

7th June, Trinity 2020 Facebook live

Welcome and Introduction

Good morning and a warm welcome to the vicarage and to this service on Trinity Sunday. The Weekly sheet is on the All Saints Website together with regular updates about church life and various resources. Please feel free to 'like', and 'share'....we greet each other, we can also add own prayers in the comments....

Two readings: Exodus and John. Last week we thought about one person of the Trinity – the Holy Spirit – sent by Jesus after his ascension.....this week we think about the fullness of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Let us call to mind and confess our sins...

Lord Jesus, you have revealed the Father to us as a God of love.

Lord have mercy.

You yourself have become a Brother to us.

Christ have mercy.

You have sent the Holy Spirit to be our Counselor

Lord have mercy.

Absolution: May almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent. Have mercy upon you. Pardon and deliver you your sins. Confirm and Strengthen you in all goodness and bring you to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

In a moment of silence let us bring to God our hopes and concerns for today and the days ahead....

Collect: O God, your name is veiled in mystery, yet we dare to call you Father; your Son was begotten before all ages, yet is born among us in time; your Holy Spirit fills the whole creation, yet is poured forth now into our hearts.

Because you have made us and loved us and called us by name, draw us more deeply into your divine life,

that we may glorify you rightly, through your Son,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen**

Reading Exodus 34: 4-6, 8-9

⁴ So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the former ones; and he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tablets of stone. ⁵ The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name, "The Lord."^l ⁶ The Lord passed before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁸ And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. ⁹ He said, "If now I have found favour in your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance."

Gospel: John 3: 16-18, Here the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John: Jesus said to Nicodemus:
"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷ "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. This is the gospel of the Lord,

In the name....

Einstein said, in 1936, that "The eternal mystery of the world is its comprehensibility", the fact that the world "is comprehensible is a miracle".

I have spent many years studying and then teaching physics. It can be said that in exploring the laws of physics we are exploring the mind of God. That God is revealing himself through our study of the natural world just as he reveals himself through the beauty of nature, in scripture, in human relationships and most fully, in the person of Christ.

A typical beginning for a Trinity Sunday sermon is for the preacher to comment that they have drawn the short straw – that they are being called upon to explain something very hard - that is a mystery and can't be fully understood.

Trinity Sunday gives us a great opportunity to say something about the nature of the God to whom we offer worship and whose commandments we seek to live by. Perhaps, because I have studied the sciences that I don't feel unduly worried about there being aspects of the world that we don't, as yet, fully comprehend. There are

scientific theories that are not yet compatible with each other. So I find that an appreciation of science can help when studying theology.

We are familiar with light, X rays and radio waves, which science calls electromagnetic waves; they do the things we have discovered that waves do.

Yet we find that they also do the things that we know particles do. It was the photo-electric effect that showed light behaving as a particle. Einstein provided a way of understanding this. So we have gained the idea of Wave-particle Duality. Particles behave as particles and in some circumstances as waves. Waves behave as waves and in some circumstances as particles. The two behaviours cannot occur at the same time. It sounds strange and shows that the world is full of wonder and that our current understanding is not the full picture.

(It is called complementarity by quantum physicists and John Polkinghorne says that it is the scientist's equivalent of the theologian's *perichoresis*, the mutual indwelling of characteristics that we see in the Trinity.¹ I don't feel unnerved by the fact that our understanding of particles and waves is incomplete. In a similar way, when it comes to trying to understand Christology, I am not unnerved that we describe Christ as being fully human and fully God. What is significant is that science and religion have had to confront the problems raised when a phenomenon cannot be represented adequately by any analogy from the everyday world.² In both physics and in matters of faith I accept that for now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face.)

Trinity Sunday invites us to contemplate the essence of God. One God yet three persons. One God is the great insight of the Jewish people – yet reflection on the experience of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, gave us in time the Trinity.

God can be recognised as the creator of the universe, a supreme being who is the cause of all that exists. Many people have a sense of wonder at the beauty of creation and an awareness of the spiritual realities that underpin our life. Yet the image of God is not complete. It is in the person of Jesus Christ that we come to a full appreciation of who God is. It is Jesus who reveals God to us as heavenly Father, his Father and our Father. It is Jesus who shows himself to be the Son and

² McGrath *Science and Religion* p161

us as his sisters and brothers. It is Jesus who promises to send the Holy Spirit – so we are reassured that he will be with us to the end of time.

When Jesus spoke with Nicodemus, Jesus didn't use clever arguments to explain why he had been sent, he used the language of love. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son". It is the loving Father who send his beloved Son so that all may know the way to eternal life. The binding together through love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, into a community, is shown so profoundly in the icon by Rublev – which appears on the Facebook page.

We are invited to encounter this love – to know that we are loved by God – by opening ourselves up we are drawn into the loving relationship that exists between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the icon of the Trinity there is a space at the table ready for us.

What can this, sometimes rather abstract, doctrine say to us in this period of pandemic? In this time of physical distancing we are discovering more about how deep and necessary our longing for connectedness is. Being separated has meant that we have developed ways to stay connected so that our sense of communion is maintained. Imperfect as what we do is, our new ways of coming together come from a longing which is at the heart of the Trinity.

We live in a society of great divisions; those who are alone or isolated, those who are separated from the fullness of life due to barriers of faith or colour..... Our faith in a God of love compels us to find ways of reaching out in whatever ways are open to us.

Our first reading says that God, is a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. And the gospel, that God so loved the world that he gave us his Son.

Both readings have the same message. God is a God of love. Our existence is a sign of God's love. God's love is unconditional and that is the Good News.

¹ Polkinghorne *Science and Creation* p70

² McGrath *Science and Religion* p161

Intercessions. Our Father.....Concluding prayer and Blessing:

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.**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you**

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 all time and for eternity, come down upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Evensong 5.30 pm, OoS on the website. Email sent, if you haven't received or would like to then please let me know.

Eucharist 11 am Tuesday Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2069378522?pwd=WkVWMUpZR01ieXE3dFFVK2ZVcHVkQT09> Updated OoS on the website (covid 19 page)

Prayer Group 7 pm Thursday, Zoom. Coffee morning 11 am Saturday, Zoom. Access details have been sent by email

Sunday 10.30 and 5.30

<https://www.facebook.com/AllSaintsPeterborough/>

Daily Hope the line, which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044, If you know of someone who isn't on internet, let them know, ...

Online collection:

<https://allsaintspeterborough.org.uk/about/giving/>