

A view from the Rectory Window July 2026

One of the truest statements possible is that of the expression; 'to every action there is a reaction'. I mention this truism in the context of how we live in a society and culture that is markedly influenced by orators and demagogues. That is, people who often rely on emotional appeals to target the public's genuine fears to advance their own political and social agendas. Every other day on our media there will be someone articulating, in very emotional language, a cause or issue that is according to them threatening our values, causing harm, and must be confronted. Often there is much truth in the issue they are referring to. However, because the language they use is that of confrontation, their words often nurture division and violence, sometimes on our streets.

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience." – Colossians 3:12

The above words of Colossians chapter 3 are a reminder to all Christians to be mindful not only of the ethical values of our faith, but also to reject the angry, hateful, and vengeful words of those who use our anxieties and fears for their own ends.

So how do we live our lives free from emotional manipulation? Part of the answer I believe is found in God himself and therefore our blueprint for life and living. Recently in our liturgical calendar we celebrated the trinitarian mystery of the three in one God. That is, to use the analogy of steam, water, and ice, to illustrate how God can appear in three different forms and still be one in nature. Through this analogy, I suggest that the common influencing factor in this apparent mutation of water is that of heat. Heat, or more precisely temperature, is the influencing factor that either heats water to steam or cools water to ice. **Hence, if we are relating this analogy to our emotions and ability to clothe ourselves in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience**, we need to use our faith and belief to live in a temperate climate, neither too hot nor too cold.

A temperate climate of Faith, hope and love that moderates our emotions, anxieties, and fears through the work of the Holy Spirit, the truth of the Word of God, and the incarnate revelation of the love of God in the life of Jesus.

"Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near." – Philippians 4:5

Philippians tell us that gentleness is the way of the Lord. Therefore, let gentleness and kindness be the fulcrum, the balancing point in our lives, to allow us to name that which is wrong and wicked. While also allowing ourselves to live lives of compassion, patience, and humility in the spirit, word and love of God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus' nature meant he never 'reacted' to events around him, he simply acted in love.

Rev. Richard