

Trinity (C)

15<sup>th</sup> June 2025

'Holy Trinity: Father, ΛΟΓΟΣ, and Spirit of Truth'

Prov 8: *I was at His side, a master craftsman ...*

Ps 8: *the heavens, the work of your hands ...*

Rom 5: *hope is not deceptive: the love of God has been poured into our hearts.*

Jn 16: *Spirit takes from what is mine ... Everything the Father has is mine ...*

This month of June is packed full of wonderful feasts and celebrations that allow us to 'feast' on the glories of our faith, and the deep meaning of being a Catholic Christian. Last Sunday's great celebration of the **Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost** marked the final day of the 7-wk Easter season, but there's a whole series of other feasts that are related to the date of Easter and that carry us over on this wave of Easter faith even into these weeks of Ordinary Time. The first of these was last Monday, the day after Pentecost, the echo of Pentecost from a Marian perspective: **Our Lady, Mother of the Church**, remembering how Our Lord's granting, from the Cross, His Mother to us as our Mother was reinforced by her presence with the Apostles when the Holy Spirit came. The next was last Thursday, a celebration peculiar to our country, of **Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest**, reinforcing the centrality of the Eucharist and Priesthood 7 wks after

Our Lord's instituting the Mass at the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday. Then, this Sunday we celebrate **Trinity Sunday**; next weekend **Corpus Christi** which in many parishes includes the joyful occasions of First Holy Communion Masses. Towards the end of the month we have the feast of the **Sacred Heart** of Jesus, Friday 27<sup>th</sup>, echoing the great sacrifice of love given by the Saviour on the Cross on Good Friday; and then on the final weekend, Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>, the feast of **SS Peter & Paul**, the greatest apostles and martyrs, recognising the taking-out to the world the Gospel that these prior feasts all embody. All this, packed in to the one month of June! So, whilst we have completed our Easter season, and entered back in to the weeks of 'ordinary time,' yet in fact we won't see the green vestments of ordinary time at all on the Sundays this month: we'll be too full of these special commemorations.

So, what of **Trinity Sunday**? Is this simply a dry acknowledgment of the mystery of God's inner being? Well, it's a moment to reflect on this mystery of the Holy Trinity, but that does not make it a dry or theoretical topic!

In fact, for us to think about the inner life of God Himself takes us to the heart of what it means to know Him and love Him, and that's precisely what our faith is about.

Bringing together all that we have celebrated, right through from Advent to Pentecost, allows us to come to this understanding that God is Three-in-One. All that Jesus taught the disciples about the Father and the Spirit makes it clear that the Son is as equally God as is the Father; and the Holy Spirit likewise. Jesus's Gospel message speaks repeatedly of Himself and the Father as 'one' and as 'equal' ... and then when He promises the Holy Spirit, He speaks of the Spirit as coming from the Father and the Son, in full communion with them both.

The first reading, today, from the Wisdom literature in the OT, the *Book of Proverbs*, relishes in a description of the personification of Wisdom, existing 'before the beginning' and being the One "through whom all things were made." It's in effect a celebration of the presence of God the Son, the *Λογος*, or Mind & Reason of God, at work — assigning all the marvels of the created order in

accordance with God's sacred intelligence. Embedded there in the heart of the OT, before the personal revelation of the Trinity by the Son of God, Jesus, Himself, it's one of many hints in the OT of the multi-personal nature of the one God: "I was daily His delight, rejoicing in the inhabited world, and delighting in the children of man." The Gospel of this Trinity Sunday — another of the many poetic passages we've had recently from St John's chapters at the Last Supper — is one of Our Lord's predictions and promises of the Holy Spirit, indicating that He too, one with the Father & the Son, is a person of the Godhead.

Whilst of course it is true that as limited human beings we can never *fully* understand the mysteries of God — we do have that challenge of trying to get our heads around the notion of 3 persons, 1 God — yet that doesn't mean we cannot learn from it, accept it, and grow in love of it. For, truly, our Christian belief — our knowledge — of God as the Trinity is not set us as a mental conundrum, but as a powerful way of reaching into the heart of the Godhead. Compare, for example, the idea of a lone,

bachelor God with a God who is a *communion of persons*. The latter leads us to see that God is, in Himself, a perfect union of loving persons. This is the heart of all reality; this is the pattern after which God made the world, that love which draws people into harmony, love which unites, and brings happiness. *God is already such a unity of love*; and this He shows as He sends first the Son and then the Spirit, into the world of mankind. God's loving relationships are played out onto Creation, as He reveals gradually more and more of Himself to humanity. Jesus shows us that God wants to give Himself, to humble Himself to allow us to know Him; He shows that the Son loves the Father with such an infinite love that He will sacrifice Himself to fulfil the Father's plan; He shows that even after the outrage of our crucifying Him, yet His love overcomes that and is restored to us once more in the Resurrection; and then, further gifts showered upon us out of love: the very person of the Holy Spirit, to dwell within the hearts of those baptised and confirmed into faith in the Lord Jesus.

All of this divine action of the Father, in Christ, by

the Spirit, proves that what the Holy Trinity is, is perfect love. Trinity Sunday gives us a chance to reflect on this beautiful truth, and to anchor all the rest of our Christian year in this sublime fact: that God, the loving Trinity, perfect and utterly happy in Himself, chose freely to share His happiness, bestow His love, create a home in which His people could enjoy His benevolence. Everything we are as Christians comes back to this, and for this we worship Him, and every single day should give Him praise. For without His love, we are nothing ...

At the beginning of the year, for several weeks in a row, I used the Sunday homily to unpack the various articles of the Nicene Creed, in recognition of the fact that 20<sup>th</sup> May this year was the 1,700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Council of Nicaea in 325AD. The kernel of that Council's deliberations, leading to the fine-tuning of prior credal formulae that took place in the Council, was the clarification of the relation of God the Son to God the Father — hence all those phrases, piled up one upon another, “born of the Father before all ages, God from God,

Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father.” How determined those Council Fathers and theologians were to make sure that Arianism didn’t get another look-in, or threaten the people’s faith: they had to speak with exactitude, expressing the unity and equality of the Godhead, so as to preserve untainted the salvific message of Jesus. The subsequent Ecumenical Council, in 381AD in Constantinople, also in modern-day Turkey like Nicaea, set about a similar formulaic precision with regard to the Holy Spirit. These considerations are not *niche* niceties for academic theology to ponder; these affect our thinking, our spirituality, our approach to life. We do not recite the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed each Sunday just to ‘bulk out’ the Mass and make sure it’s a good hour long(!). No, we profess our faith on Sundays in this creed because it is life-giving, truth-affirming: the Trinity is *true* — Son & Spirit are “true God from true God” with the Father — and not to acknowledge that is to slip from the truth, and have less of a grasp on God-given realities.

Every time we make the Sign of the Cross and enter into prayer; every time we conclude formally the prayers of the Church, “*through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You [Father] in the unity of the Holy Spirit ...*”; every time we renew our 3-fold Baptismal Promises at Easter and other times, we are making that solemn and loving acknowledgment of “*God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity.*” Into that loving union of divine persons, we can, by His perennial invitation, insert ourselves: His heart is expansive three-fold, so to speak — in 3 (spiritual) dimensions, you might say — so as to make room for us. Just as the love of parents makes room for, and increases because of, their children, so, the Spirit opens up for us the Godhead that we might (at His behest) make our home there. So, let’s be reassured, this Trinity Sunday: the Holy Trinity isn’t some bizarre theological–mathematical enigma to baffle us: He is the source of loving; He wishes, through the Spirit, to make His home in us, so that we might one day in utter completeness of the human condition, make our home in Him.