

Trinity Sunday 7th June 2020

Today is Trinity Sunday. It is the only Sunday or feast day in the church's calendar which is named after a bit of church teaching and doctrine, rather than an event in the life of Jesus... Recognising we proclaim one God - Father Son and Holy Spirit.

Why is this day important?

Robert Jones Archdeacon of Worcester writes...

I like to think of it this way. That at the heart of God is a community of love between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit: this community of love beckons us to join and belong. It is this for which we are made – life in communion with Christians down the centuries and around the world, life in communion with the God who created us, redeems us and loves us. That is what our God is like – a community of love, and the Christian invitation to all people is to be part of that community of love.

Opening antiphon:

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity! *Reginald Heber*

So let's worship our God:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you
and also with you.

Penitential Rite

We have too often exchanged the worship of the living God for idols of our own imagining. As we gather to offer our praises to the holy and undivided Trinity, and to worship in spirit and in truth, let us call to mind our sins.

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Spirit, you give us life and peace:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May the God of love and power
forgive you and free you from your sins,
heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Our Gloria for today

Mighty God

beyond all time and space

greater than our minds can fully grasp

ruler over all that is and has been and ever shall be

We worship you.

Loving Father

Kind and merciful

full of goodness and compassion

constantly watching over us and directing our steps

We worship you

Saviour Christ

flesh of our flesh

sharing our humanity yet one with the Father

loving to the point of death yet bringer of life

We worship you.

Holy Spirit

free and mysterious

source of guidance and inspiration

filling our hearts and minds and lives

We worship you.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit

God of gods and Lord of lords

with awe and wonder

joy and gladness

love and praise...

...We worship you. Amen. (adapted from Nick Fawcett)

Collect :

Holy God,
faithful and unchanging:
enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,
that we may truly worship you,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

1st Reading 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Final Greetings

11 Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.
12 Greet one another with a holy kiss. **13** All God's people here send their greetings.

We pray in response to our first reading:

Let there be love shared among us,
Let there be love in our eyes;
May now Your love sweep this nation,
Cause us, O Lord, to arise.
Give us a fresh understanding
Of brotherly love that is real;
Let there be love shared among us,
Let there be love.

We greet the Gospel:

Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, one God, who was, and who is, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Alleluia.

cf Revelation 1.8

The Gospel. Matthew 28.16-20

The Great Commission

16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. **17** When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. **18** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Sermon:

The doctrine of the Trinity came about through the early Church's need to explain the reality that they perceived and experienced....

They knew Jesus and came to believe that in Jesus God was visiting his people. They came to believe that although - as they knew and had always known - as many had recited daily in the Shema prayer, "the Lord our God, the Lord is one" in

Jesus God was indeed visiting and redeeming his people. But they realised also that Jesus was distinct from his Father... he prayed to his Father... so there arose the question... "How can Jesus be divine and yet distinct from the Father? How can he be God and yet talk to God without talking to himself? At and after Pentecost they began to experience the presence of the Spirit with them and between them... a presence empowering and emboldening them, making them holy and allowing them to share in the life of God... a presence that again they recognised as divine. But they also knew that the Spirit was not the same as Jesus or the Father.

We might think that they could have concluded that there were three Gods... but there is no evidence that they even toyed with this idea. So their experience of God forced them to formulate that paradox - the doctrine that we call the "trinity" - God is three and God is one!

But I do not think that "The Trinity" is primarily a doctrine we have to understand and accept (although we do accept it) I think it is the way that God makes Godself known. The Trinity is not a conundrum for us to solve - it is the self revelation of the God who we are invited to know now and to live with for ever and ever... and an invitation into a personal relationship with the persons of God that we must take time to nurture. God, the living God, has made himself known to us once again in Jesus - and by the power of his Holy Spirit.

From the time he walked with us in the garden in the cool of the evening Gen 3:8 (and even before that) God has desired a close, open and unveiled relationship with us and for all eternity. Of course, we made choices, messed up **so** severely that an estrangement followed - an estrangement that had

God knocking on our door for generation after generation - covenant after covenant - offering friendship - and trying to restore the love and the joy we shared with Him in the very beginning... a relationship finally restored through the life and death and resurrection of Jesus.

And in scripture - the symbol of that close open unveiled relationship is sitting and eating together.

Rev 3:20

Jesus says "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me."

Revelation 19:9

And the angel said to (John), "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

Luke 13:29

And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God.

We may have the kind of mind that likes to grapple intellectually with the concept of Trinity - we might be lovers of the Athanasian Creed (you might like to look that up!) - but I don't believe that God revealed himself to us so that we could study him, label him and write books about what kind of being he might be.

I believe Trinity Sunday is a reminder that we are invited to get to know, really know, our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe that God has revealed himself to us - introduced himself to us - so that we might “know him and love him and serve him in this world and live forever in the next” - so that we might share “table fellowship” with him in this world and the next.

And indeed our response this morning - is to gather as best we can together and apart - around the table of the Lord in Spiritual Communion. This side of Heaven - we gather to break the bread and bring the wine of which Jesus said “This is my body” and “This is my blood” - until the day when by grace, we recline and feast at table in the Kingdom of God.

Communion

This is the Lord’s table.

The Lord Jesus invites us
to share this joyful feast.

From east and west, from north and south,
people will come and take their places
at the banquet in the kingdom of God.

(Luke 13:29)

Common Order

A Spiritual Communion...

As we break our bread together and apart this morning we look forward with hope to the time again soon - when as his people we may share with joy and thanksgiving in our family meal, our holy communion - one bread and one cup.

(we suggest taking half / some of your piece of bread yourself - and feeding the rest to the birds - ‘missing one another’ until

that time when we can celebrate communion together in our churches)

I eat this (*unconsecrated*) bread as a sign that I am asking you to come again into my heart.

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day. **Amen**

(pause to eat your bread)

Post spiritual communion prayer.

Almighty and eternal God,
you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
and live and reign in the perfect unity of love:
hold us firm in this faith,
that we may know you in all your ways
and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory,
who are three Persons yet one God,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Our declaration of Faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession: prepared and led by Jenny Dann

Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Let us bring our prayers and thanksgivings, our hopes and fears, our joys and griefs, into the all-encompassing love of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The response is: Mighty and merciful God **Hear our prayer**

'Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.'

God of newness, we thank you for this new day and the new opportunities it brings. Thank you for answered prayers and daily blessings. Thank you for new lessons being learned in these times; for new ways of seeing and understanding your beautiful and complex world; and for the invitation to live more gently and kindly, to tread more softly on the earth.

Mighty and merciful God **Hear our prayer**

'Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee.'

God of the Church, we long to gather once again in one place to praise and worship you; but even though we are physically apart, we are joined in the Spirit's unity with all your people in every nation, and with the saints in heaven. Bless the churches of every denomination, and all who affirm their faith in you as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Strengthen and guide church leaders, and may the mission of Christ reach ever wider, building your Kingdom of justice and peace.

Mighty and merciful God **Hear our prayer**

'Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee.'

God of hidden glory, in our times of suffering, struggle and doubt, strengthen us with the knowledge of your power, love and purity. We spend a few moments in silence as we hold up to you all those who are in any kind of trouble or pain today: the sick and the anxious, the lonely and the fearful, the overworked and the unjustly treated, the bereaved and those facing an uncertain future. (Pause)

May your healing peace, your incomparable compassion and mercy, flow over them and over each one of us.

Mighty and merciful God **Hear our prayer**

'All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.'
God of eternity, as we remember with love and gratitude our loved ones who have left this life, whether recently or long ago, we look forward to our heavenly reunion with them and to the great fulfilment of your promise in Christ - to the new heaven and earth where you reign in majesty for ever. In joyful humility we praise you now, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Mighty and merciful God **Hear our prayer. Alleluia! Amen.**

Let's pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in Heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen**

Notices and Birthdays

The Blessing

God the Father,
who first loved us and made us accepted in the beloved Son,
bless you.

Amen.

God the Son,
who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood,
bless you.

Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
who sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts,
bless you.

Amen.

The blessing of the one true God,
to whom be all love and all glory for time and for eternity,
come down upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Sending:

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. *Matthew 28.19*

To God be the glory, forever and ever Amen.

Closing Acclamation

**Let all things their Creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness,
O praise him, alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, three in one,
O praise him, O praise him,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

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The Trinity



The Mystery of the Trinity

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you." John 16:13-15 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on John 16:12-15



C C H U R Z M S P E A K E H A
 T C E M J E C B F L Q K J E T
 P O N G W V C T I U K I E A E
 W M V L K C V E S P E W S R L
 O E Q O Q B B Y I P R F L S L
 Q S D R F E L M U V I F U T K
 K H E I A L N T F S E R P J E
 M W R F T O X R U G U H I K S
 E C O Y H N T U C H T I A T X
 R V Z G E G B T Q U A M A E E
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 M N P U Y Q U Q F R L P A M O
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TRUTH
 MAKE
 GLORIFY

FATHER
 SPEAK
 COMES

RECEIVE
 BELONGS
 TRUTH

KNOWN
 SPIRIT
 HEARS

GUIDE
 MINE
 TELL