

The Most Holy Trinity

Year B

Abba, Father!

We celebrate our baptism in the name of the Trinity as a result of which we have received the spirit of sons and are privileged to call the great God of glory and majesty our Father.

(Readings: Deuteronomy 4: 32-34, 39-40. Romans 8: 14-17. Matthew 28: 16-20.)

An elderly couple recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Their children had long-since flown the nest, and themselves married and had their own children, meaning they've spent the best part of twenty years, or more, on their own – a time they both describe as “a real growing towards each other.”

When asked why they still enjoyed each other's company, the woman replied, “We have always had a healthy respect for each other's differences. And we are still growing in our knowledge and respect of each other. I just wish we could have communicated with each other, all those years ago, the way do now. Perhaps our easiness with each other now, could only have come about because of the struggles of our earlier days.”

It is a strange paradox, but true nonetheless, that the longer we are acquainted with people, the more we come to realise just how little we actually know them. Family and friends, continually surprise us, reminding us that, whatever we may presume to think, they are always more than our inexact perceptions, and our imperfect understanding of them. We tend to make up our minds about people after knowing them, for only a very short while. But if we are honest with ourselves, we'd realise that our first impressions are often born of ignorance. We can have long, draw out conversations with, and about, a new acquaintance, but for all the talk, our impressions, our *judgements*, are almost invariably, merely guess work, makeshift images, built on a few clues, based mostly on pre-suppositions and assumptions.

Unless we are prepared to settle for stereotypes, and be happy to accept our assumptions, our right and proper understanding of other people is a lifetime's task. That being so, it is hardly surprising that when it comes to God, we easily become confounded, even paralysed by the sheer magnitude of the mystery. It seems the more we learn about God, and the more we discover about his greatness, the more mysterious his presence, and his love become. – Even the considerable knowledge of the Church cannot dispel the most enigmatic, and abiding, of all mysteries.

Mystery, more specifically, ‘divine mystery’, means that we can never say the final word about God. – There is always more to be discovered, and always more to be said. There is always more to be experienced, and so, there is always more to be shared. In that sense, the mystery of God reminds us, indeed, it *urges* us, again and again, never to abandon the endless task of growing in our understanding of God's infinite, incomprehensible power; a power governing and influencing the world in which we live.

Each year, the feast of the ‘Most Holy Trinity’ calls us to reflect on the nature and, moreover, on the mystery of God afresh. As Christians our entrance into the mystery of God is in, and through, the person of Jesus. He is, ‘the Way, the Truth, and the Life’. – He is the image of the invisible God – the ‘Firstborn of all creation’ – the ‘Word made flesh’ among us.

As Jesus, himself, said to the Apostle Philip: “He who has seen me has seen the Father”. One could say that Jesus is God’s adventure, his journey, among us. To make our journey to God-the-Father we must begin with God-the-Son. We must begin with Jesus! And the Good News is that Jesus has promised to be with us on our journey to God, until it is complete: “Know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time”.

In the person of Jesus, the mystery of God has a face, and it has a voice, and it has a language, it has a love, and it has a life. In the pages of the Gospel, we meet his friends, and we meet his enemies. We learn of his enthusiasms, and of his dislikes. We are caught up in his struggle in the cause of right. And we are challenged to keep alive, the values he cherished and taught.

In the three years of Jesus’ public ministry, more than two millennia ago, the ‘Light from light’ shone among us. – Today, in him, we are still able to ‘taste and see the goodness of the Lord’. And God’s mysteries are revealed in him: “He who has seen me has seen the Father”. To look on the Son, is to begin to perceive, to understand, the mystery of our Triune God.

The feast of Pentecost, which we celebrated last week, reminds us that we cannot begin to understand the truth of God unless we are first gifted with the power of the Holy Spirit. Even the apostles couldn’t recognise the truth about Jesus, whom they knew and deeply loved, without the gift of the Spirit. The same is true for us! For us to understand Jesus we must, likewise, have the gift of God, the Holy Spirit. And to reach God-the-Father we must go via God-the-Son.

It is the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity that is at the very heart of the Christian life of faith, which is why we begin everything, ‘In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit’.

Today’s second reading reminds us that we are not God’s slaves, living in fear. We are children of God, and we are his heirs. We have been granted the privilege of inheriting the divine glory of God himself! And we have been given the right to belong. So, we can enjoy the easiness of sons and daughters who have a share in Our Father’s inheritance.

If God is mystery (which he is) and if we are all made in his image and likeness (which we are) it is hardly surprising that we, his children, are also mysterious. That being so, it follows that it takes a lifetime to understand each other.

We know that we learn best about people when we really want to know them for ourselves, in Christian love, refusing to accept hearsay and second-hand accounts. As our love for people prompts us to know them better, so, our love for God urges us to deepen our understanding of him. In each and every sense, undeniably and always, to love is the very best way to understand.

Our journey towards God, and towards each other, is made along precisely the same road. When we journey that road in love, and in respect, we are assured of reaching our destination: He who is.....

..... **Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**