprising. I remember a song recorded by Carey Landry I learned with the children in our parish Children’s Liturgy many years ago for which the words of the refrain were, “Well, surprise, surprise, God is a surprise, Right before your eyes. It’s baffling to the wise. Surprise, surprise God is a surprise, Open up your eyes and see.”

In today’s Gospel reading ((John 3:7b-15), Nicodemus, presumably a very wise man, is confused by Jesus’ words about heavenly things. And we do speak of the Paschal Mysteries, referring to God’s plan of salvation which was ultimately fulfilled through four events in Christ’s life, being the Passion (his suffering and crucifixion), death, Resurrection, and Ascension.

We are reminded by Jesus that we need to come to the Kingdom as little children; Spring is often the time when our children remind us of the surprising miracles with which God presents us, as we discover the unexpected in our gardens and the woodlands we hope to be able to explore again soon. Trilliums – our provincial flower – are one of those joys and they tend to sneak up on us. I remember driving down a Concession road in Caledon one year and suddenly realising with delight that the woodlands
on either side of the road were carpeted with trilliums. This picture was posted on April 21st 2019, after being taken at Bronte Creek by one of the Ontario Parks naturalists. If you have never had that experience, I hope you will. They are a very good symbol for us of the Trinity – having three broad leaves, three small green sepals, three petals, and a three-sectioned seedpod. They are quite fragile and we need to let them “bloom where they are planted”, to borrow some more words from Carey Landry, as picking them may deny them the nutrients to survive the next winter. It isn’t illegal to pick trilliums, but they are much more beautiful when seen in their natural habitat. Beautiful scenes like this remind us that God is everywhere, even under our feet – which reminds me of the beautiful adaptation of St Patrick’s Breastplate set to the Welsh tune Suo Gân:

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24-pZe9_VvA

St Catherine of Siena speaks to us of a conversation in which God told her,

“Everything was made by me, and without me nothing can exist. Therefore, if it is beauty you want, I am beauty. If you want goodness, I am goodness, for I am supremely good. I am wisdom. I am kind; I am compassionate; I am the just and merciful God.”

This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad! (Ps 118:24)

Until tomorrow,

Gillian