

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 27

Trinity Sunday 7th June 2020

'Virtually Church but with some way to go...'

Welcome

Welcome to Cutting Edge Camelot on this Trinity Sunday. We can often find the Trinity a difficult concept to grasp. Anna looks at the Trinity in terms of the relationships between Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. We too are invited through these relationships to share in the life and love of God.

Scripture Passage

Matthew 28.16-20

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Reflection

I have heard people refer to Trinity Sunday as 'Heresy Sunday', because preachers so easily end up misrepresenting God when trying to explain the Trinity. Perhaps it is not surprising, given that God is God, that our human minds and words fail to do justice to God. So I hope you'll forgive me if I too fail to find the words to speak adequately of our amazing God.

If you were asked to go through the Bible and choose a Gospel reading for Trinity Sunday, this perhaps isn't the most obvious choice. You might instead opt for Jesus' baptism, in which the Holy Spirit descends on Jesus and the voice of God the Father is heard. Our passage, from the very end of Matthew's Gospel, is commonly referred to as The Great Commission, when Jesus gave his disciples their final instructions before his Ascension. It is significant therefore that one of the final things he tells his disciples to do is to baptise people **'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'** – and his disciples have continued to do just that throughout history. For example, when people are baptised in the Church of England, the minister says the words, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." So what is so significant about this?

In reflecting on this passage, Bishop Tom Wright comments, 'those who have followed Jesus and have become true disciples are themselves to be caught up in this divine life and purpose' (*Matthew for Everyone*, page 208). In other words, this is about our identity; we are invited to become part of the Trinitarian relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

You may well be familiar with Andrei Rublev's famous icon of the Trinity, which depicts the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as the three angels who visit Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 18 and tell them they will have a child (so the painting is also known as *The Hospitality of Abraham*). In the painting, there is space at the table for someone else to join the three Persons of the Trinity; we are invited into this special relationship. In this painting by Meg Wroe, entitled *Trinity – After Rublev*, Wroe reinterpreted Rublev's icon,



depicting the three Persons of the Trinity as three people, each distinct from one another. Jane Williams, in writing about Wroe's painting, says this:

Wroe's painting is also a double vision: here we have Rublev's Trinity, inviting us in, but inviting us in all our particularity. In this painting, the three angels have real faces because the people whom God invites are not just 'humanity' in the generic sense, but real, individual people.

(Jane Williams, *The Art of Advent*, pages 147-148)

The Trinity is not an abstract theological doctrine that is only relevant to academics: 'the Trinity' is the name given to the God in whom we believe, and in whom we have our identity. As real, individual, particular people, we are invited into a relationship with the Trinitarian God. And this invitation is open to all – as Jesus says, "Go therefore and make disciples *of all nations*" – and this is why in Wroe's painting, the individuals are depicted as

black and minority ethnic. God invites all people to know him, not in spite of our particularity, but because of it. And this is why, as Christians, we must stand against the systemic racism that has led to the tragic death of George Floyd and so many others. We would expect the diversity of the Trinitarian nature of God to be seen in the diversity of the Church.

So, what does this mean for us today? It is a reminder that we are invited into a relationship with the Trinitarian God, and that this relationship shapes our identity. And if we accept this truth, then we are called, like the first disciples, to go and make disciples, to reach out to those we know and even those we don't, inviting them into a personal relationship with God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

You might like to pray the following Collect for Trinity Sunday, which speaks of being drawn more deeply into the love of the Trinity. May we all come to know more fully the depth of God's love for us – and may that be the foundation of our identity.

*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.*

Anna

Hymn Suggestion

Two well-known hymns for Trinity Sunday which can be found on YouTube are 'Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God almighty' and 'I bind unto myself today'.

Points for Prayers

- Thanksgiving for the invitation of the Trinity for us to share in the mystery of God's love and life
- Thanksgiving for care, skill and courage of NHS workers and those in care homes
- Those suffering from coronavirus in hospitals, care homes and at home
- Need for further largescale testing
- Response to death of George Floyd
- Prayers for parents, teachers, governors and children of North Cadbury Church of England Primary School as the school is partially reopened, for the school to be a place of both joy and safety
- Funerals needing to take place under new restrictions with only family mourners
- Prayers for those affected economically by the lockdown, for businesses and those who have become unemployed
- Prayers and thanksgiving for contributions to the foodbanks and for those helping to take these to the foodbanks.

Diocesan weekly livestreamed services and reflections

Bishop Peter and Bishop Ruth will be livestreaming a mid-week Eucharist each week and offering recorded reflections each Sunday.

For further details please see the Diocesan website.

Church of England Daily Hopeline

The Archbishop of Canterbury has launched a new telephone service, 'Daily Hopeline'. If you ring the free number 0800 804 8044 you can hear a

recorded message and can also listen to well known hymns along with prayers and a reflection based on a hymn.

Premier Radio

Available from Premier Radio (DAB radio and channel 725 via Freeview TV) Sunday morning of sacred music, songs and teaching etc, 7am-12.00 noon. Includes 'Hearts and Hymns' by Pam Rhodes, 8.00am to 10.00am with great variety of hymns and accompanying information.

Bible studies on weekday mornings.

Some other streamed resources

Here are a selection of some streamed resources available online which you may find helpful:-

- The Royal School of Church Music website provides a Hymn of the Day and Sunday Self-Service with music, readings and prayers.
- The Prayer Book Society has details of online streaming of BCP services.

An inclusive Communion celebrated on behalf of the benefice

Ron and Pam will be celebrating Communion regularly in their home each Sunday at 10.00am. Please be aware of this because even though no-one can join them they are praying for us all and hope that you will feel included in this act of Communion.

Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family

*We pray that 'we might live in love,
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5:2)